

Soccer Study Sheet

History

The earliest record of people using their feet in a contest is in 300 BC in a Chinese military challenge called *ts'uh kúh* where participants had to kick a ball filled with feathers into a 16-inch (40-centimeter) hole in a 1-foot (30-centimeter) net that was raised 30 feet (9 meters) above the ground. In 600 AD, the Japanese played a circle game where they tried to keep the ball in the air. Similar activities were taking place in the Mediterranean and in the Americas. Around 800 AD, soccer is said to have had its birth in England with a game called *mob football* that was played during celebrations where the participants tried to force a ball into the market square of an opposing village. It is said that the only restriction was murder or manslaughter and that it was so violent that people barricaded their windows during matches. The sport was so loved that instead of practicing military skills, people were out kicking around balls. It is questionable whether this practice is what infuriated King Edward III or whether it was the lack of Christian rules, but in 1314 he tried to suppress the game by banning it. The ban never held, though—too many people loved the game and took their chances.

In the 1863, as the industrial revolution took people from farms to cities and outdoor recreation needed more organization, the London Football Association was formed. It separated mob football into two sports—rugby and football (American soccer). Then it developed the first set of rules for each.

Soccer Positioning

One ball but eleven people on a team? Should everyone run after the ball? No, they should not. Each player has a different job on the field and each works with their 10 other teammates to cover the field. See figure 11.1 to see how players line up for the kickoff, and read on to see what each position specializes in doing.

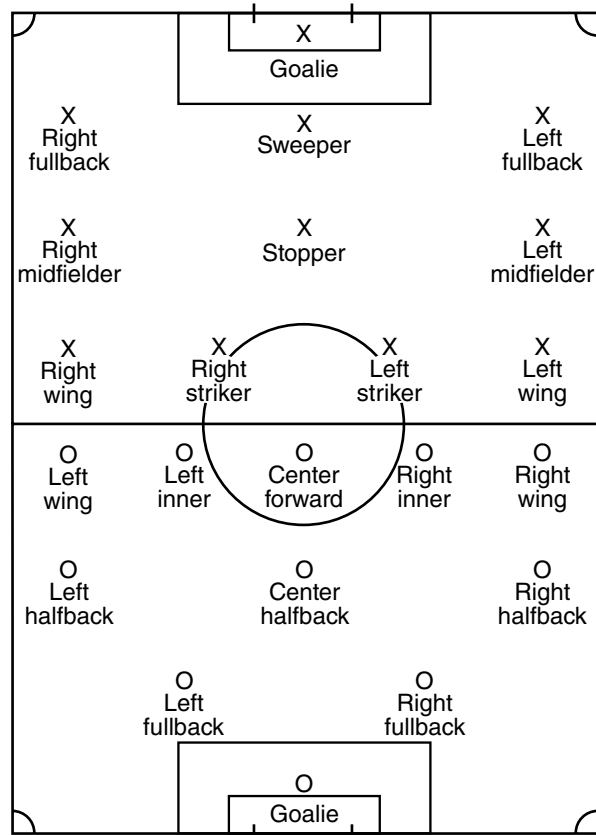


Figure 11.1 Soccer field and positions.

Offense

- Forward line—Has the job of scoring.
- Wings—Cover the outside of the forward line and should be fast and have good dribbling skills. The left wing should be able to pass to the right and should have excellent foot speed.
- Inners (strikers)—Should try to position themselves so they are in front of the goal when the ball is centered so they can shoot.
- Center forward—Sometimes there are only four forwards, in which case this position would not exist. When it does, the center is aligned to be in shooting position when the ball is in front of the goal. Passes received from the center determine which side of the field the attack comes from, so a center should be able to pass both right and left.

