

Common Soccer Terminology

1. Touch lines – The lines that form the long side of the field where players may “touch” the ball for a throw-in. Not “sideline” as in some other sports.
2. Goal lines – The lines at the ends of the field where the goals are placed. Not “end line” as in some other sports.
3. Handling the ball – A player’s deliberate use of his/her hands to control the ball. Not “handball”, which is another sport that uses a small hard ball and a wall.
4. Goal area – The area defined for taking goal kicks in front of the goals. Not “goal box”, which implies a three-dimensional structure.
5. Penalty area – The area defined where goalkeepers may use their hands and where certain fouls result in a penalty kick. Not “penalty box” or “the box”, which imply a three-dimensional structure.
6. Goalkeeper – The player allowed to use his/her hands inside the penalty area to control the ball. Not “goalie”, which is a name used in other sports. “Keeper” is an acceptable shortening.
7. Good ball! - A compliment to a teammate for a ball well played. Not “good kick”, which parents yell for any strong kick no matter where the ball goes.
8. Man On! - Telling a teammate there is an approaching opponent who is applying pressure.
9. Clear it! - A request to a teammate to kick the ball away from the goal.
10. Push Up! - A request for defenders to move forward quickly and force the opponents to move away from the goal or be left in an offside position.
11. Mark up! - A request to teammates for everyone to mark (guard) an opposing player and thus ensure all opponents are marked.
12. Down the line! - A request to throw or play the ball parallel and close to the touch line.
13. Keeper! Keeper! - A demand from the goalkeeper to his teammates not to play the ball because he/she is in a better position to gain possession under pressure.
14. Near Post – The goal post nearest to the ball.
15. Far Post – The goal post farthest from the ball.
16. Striker – An attacking player playing in a forward position. Not “forward”, which is used in other sports
17. Midfielder – Player who plays mostly in the middle of the field. Not “halfback”, which is used in other sports.
18. Defender – Player who plays mostly close to the players own goal. Not “fullback”, which is used in other sports.
19. Sweeper – Player who plays mostly behind his/her defenders.
20. Wing(er) – Player who plays mostly wide near a touch line.