
SOCCKER

Soccer first evolved as a game in England during the Middle Ages. Following many years of informal play, formal soccer rules were adopted by the English Football Association.

Soccer is referred to as "football" in every country except the United States. Much more popular in Europe and South America, soccer is the focus of the largest sporting event in the world. The World Cup, the international professional soccer championship held every four years, draws crowds in the millions.

Now growing in popularity in the United States, soccer is unique among U.S. games because players (except for the goalkeeper) use the feet and head, not the hands.

EQUIPMENT

Soccer balls are sized according to the age of the player. Adults or teens use size 5 (circumference 27 to 28 inches) and ages 7 to 12 use size 4 (circumference 25 to 26.5 inches). Soccer players should wear shin guards and in addition goalkeepers should wear elbow, hip, and knee pads and special gloves.

UNIT ORGANIZATION

Lessons 1, 2, 3, and 4 present the offensive soccer skills of dribbling, passing, shooting,

and heading, and Lesson 8 integrates these skills into offensive strategy. Lesson 5 introduces the trap, a skill in which both offensive and defensive players must be proficient. Tackling and goalkeeping are presented in Lessons 6 and 7 and are reexamined in Lesson 9 as defensive strategy. In Lesson 10 students participate in a series of lead-up games and activities and in Lesson 11 they play regulation soccer. Some of the lessons may contain more material than a teacher can utilize in a single class section. When this occurs, teachers can select the most appropriate tasks for their students. This unit is based on the assumption that your students have learned the prerequisite skills in soccer during the lower grades. An asterisk preceding a facility or equipment listing indicates that special preparation is required prior to the lesson.

SOCIAL SKILLS AND ETIQUETTE

Social skills should be emphasized in soccer because it involves both competition and teamwork. Instruct students in the importance of being good sports, including accepting referee decisions and treating the opponents with respect. Encourage teamwork by rotating posi-

tions. Your preliminary discussions can set the atmosphere for fair and fun play.

LESSON MODIFICATIONS

You can modify this unit by using a Nerf ball or a larger ball, reducing the size of the playing area, or enlarging the goal area for students with lesser abilities. Allowing more players per team or eliminating some of the more technical rules gives students with lower fitness levels opportunities for success.

SAFETY

Several safety factors should be observed. Teach students to avoid dangerous high kicking when close to another player and to protect their heads from high-kicked balls by folding their arms across their faces. Girls are permitted to cross their arms over their chest when doing a chest block. Discourage tripping, body blocking, pushing, and shoving by enforcing the soccer rules pertaining to rough play. Teaching the students to kick with the instep and the inside of the foot will prevent toe injuries. Instruct goalkeepers to be careful when picking up the ball with their hands so they are not kicked by an opposing player. For indoor soccer, use a softer or slightly deflated ball for safety and control.

The object of the game is to send the ball into a goal 8 feet high and 80 yards wide using the feet and head, but not the hands, to propel the ball. Regulation soccer teams have 11 players, one of whom is the goalkeeper. However, you can play with up to 15 players per team if necessary. Each team consists of four or five defensive players, three or four midfielders, and four or five forwards, in addition to a goalkeeper. The goalkeeper must wear gloves and should also wear pads on the elbows, hips, and knees.

The game begins with a kickoff by one team. The player who kicks off cannot touch the soccer ball again until it has been touched by another player. All players must be in their own half of the field for the kickoff, which also occurs after half time and after a team scores.

A ball is out of play when it crosses over the sidelines. The team that touched the ball last before it went out of bounds loses possession and the other team gets a throw-in.

A direct free kick (kick shot directly at the goal) is awarded when a major foul occurs. Major fouls include handling the ball, kicking an opponent, striking an opponent, tripping an opponent, holding an opponent, pushing an opponent, jumping at an opponent, charging an opponent, charging from behind, and unsportsmanlike conduct.

