

Glossary

The Glossary contains words/phrases which need clarification or explanation beyond the detail in the Laws and/or which are not always easily translated into other languages.

Football bodies

The IFAB – The International Football Association Board

Body composed of the four British FAs and FIFA which is responsible for the Laws of the Game worldwide. In principle, changes to the Laws may only be approved at the Annual General Meeting usually held in February or March

FIFA – Fédération Internationale de Football Association

The governing body responsible for football throughout the world

Confederation

Body responsible for football in a continent. The six confederations are AFC (Asia), CAF (Africa), CONCACAF (North, Central America and Caribbean), CONMEBOL (South America), OFC (Oceania) and UEFA (Europe)

National Football Association

Body responsible for football in a country

Football terms

A

Abandon

To end/terminate a match before the scheduled finish

Advantage

The referee allows play to continue when an offence has occurred if this benefits the non-offending team

Additional time

Time allowed at the end of each half for time 'lost' because of substitutions, injuries, disciplinary action, goal celebration etc.

Assessment of injured player

Quick examination of an injury, usually by a medical person, to see if the player requires treatment

Away goals rule

Method of deciding a match/tie when both teams have scored the same number of goals; goals scored away from home count double

B

Brutality

An act which is savage, ruthless or deliberately violent

C

Caution

Official sanction which results in a report to a disciplinary authority; indicated by showing a yellow card; two cautions in a match result in a player being dismissed (sent off)

Charge (an opponent)

Physical challenge against an opponent, usually using the shoulder and upper arm (which is kept close to the body)

D

Deceive

Act to mislead/trick the referee into giving an incorrect decision/disciplinary sanction which benefits the deceiver and/or their team

Direct free kick

A free kick from which a goal can be scored by kicking the ball directly into the opponents' goal

Discretion

Judgment used by a referee or other match official when making a decision

Dismissal

Another word for 'sending-off' (red card)

Dissent

Public disagreement (verbal and/or physical) with a match official's decision; punishable by a caution (yellow card)

Distract

Disturb, confuse or draw attention (usually unfairly)

Dropped ball

A 'neutral' method of restarting play – the referee drops the ball between players of both teams; the ball is in play when it touches the ground

E**Electronic player tracking system (EPTS)**

System which records and analyses data about the physical and physiological performance of a player

Endanger the safety of an opponent

Put an opponent at danger or risk (of injury)

Excessive force

Using more force/energy than is necessary

Extra time

A method of trying to decide the outcome of a match involving two equal additional periods of play, not exceeding 15 minutes each

F

Feinting

An action which attempts to confuse an opponent. The Laws define permitted and 'illegal' feinting

Field of play (Pitch)

The playing area confined by the touchlines and goal lines and goal nets where used

G

Goal line technology (GLT)

Electronic system which immediately informs the referee when a goal has been scored i.e. the ball has wholly passed over the goal line in the goal
(See Law 1 for details)

H

Hybrid system

A combination of artificial and natural materials to create a playing surface which requires sunlight, water, air circulation and mowing

Indirect free kick

A free kick from which a goal can only be scored if another player (of any team) touches the ball after it has been kicked

Infringement

An action which is against/breaks/violates the Laws

Impede

To delay, block or prevent an opponent's action or movement

Intentional

A deliberate action (not an accident)

Intercept

To prevent a ball reaching its intended destination

K

Kicks from the penalty mark

Method of deciding the result of a match by each team alternately taking kicks until one team has scored one more goal and both teams have taken the same number of kicks (unless during the first 5 kicks for each team, one team could not equal the other team's score even if they scored from all their remaining kicks)

N

Negligible

Insignificant, minimal

O

Offence

An action which breaks/infringes/violates the Laws of the Game; sometimes relates particularly to illegal actions committed against a person, especially an opponent

Offensive, insulting or abusive language

Verbal or physical behaviour which is rude, hurtful, disrespectful; punishable by a sending-off (red card)

Outside agent

Any person who is not a match official or on the team list (players, substitutes and team officials)

P

Penalise

To punish, usually by stopping play and awarding a free kick or penalty kick to the opposing team (*see also Advantage*)

Played

Action by a player which makes contact with the ball

Playing distance

Distance to the ball which allows a player to touch the ball by extending the foot/leg or jumping or, for goalkeepers, jumping with arms extended. Distance depends on the physical size of the player

Q

Quick free kick

A free kick taken (with the referee's permission) very quickly after play was stopped

R

Reckless

Any action (usually a tackle or challenge) by a player which disregards (ignores) the danger to, or consequences for, the opponent

Restart

Any method of resuming play after it has been stopped

S

Sanction

Disciplinary action taken by the referee

Save

An action by a player to stop the ball when it is going into or very close to the goal using any part of the body except the hands (unless a goalkeeper within their own penalty area)

Send off (Dismissal)

Disciplinary action when a player is required to leave the field for the remainder of the match having committed a sending-off offence (indicated by a red card); if the match has started the player can not be replaced

Serious foul play

A tackle or challenge for the ball that endangers the safety of an opponent or uses excessive force or brutality; punishable by a sending-off (red card)

Signal

Physical indication from the referee or any match official; usually involves movement of the hand or arm or flag, or use of the whistle (referee only)

Simulation

An action which creates a wrong/false impression that something has occurred when it has not (*see also deceive*); committed by a player to gain an unfair advantage

Spirit of the game

The main/essential principles/ethos of football

Suspend

To stop a match for a period of time with the intention of eventually restarting play e.g. fog, heavy rain, thunderstorm, serious injury

T**Tackle**

A challenge for the ball with the foot (on the ground or in the air)

Team official

Any non-player listed on the official team list e.g. coach, physiotherapist, doctor (*see technical staff*)

Team list

Official team document usually listing the players, substitutes and team officials

Technical staff

Official non-playing team members listed on the official team list e.g. coach, physiotherapist, doctor (*see team official*)

Technical area

Defined area (in stadia) for the team officials which includes seating
(See Law 1 for details)

U

Undue interference

Action/influence which is unnecessary

Unsporting behaviour

Unfair action/behaviour; punishable by a caution

V

Violent conduct

An action, which is not a challenge for the ball, which uses or attempts to use excessive force or brutality against an opponent or when a player deliberately strikes someone on the head or face unless the force used is negligible

Referee terms

Match official(s)

General term for person or persons responsible for controlling a football match on behalf of a football association and/or competition under whose jurisdiction the match is played

Referee

The main match official for a match who operates on the field of play. Other match officials operate under the referee's control and direction. The referee is the final/ultimate decision-maker

Other match officials

Competitions may appoint other match officials to assist the referee:

- **Assistant referee**

A match official with a flag positioned on one half of each touchline to assist the referee particularly with offside situations and goal kick/corner kick/throw-in decisions

- **Fourth official**

A match official with responsibility for assisting the referee with both on-field and off-field matters, including overseeing the technical area, controlling substitutes etc.

- **Additional assistant referee (AAR)**

A match official positioned on the goal line to assist the referee particularly with situations in/around the penalty area and goal/no-goal decisions

- **Reserve assistant referee**

Assistant referee who will replace an assistant (and, if competition rules permit, a fourth official and/or AAR) who is unable to continue