

SOCCER TERMS

3-5-2: A formation that includes three defenders, five midfielders, and two forwards.

4-4-2: The most common formation in most parts of the world, it includes four defenders, four midfielders, and two forwards.

4-4-2 Diamond: A variation of the most common formation in most parts of the world, it includes four defenders, A diamond shaped four midfielders, and two forwards.

4-3-3: A formation that includes four defenders, three midfielders, and three forwards. Is used by a lot of professional teams.

Aggregate score: A form of keeping score in knock-out tournaments in which teams play two-match series in each stage of the tournament, with each team hosting one of the matches in its home venue. The combined score of the two matches is the aggregate or total, which decides which team will advance to the next stage of the tournament.

Backs: Refers to defenders. In a four-back set, two center-backs play between the left back and right back.

Caution: When the referee shows a player the yellow card, usually in response to an action that is not in the spirit of fair play. A second caution in a single match results in the player being shown the red card. See also Red Card

Corner kick: Awarded when the defending team puts the ball over the end line, a corner kick is taken by the offensive team from next to the corner flag. Just as is the case with a free kick, the ball is kicked from a stopped position and defenders must be at least 10-yards away.

Cross: A pass from near the touchlines that is directed towards the area in front of the goal. A cross is usually intended to be headed or volleyed with the foot into the goal by a teammate.

Defender: A player positioned in front of his goalkeeper who is primarily focused on stopping the opposition's attackers from scoring.

Direct Kick: After a foul, a team is awarded a free kick, in most cases, a direct free kick. A direct kick can result in a goal; a player can use the kick to take a shot directly on the goal and score. See: free kick.

Dismissal: Ejection from a match as a result being shown a red card.

Division: Most domestic leagues have multiple divisions, separate leagues based on performance where clubs can move between divisions through promotion and relegation. Major League Soccer in the United States is one of few professional leagues with only one division.

Draw: A game that ends tied.

Dribbling: When a player runs with the ball at his or her feet, directing the ball with small, quick touches.

End line: The lines extending from the goal line to the corners of the field; If the defending team puts the ball over the end-line, the attacking team is awarded a corner-kick. If the attacking team puts the ball over the end-line, the defending team is awarded a goal-kick.

Equalizer: The tying goal in a game.

Extra Time: The overtime period used to decide tied, or drawn, games. Most leagues let draws stand, but in some knockout competitions, a 30-minute overtime divided into two 15 minute halves is used. Currently,

FIFA employs a 'golden goal' extra time where the first team to score wins. If the game is still tied at the end of extra time, the game is decided by penalties.

Forward: A player positioned at the front of a formation responsible for trying to score goals.

Foul: A stop in play when the referee judges a violation against an opposing player. The team that suffers the foul is awarded with a free-kick unless the foul is committed by a defensive player inside his own penalty area, in which case the foul results in a penalty kick.

Fourth official: Stationed on the sideline near the center of the field, this official signals substitutions and the amount of time added by the referee at the end of each half.

Free kick: A kick given to the team that has suffered a foul at the spot of the infraction. The kicker is given a ten-yard buffer between the spot of the kick and the first opposing player. A free-kick is usually direct, meaning the kicker can score without the ball having to touch another player before it enters the goal. An indirect free-kick is used for minor fouls in or near the penalty area that require the ball to touch another player before crossing the goal-line.

Game Winner: The goal scored that results in a win for the team. I.e., if the score was previously 1-1, whoever scores the goal to make it 2-1 scores the game winner (even if the same team continues to score and the final score is, e.g., 4-1). If a team wins by 1-0, the sole goal scorer also scored the game winner.

Goalkeeper: The player positioned in the goalmouth that tries to stop the ball from crossing the goal-line. The keepers are the only player on the field allowed to use their hands, but only inside the 18-yard penalty area.

If a keeper uses their hands outside of the penalty area, the other team is awarded a free kick, and the goalkeeper is ejected from the game for an intentional handball.

Goal kick: Awarded when the attacking team puts the ball over the end-line, this is a set kick taken from the defending team's own six-yard box. After the kick is taken, the ball cannot be touched again by any player until it is outside of the penalty area.

Ground: Another word for a soccer stadium, mostly used in reference to European stadiums.

Header: When a player strikes or deflects the ball with his head to pass or shoot.

Indirect Kick: A free kick that must be touched by one other person (from either team) before it can result in a goal. This kick cannot enter the goal straight off the shot and be called a goal. In indirect kick situations, you will see the 'tap' phenomenon: one player will tap the ball a few inches to a fellow player, who will then take a direct shot on goal. See: free kick.