An indirect free kick (in which the kick must be touched by another player before a goal can be scored) is awarded when a minor foul occurs. Minor fouls include dangerous play, obstruction, the goalkeeper taking too many steps, and offsides. Offsides occurs when the ball is passed to an offensive player positioned near the goal without at least two defensive players between the offensive player and the goal.

A drop ball is given after the game is stopped due to injury. The soccer ball is dropped between two opponents who try to gain possession of the ball after it touches the ground.

A penalty kick occurs when the defensive team commits a major foul in the penalty area. The offensive team member takes a kick from the penalty spot and the goalkeeper is the only player allowed to try to stop the kick.

A corner kick occurs when the defensive team kicks the ball out of bounds over the endline. The offensive players can stand as close as they want to the kicker but the opposing team must be 10 yards away. A corner kick is taken from a corner of the field that is marked off with an arc with a 1-yard radius.

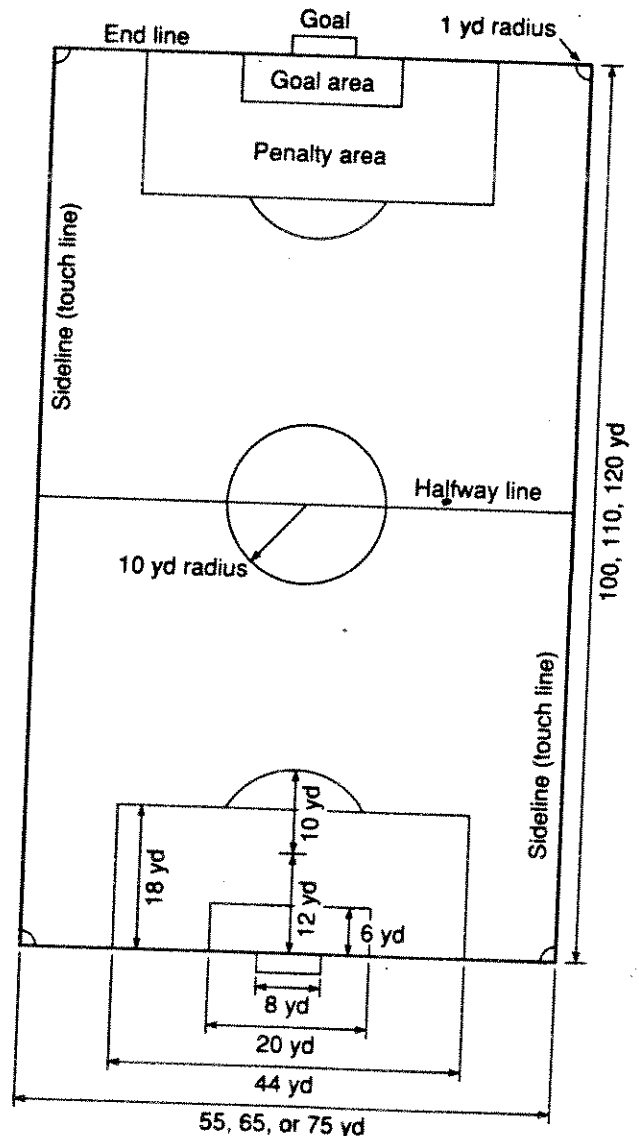
A goal kick occurs when the offensive team kicks the ball out of bounds over the endline but the ball doesn't go into the goal. The defensive team places the ball within the goal area on the same side of the goal from which the ball went out and then takes a kick. Usually the goalkeeper takes this kick.

A throw-in occurs whenever the ball goes out of play over the sidelines. The team that

did not touch the ball last takes the throw. In a throw-in, both feet must stay on the ground and remain behind the sideline. The player must use both hands to throw the ball from behind the head, and another player must touch the ball before the thrower can touch

the ball again. A goal cannot be scored from a throw-in.

The team scoring the most goals by the end of the game is the winner. The length of the game will be determined by the amount of class time available. (Regulation games consist of two 45-minute halves.)



Soccer field dimensions