

The FA Football Development Programme Futsal Fact Sheet



Futsal in 60 Seconds

Fu' what?

Ever wondered how some of the world's most skillful players developed their ability to beat opponents at will? How do players such as Luis Figo, Ronaldo, Denilson, Romario and Roberto Carlos develop skills that set them apart from other players? What did they do as youngsters that provided them with the basis to becoming some of the world's best players? If you are interested in the answer then you need to learn more about a game called Futsal.

Futsal was the name chosen by FIFA, the World governing body of Football for the only version of 5-a-side football that it supports. Futsal is a game that develops individual close ball skills through an increased number of touches during the game. Players are nearly always placed in reduced space situations and are constantly forced to make decisions demanding speed of thought and quick reflexes. On average a player will touch the ball twelve times more than in 11-a-side football.

Essentially 5-a-side but with some twists on how the game is currently played across most of England, Futsal has been designed to provide a high paced, energetic, fast flowing

game for spectators at the same time as allowing players to be at their most creative by protecting those showing attacking flair.

The end-to-end, non-stop, goalmouth action has proven a hit with the fans as the number of professional leagues in the world game grows every year. Russia, Portugal, Italy, Brazil, Japan and Argentina all have professional leagues along with Spain, the current World Champions, whose league regularly attracts over thirty thousand spectators a week to it's games.

Futsal is now a world game. Chinese Taipei will be hosting the fifth FIFA World Championships in December 2004. One hundred and four Associations took part in the qualification competition, an increase of the 64 that participated in the qualifying phases for the 2000 championships held in Guatemala.

Futsal owes a great deal of its success and all of its appeal to the streets and playgrounds of South America where the game was first conceived.

South American Origins...

Futsal has it's origins in the South American countries of Uruguay and Brazil where, in the 1930's, two versions of small sided football were being played in the cities of Montevideo and Sao Paulo respectively.

In Brazil, a version began to develop on the streets of Sao Paulo, leading to the publishing of the first rules of the game in 1936 from the country that would soon become the masters of the game.

The skills involved in Futsal were soon evident in the 11-a-side game with Pele, Rivelino, Falcao and Zico all playing Futsal at some time in their development.



Futsal in 60 Seconds (continued)



FIFA Takes Control...

In 1989 FIFA recognising the potential of the sport, took over as the governing body, abbreviating Futebol de Sala to 'Futsal' and organising the first FIFA Futsal World Championship held in the Netherlands in the same year.

Under FIFA's control new rules were introduced aimed at improving the technical aspects of the game for players and spectators alike. The ball was made slightly larger (increased to a size 4) but still weighted to reduce bounce, the linesmen were replaced with the second referee and unlimited substitutions were introduced.

FIFA's relationships with its member associations enabled more and more countries to gain access to Futsal knowledge and resources. This was a major factor in the increase in the number of participating nations in the fourth FIFA world championships held in Guatemala City in 2000, in which Spain ended the dominance of Brazil in world Futsal beating them in the final.

Futsal comes to Europe

UEFA also contributed to the growing popularity of the game by organising the first European championships in Spain. Russia took the title after a penalty shoot out. The tournament attracted large crowds and convinced UEFA to extend the development of the game, encouraging more of its member associations to take part in the qualifying rounds of the UEFA Championships held in Russia in 2001 and Italy in 2003.

Encouraged by the growth in stature of the domestic leagues in Europe, UEFA created the official European competition for Futsal clubs – the UEFA Futsal Cup in 2001, with teams from member associations earning their right to play in the competition by winning the National League or Championship organised by their own association.

The UEFA Futsal Cup continued into its third year with the 2003-2004 competition again being dominated by the Spanish clubs. It was however, a landmark season for English Futsal as it was the first year that a team participated in the competition and the first time that an English team playing small-sided football could participate in an official European competition. For the first time five a side players can start to dream of playing in the UEFA cup!

Futsal in England...