»continued

»continued

Defense

- Halfbacks or midfielders—Try to keep the forwards on offense by following them downfield but keeping their distance so they can stop opponents should the opponents come up with the ball.
 - Left halfback—Has to neutralize the speed of the other team’s right wing; should be able to pass to the right and straight ahead. The left halfback will probably receive most of the team’s outlet passes because passing left is easier than passing right; should be able to gain control of long passes.
 - Right halfback—Must neutralize the fastest player on the field, the opponent’s left wing, and try to keep the ball out of the penalty area.
 - Center halfback—Has the most complex job on the field because sometimes must take the moment and threaten to take a shot on goal, and other times must get back to stop opponents from scoring. The center halfback usually controls the direction of the game (right, left, or down the center). Center halfbacks need a keen sense of everyone’s positioning and the ability to pass to the open field so teammates can generate an attack.
- Fullbacks—Work together to stop the attack as if they were an accordion. If the ball is on the left, the left fullback moves up and the right fullback stays deep and vice versa. Fullbacks should slow down the attack if they cannot stop it. Their efforts give halfbacks time to drop back and reposition themselves so that there are six people defending the goal instead of two. Fullbacks need a strong clearing pass that will get the ball downfield.
 - Left fullback—Should try not to pass the ball right when near the penalty area; otherwise the ball is centered for the opponents, giving them another shot at the goal. Fullbacks should talk to their halfback so that they don’t wind up playing the same ball and blocking each other’s outlet pass.
 - Right fullback—Should try not to pass to the left when near the penalty area. Outlet passes should go either down the field or angled to the right; need a strong clearing pass.
- Goalies—Need a great sense of angle, good reaction time, the fearlessness to block shots, and the ability to stay warm and alert when the play is downfield and far away from them. They’re the only players on the field who may use their hands, dress differently, and would do better with basketball skills.

Skills

- Dribbling—Moving with possession of the ball.
 - Tight dribble—Small pushes of the ball with the foot so it stays close to you, enabling you to pass or to dodge or control the ball when being challenged for it.
 - Loose dribble—Sending the ball two or three steps in front of you so you can run at top speed to take advantage of the open field.
- Trapping—Using any part of your body to put the ball down to the ground so you can use your feet to redirect it.
 - Foot trap—Raising the toe while the heel remains down so you can put the sole of your foot on the ball and stop it.
 - Knee trap—Bending at the knees to trap a bouncing ball between your knees and the ground.
 - Body trap—Caving in to let your body absorb the force of the ball so it drops at your feet.

»continued

»continued

- Tackling—Legally attempting to get the ball from your opponent.
 - Straight-on (front) tackle—Attempting to stop the ball so that the dribbler overruns it and you can take possession.
- Passing—Sending the ball with a kick or volley to someone else.
 - Instep kick—Kicking the ball with the inner part of either foot. Works best for passes to the right or left. To direct the ball straight ahead, kickers must turn so their side faces their target.
 - Place kick—Using the top of the arch of the foot to send the ball in the direction you are facing.
 - Foot, knee, shoulder, or head volley—The part of the body used depends on the height of the ball when the player tries to hit it while it is in the air.

Rules

- Kickoff—Each playing time begins with a kickoff, at which time players must be on their own side of the field with the receiving team outside the circle until the kick. The kicker may not touch the ball again until someone else does.
- Putting the ball back into play—There are different rules for different situations.
 - After a score, use a kickoff.
 - After it goes over a sideline, the ball must be thrown in from out of bounds with two hands from above and behind the head and both feet on the ground.
 - After a shooter sends it out on the goal line, the defender, usually the back, kicks a goal kick from anywhere inside the goal box. No one may play it until it clears the penalty area.
 - After the defensive teams sends it out on the goal line, the attacking team takes a corner kick anywhere on the corner arch. Others have to stay 10 yards (9 meters) away.

Fouls and Their Penalties

- Direct kicks (kicks for goal that need not be touched by any other player before they score) are awarded after
 - endangering the opposite team (charging, tripping, hitting, kicking, pushing, jumping into, using excessive force),
 - holding an opponent, or
 - deliberately using one's hands on the ball.
- Indirect kicks (must be touched by someone other than the kicker before it enters the goal) are given after
 - endangering oneself (e.g., low heading a ball that someone is trying to kick),
 - using one's body to impede the progress of an opponent,
 - preventing the goalie from releasing the ball,
 - unsportsmanlike behavior, or
 - offside violations (a player gets ahead of the ball so that there are not two defenders between the player and the goal).
- Penalty kicks are free shots on goal given to the attacking team when the defenders commit a foul that would normally result in a direct kick had the infraction not been inside the penalty box. The goalie must stand on the goal line until the kick and then try to stop the goal. The kicker must stand on or behind the 10-yard (9-meter) line to take the kick. All teammates must be out of the penalty area until the ball comes out or is scored.