

# Football Vocabulary

B2-C1 English level

Football is the universal manifestation of excitement and joy with people from all walks of life. This article is your passport to English football vocabulary, including general terms, people on the field, parts of a football pitch, etc. which improve your understanding and appreciation of the sport even more.

- **General Terms of Football Vocabulary**

**Counterattack:** Swiftly transitioning from defense to offense in response to the opposing team's attack.

**Extra time:** Additional playing time allocated when a match ends in a draw after regulation time.

**Goal:** The objective of football, where players attempt to score by kicking the ball into the opposing team's net.

**Half-time:** The break in the middle of the match when players rest, and the teams switch ends.

**Match:** A scheduled game between two teams.

**Offside:** When an attacking player is nearer to the opponent's goal line than both the ball and the last defender.

**Penalty:** A direct free kick taken from the penalty spot as a result of a foul committed inside the penalty area.

**Pitch:** The playing area, typically a rectangular field, where the game occurs.

**Referee:** The official who enforces the game's rules and ensures fair play.

- **People on the Field**

**Attacking Midfielder:** Attacking midfielders play just behind the strikers and are responsible for creating goal-scoring opportunities.

**Captain:** The team's designated leader, often responsible for making decisions on the field and representing the team.

**Center-back/Central Defender:** The center-backs, also known as central defenders, are positioned in the heart of the defense. They form the backbone of the defensive line and are responsible for marking opposing strikers, intercepting passes, and clearing the ball.

**Central Midfielder:** Central midfielders operate in the middle of the field and control the game's tempo, distribute passes, and link defense with attack.

**Defender:** Defenders form the line of defense for the team, aiming to prevent the opposing team from scoring. They are typically positioned in front of the goalkeeper and work together to deny the opposition's attacks.

**Defensive Midfielder/Holding Midfielder:** Defensive midfielders, also known as holding midfielders or defensive midfield anchors, sit in front of the defense and shield the backline.

**Full-back:** Full-backs are positioned on the left and right sides of the defense. They provide defensive cover and support to the central defenders and contribute to the team's attack by delivering crosses into the opposition's penalty area.

**Goalkeeper:** The goalkeeper is the last line of defense, stationed directly in front of the goal. Their primary role is to prevent the opposing team from scoring by blocking shots, making saves, and commanding the defense.

**Linesman:** An official who assists the referee by indicating offside decisions, throw-ins, and other technicalities along the touchlines.

**Manager:** The head coach who strategizes, selects the lineup, and guides the team's tactics and performance.

**Striker/Forward:** The striker, also known as a forward, is a person positioned closest to the opponent's goal. Their main objective is to receive passes from teammates and shoot accurately to score.

**Substitute:** A player on the bench who replaces an injured or underperforming teammate during the match.

**Wing-back:** Wing-backs are a hybrid position between full-backs and midfielders. They are deployed in systems that require extra defensive cover and attacking width. Wing-backs play wider than traditional full-backs and often contribute to both defensive and offensive phases.

- **Parts of a Football Pitch**

**Center Circle:** A circular area in the middle of the field from which the initial kick-off occurs.

**Corner Arc:** The curved line marking the area from which corner kicks are taken.  
**Bench:** The seating area where substitutes and coaching staff sit during a match, ready to enter the field when needed.

**Centre spot:** The central point on the pitch where the game begins with a kick-off and restarts after a goal.

**Corner:** The intersection of the goal line and touchline where corner kicks are taken to initiate an attacking play.

**Crossbar:** The horizontal bar that connects the two vertical goal posts, forming the top boundary of the goal.

**Goal post:** The two vertical posts positioned at each end of the goal line, defining the target for scoring goals.

**Goal Line:** The line that extends between the goalposts, marking the width of the goal.

**Net:** The mesh structure attached to the goal posts and crossbar, preventing the ball from easily passing through after a goal.

**Penalty spot:** The designated spot from which penalty kicks are taken, located 12 yards from the goal line.

**Penalty Area:** The rectangular area in front of each goal post, where the goalkeeper has special privileges.

**Touchline:** The boundary line that runs along the field's length, marking the outermost edge of the playing area.

- **Verbs Used During a Football Match**

**Clear:** To kick or head the ball away from one's goal, typically to prevent the opposing team from scoring.

**Cross:** To kick the ball from the sides of the pitch into the middle, aiming to set up a goal-scoring opportunity.

**Dribble:** To skillfully maneuver the ball while maintaining control, typically by closely controlling it with one's feet.

**Foul:** A violation of the rules resulting in a free kick or penalty for the opposing team.

**Head:** To strike the ball with the forehead, often used for headers.

**Mark:** To closely guard an opponent, preventing them from receiving the ball or making effective passes.

**Pass:** To kick or otherwise direct the ball to a teammate.

**Shoot:** To attempt to score a goal by striking the ball with force.

**Tackle:** The act of legally attempting to take the ball away from an opponent using skillful footwork.

- **Football Equipment**

**Ankle Brace:** A supportive device worn around the ankle to provide stability and prevent injuries during intense movements.

**Arm Sleeve:** A compression sleeve worn on the arm to provide support, warmth, and reduce muscle fatigue during play.

**Captain's Armband:** A band worn around the upper arm by the team captain to signify their leadership role.

**Cleats:** Specialized shoes with studs or spikes on the sole for better traction on the field.

**Goalkeeper Gloves:** Padded gloves worn by the goalkeeper to improve grip and protect the hands while making saves.

**Headband:** A band worn around the head to keep hair away from the face and absorb sweat during the match.

**Jersey:** The shirt worn by players to identify their team.

**Mouthguard:** A protective device worn over the teeth and jaws to absorb impact and reduce the risk of dental and jaw injuries.

**Shin guards:** Protective gear worn on the lower legs to safeguard against kicks and impacts.

**Shorts:** Short pants players wear for better freedom of movement during the game.

**Socks:** Garments worn on the feet, typically extending up to the knee, to cover and protect the legs.

**Studs:** The protrusions on the sole of football boots that provide traction and stability on the pitch's surface.