Futsal is still in the embryonic stages of development in England. It was kick-started by the visit of the first international Futsal team to English shores, when Tranmere Victoria, one of the few English Futsal teams at the time, hosted the Iranian National Team in October 2002. The skills of the professional Iranian team were exceptional and were reflected in the 30-1 score line! This was followed by a pilot futsal tournament hosted by Sheffield Hallamshire FA in the November of the same year. The Football Association then began to put in place plans to take the game forward and organised the inaugural FA National Championships.

The first National Championships were played in July 2003, drawing teams from regional qualifying competitions in London, Pendle, Cheltenham, Wirral, Sheffield and Grimsby. Sheffield Hallam Futsal Club were crowned champions after recovering from a 0-4 deficit to beat Thomas Rother College 5-4. The finals of the 2004 FA Futsal Cup were contested by 16 teams. The winners Team USSR draw their players from 8 former countries of the Soviet Union.

As a means of showcasing the game an England National Team has also been brought together to play International friendlies and the qualifying tournament for the 2005 UEFA Futsal championship. Drawing on English Futsal players and players involved in semi-professional football this team has played against Iran, Uzbekistan, Indonesia, Belgium, Cyprus and Albania to date. The National squad train regularly at Lillleshall National Sports Centre and have the opportunity to represent their country in European and World Championships.

Futsal Skills Section

Líneas del campo

Organisation

- One ball per player

Performance

Beginning:

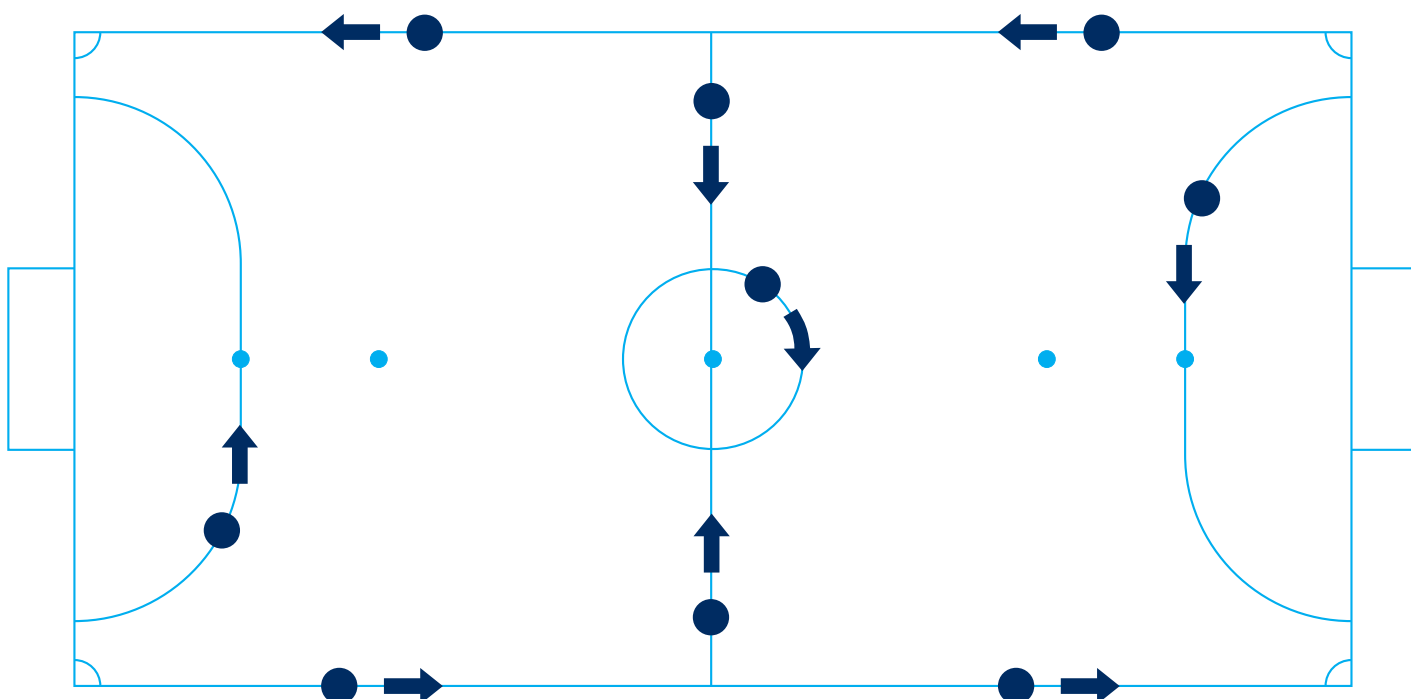
Each player positions himself on one of the lines of the playing court (for Futsal or other sports).

