

Soccer Study Guide

- **Brief History:** soccer has been around for about 3,000 years. It is known as “football” in many parts of the world. The sport became a regular Olympic event in 1908.
- **The ball** is made of a leather or synthetic leather cover. It measures 27-28 inches in circumference and weighs close to a pound. Size 5 is the international size soccer ball.
- **The field** is divided into two halves by a center line. Each half includes part of the center circle, a penalty kick circle, a penalty box, and a goal box. There is an area marked off for corner kicks. Soccer fields vary in size, but may be similar in size to a football field.
- **The players** on a team include the following:
 1. Forwards (right, left, and center): the main purpose of forwards is to shoot for the goal! The center forward takes the kickoff.
 2. Midfielders (right, left, and center): also known as halfbacks, their main purpose is a link between the offense and defense.
 3. Defense (right, left, sweeper, and stopper): also known as fullbacks their main purpose is to help defend the goal and take the ball away from the attacking team so their own team can start an offensive play. The stopper defends the opposing team’s center forward.
 4. Goalie: the defender of the goal is the only player that may use their hands. The goalie must stand in front of the goal line to stop a ball.
- **The kickoff** is kicked from the center point on the center line. The ball must roll forward before any player on either team can touch it. A kickoff is taken at the start of the game, the second half and after a goal is scored. Players must be in their own half of the field during a kickoff.
- **Moving the ball** can be done by dribbling, passing, volleying, and heading. The ball may be contacted with any part of the body EXCEPT the hands and arms (unless the player is the goalie).
- **Techniques of the game:**
 1. Dribbling: keep ball close to feet to maintain control; take short strides; use all parts of the foot except toe
 2. Passing: pass ahead of the receiver; use inside of foot for longer passes and outside of foot for shorter passes; follow your passes
 3. Volleying: playing the ball in the air often with the inside of the foot or knee
 4. Heading: bend knees, raise heels from ground; contact on forehead; strike ball instead of letting it strike you; use this technique only when the ball is well above your head
 5. Shooting: look at the target before you shoot; look at the ball as you shoot; follow your shot; may use inside of foot, toe, or top of foot; each goal counts as one point
 6. Goal keeping: feet shoulder-width apart; lean forward with hands ready; stop grounders by kneeling; catch and tuck a ball that is airborne; toss ball to side not back out front; may punt if in goal box A throw-in is taken when the ball crosses the sideline on the field and goes out of bounds. It is taken by the team that did not kick it across the sideline. A player must have both hands on the ball and make an overhead throw. Feet must remain in contact with the ground during a throw-in (may drag back foot).

- **A penalty** or foul in soccer is an illegal play.
- **Common penalties** in soccer include: 1. handball: a player (other than the goalie) touches the ball with their hands or arms 2. Knocking a player down, tripping, or grabbing a jersey 3. Unsportsmanlike behavior 4. Off-sides: when the attacking team has two or fewer defending players between him or her and the goal he or she is attacking 5. Obstruction: purposely getting in the way of a player without any intent of going for the ball.

A yellow card (warning) is issued when a player commits a foul that is considered dangerous to an opposing player. A red card is the most serious punishment in the game of soccer and results in a player being kicked out of the game.

- **Kicks:** the following kicks are part of the game of soccer:
 1. Goal (defensive) kick: awarded when an attacking player kicks the ball over the endline outside the goal; taken by a defensive player in the goal area; kicked off the ground
 2. Corner kick: awarded when a player defending their goal touches the ball before it crosses over the endline outside the goal; opposing team places the ball in the corner of the field and kicks it from the ground
 3. Direct Free Kick: awarded for a handball, hitting, kicking, charging, holding; A GOAL MAY BE SCORED FROM A DIRECT KICK!
 4. Indirect Free Kick: awarded for offsides, arguing w/ref, obstructing a player without the ball; a goal may NOT be scored from this type of kick; a team member must touch the ball before a goal is scored.
 5. Penalty Kick: awarded when a foul occurs in the penalty area in front of the goal. A penalty kick is taken between a player and the goalie with no other defenders.

Soccer is a game that involves a lot of running. Players must know what is required of them in their positions and play their positions to the best of their ability. Soccer involves a lot of team work. When played correctly, the game is fast paced and very exciting.