Injury time: See Stoppage time.

Keeper: An abbreviation, See Goalkeeper.

Leg: Each of the two matches in a home-and-away knockout format.

Linesmen: The two officials stationed along the sidelines who monitor the offside rule and point out fouls to the referee.

Match: A regulation game. A standard international game features two 45-minute halves with the referee keeping time on the field. The clock

does not stop until the end of the half, with the referee adding time to account for injuries and stops in play. Also known as a game, tie, or fixture.

Midfielder: A player positioned between the forwards and defenders, midfielders control traffic in the middle of the field and the transition between attack and defense.

Offside: A violation that occurs when an offensive player is closer to the opponent's goal than both the ball and the second-to-last opposing player at the time that the ball is passed to the offensive player by his or her teammate. Players cannot be called offside if they are in their own half of the field or if they receive the ball from a throw in, corner kick, or goal kick. When a player is called offside, the opposing team is awarded a free kick.

Penalties: A way of deciding tied games. Each team nominates five penalty takers who alternate taking penalty kicks. If the two teams are still tied after each has taken five penalty kicks, they continue alternating in the same fashion until one team has a goal more than the other after both have taken the same number of kicks. The shots are taken in rounds up to five. If the teams are still tied, extra rounds of penalties are added to determine the winner.

Penalty kick: A kick taken from 12 yards in front of the goal, usually as a result of a foul that takes place inside the penalty area. When a penalty kick is taken, no player other than the shooter and opposing goalkeeper can enter the penalty area until after the shot is taken. Further, the goalkeeper cannot advance from the goal line until after the shot is taken although the goalkeeper is allowed to move from side-to-side.

Penalty area: The 18-yard rectangle in front of the goal where the goalkeeper is allowed to touch the ball with his hands. Also the area

where harsh fouls committed by the defending team result in penalty kicks.

Pitch: Another word for the field of play.

Red card: A referee shows a player a red card to signal that the player has been banned from the rest of the match. A red card can be shown for a single serious offense or as the result of being shown a second yellow card in the same game. After a player is shown a red card, the player must leave the field of play and cannot be replaced by a substitute, meaning that his or her team must finish the match with one player fewer.

Referee: The only on-field official in charge of assessing fouls, allowing substitutions, and keeping the official time, among other things.

Relegation: In multiple division leagues, moving from a higher division to a lower division.

Sending off: An ejection resulting from a player being shown a red card. See also Red card.

Shot: A shot is any attempt to score by a team. The shot can result in a wide or high ball (over the goal), a keeper save, a deflection by another player or the post, or a goal. A shot is not necessarily a shot on goal.

Shot on goal: A shot on goal is any shot that results in a goal or a keeper/player save. All shots on goals count as shots, but not all shots are shots on goal.

Sideline: The sides of the field designated by the touchline.

Spot kick: Another word for a penalty kick because of the dot drawn on the field to mark the place from which penalty kicks should be taken. See also Penalty kick.

Stats: Short for 'statistics,' stats refer to a player or team's 'accomplishments' throughout any given game. For instance, during games, statisticians keep track of shots, saves, fouls, etc., to create stats sheets to follow the players' progress. Individual and team stats can have a great bearing on playing time, game outcome, all-star selections, team rankings, and more.

Stoppage time: Time added by the referee at the end of each half to account for injuries and stops in play.

Striker: A term that can be used interchangeably with forward, though it sometimes refers specifically to a forward that is his team's primary scoring threat.

Sweeper: In some formations, a single defender that plays between the keeper and the other defenders.

Tackle: A move where a player attempts to win the ball by sliding towards the ball. If the tackling player touches the ball first, he is allowed to make contact with the player controlling the ball. If the tackling player strikes the player before the ball, a foul is assessed. A tackle from behind is always a foul regardless of whether the tackler managed to get to the ball first.

Through ball: A pass 'through' the defense into space intended for a teammate to run onto it.

Throw-in: A way to restart play when the ball goes out over the sidelines. The team that did not last touch the ball last is allowed an overhead throw with a run-up from the sideline.

Tie: Though commonly used in the United States to indicate an even score, in regards to world soccer tie is usually used to mean a match. See also Match.

Touchline: The line surrounding the field of play, made up of the sidelines and the end-lines.

Wall: When several defending players stand in a line between the ball and the goal in order to deflect a free-kick. The wall must be setup a minimum of 10-yards away from the spot of the free-kick.

Yellow card: See Caution.