Development:

- On the coach's signal, all of the players dribble the ball as they wish along the lines of the court
- The dribbling should be as quick as possible, keeping the ball near the lines at all times
- If two players meet face to face along the same line, they step on the ball and change directions

Variations

On the coach's signal, the players change feet in dribbling the ball, or they change when they meet another player face to face along the same line.



Futsal Skills Section

The Clock

Organisation

- In two teams
- Half of the playing court
- One ball

Performance

Beginning:

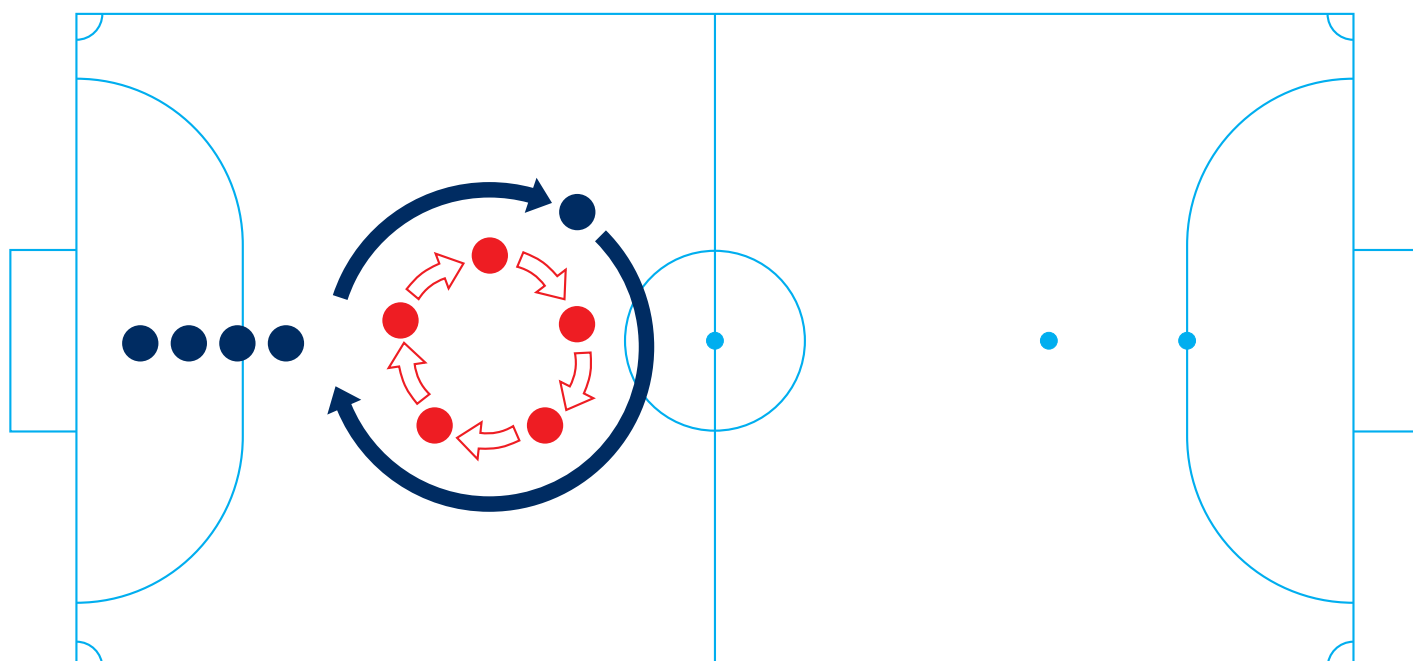
The players of a team position themselves in a circle, separated by some 3 or 4 steps. The players of the other team form a single-file line to one side of the circle.

Development:

- The team in the circle must make the maximum number of complete circuits around the circle in the form of ground passes, made clockwise
- The team that is positioned outside the circle must run relay races around the circle (also clockwise)
- The game concludes when the last player of the line has finished his relay. Then the roles are inverted. The team which makes the most passes during the game time wins

Variations

The passes may skip over a team-mate.
The direction of the passes can be changed.



Futsal Skills Section

Crossing the river

Organisation

- The playing court
- One ball per player

Performance

Beginning:

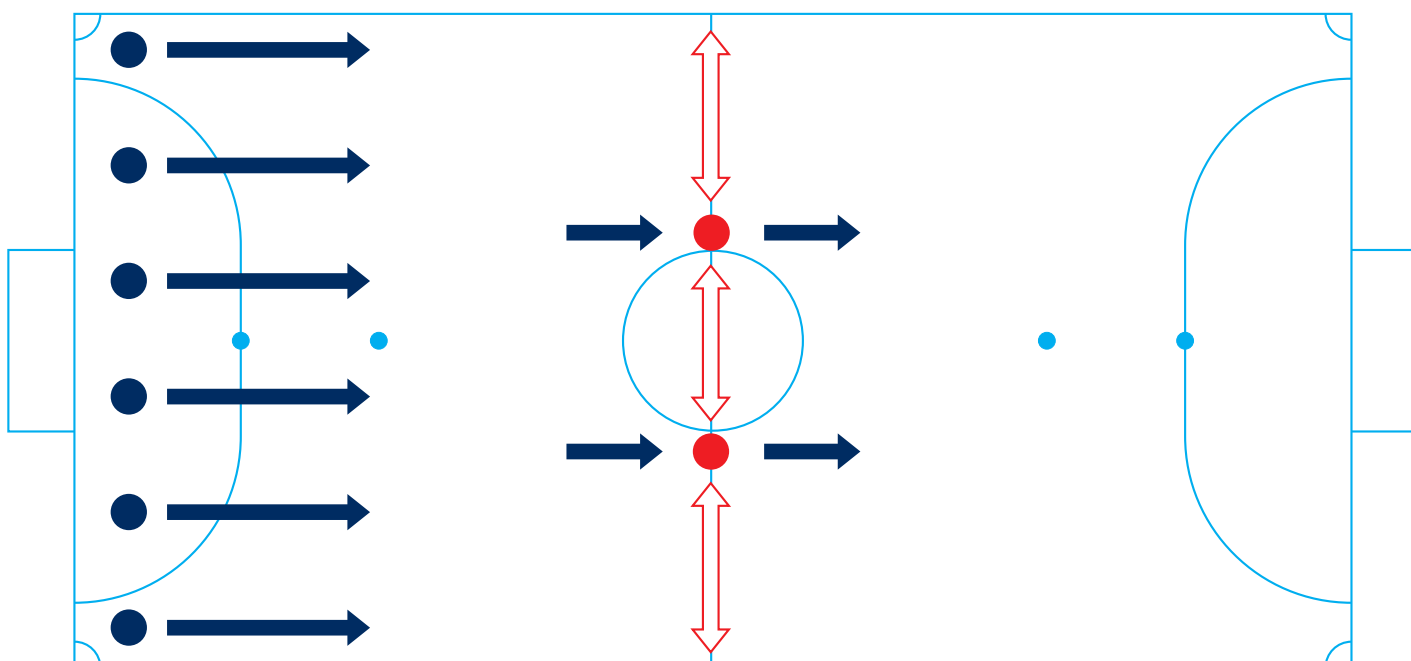
All of the players except for two position themselves along the goal line, with a ball. Two players position themselves on the halfway line (they are the "river").

Development:

- On the coach's signal, the advancing players head out with the ball controlled
- The "river" players move along the halfway line, and must try to take the ball by tackling the advancing players
- The advancing players have to cross the "river" with feints or dribbles, and reach the opposite goal line
- The first two players who lose the ball will be the "river" in the next turn

Variations

Change the dribbling leg or type of feint, establish a time in which the court must be crossed.



Futsal Skills Section

Passing and shooting

Organisation

- In two groups
- Half-court and goal of the playing court
- Several balls

Performance

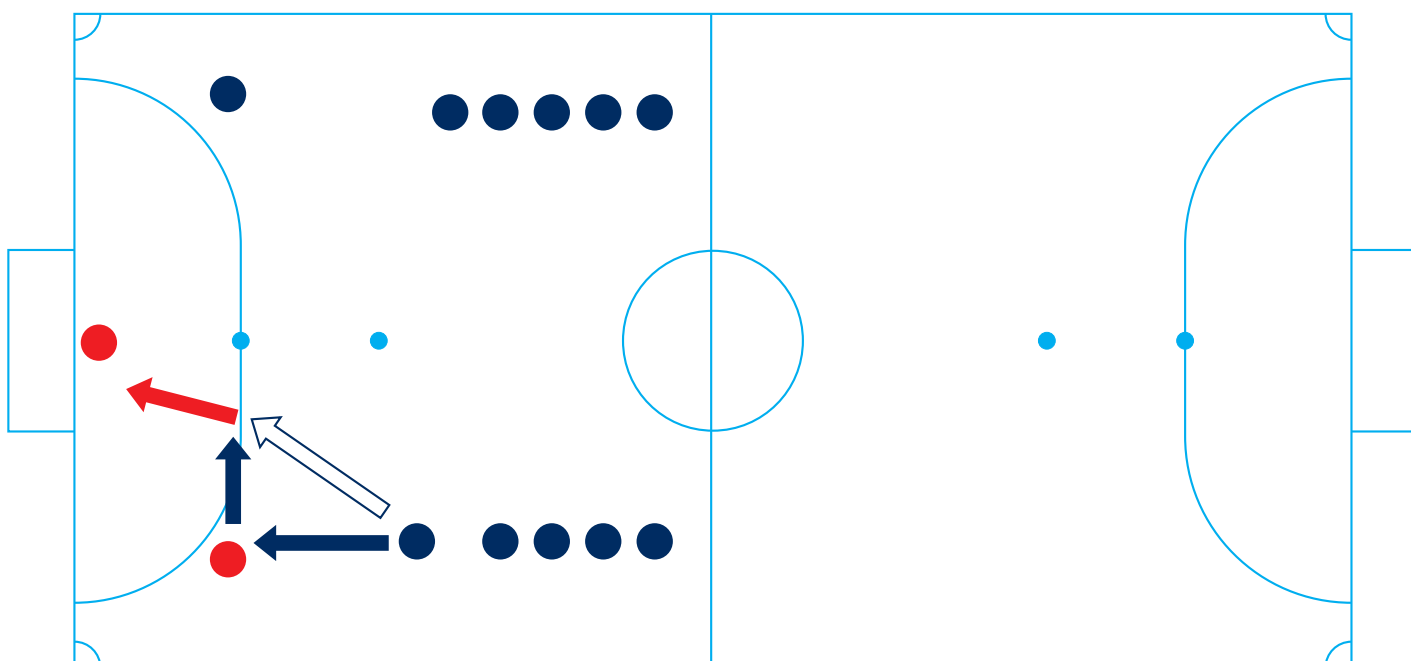
Beginning:

One player is the goal-keeper and two take the pivot position, one on the left touchline and the other on the right. Each group of shooting players forms a single-file line in front of their pivot player.

Development:

- The coach's signal, the first shooter of one of the groups moves forward some 3-4 metres with the ball at his feet, passes it to his pivot and continues moving forward, now faster, toward the penalty area
- The pivot controls the ball with the sole of his/her foot and then pushes the ball into the path of the oncoming shooter
- The shooter immediately shoots on goal upon receiving the ball

- The first shooter of the other group comes out immediately and proceeds in the same fashion
- The shooters of the left pivot shoot with the left leg and those of the right pivot, with the right leg
- The shooter who has shot on goal picks up his ball and positions himself in the line of the other group



Starting to Play

Why not organise your own Futsal Festival and replicate the rivalry and excitement of international competition? You could have an internal competition or invite neighbouring schools? Why not 'adopt' the nationality of an international team and hold your own draw?

The FA has produced a helpful Schools Festival pack that is downloadable from the FA.com. Just go to the Grassroots section of the main menu and click 'Football In Schools'.

Since the sport is only just beginning to develop in England, initially it may be difficult to find the facilities that will allow you to play Futsal - but don't be put off!

Any reasonable sized school or sports hall can accommodate Futsal and the floor markings can be laid down with tape - even if it is only temporary at first. (make sure you seek permission). Futsal goals resemble Handball or Hockey goals so try to use these if you can't access the real thing. Alternatively goals used for Mini Soccer would also be fine to start off with.

Here are some answers to some commonly asked questions when first starting to play the game:

Can I play on any surface?

At an international level Futsal must be played on either a wooden floor or a suitable synthetic floor that is smooth and flat and does not restrict the roll of the ball. However, at any other level Futsal may be played on a variety of surfaces including Astroturf and tarmac.

Do I need to use a special type of ball?

Yes, Futsal balls are smaller than eleven-a-side balls and are made with a reduced bounce. Mitre produce an excellent range of balls and these are available from companies listed below.

Are three referees and a timekeeper really necessary?

Only at an international level - though it is recommended that you play with a minimum of two referees as the game by its nature is very fast and will be difficult for one person to referee on their own.

Are there any leagues in my local area?

The game is developing quickly and although it started off as an adult game, youth leagues are developing. Why not look to stage your own Futsal Tournament and invite other local schools - male and female to participate?

The FA is piloting Futsal coaching and refereeing awards and there will be local people available to support you. Contact the Football Development Team at your County FA for further information.

How do I find out more information about refereeing and coaching?

An entry-level qualification for Refereeing and Coaching is expected to be available from early 2005.

Where can I get hold of balls, goals, and other equipment together with more information about the game?

A Futsal 'starter pack' including balls, cones, portable goals, FIFA coaching manual and promotional resources is available to schools prepared to introduce the game through the FA's School-Club link programme. Contact your local County FA for further details on how to apply.

As Futsal is still at its early stages of development it is sometimes difficult to purchase equipment on the High Street.



However there are a growing number of specialist companies that are now making Futsal equipment available:

www.futsalengland.com
www.futsal.org.uk
www.sheffieldfa.com
www.thefpl.com

Goalposts

To get started you could use Hockey, Handball or Mini-Soccer goals. Futsal goals can be ordered by contacting:

sales@edsports.co.uk
mel@ybsinsulation.com
john@itsagoal.net
www.harrod.uk.com
www.thefpl.com

Information on the international Futsal scene can be found at:

Futsalplanet.com
UEFA.com
FIFA.com

Check out the Futsal Section on The FA website:

www.thefa.com/grassroots/smallsided/Futsal
or the progress of the England Futsal team:
www.thefa.com/Englan/Futsal

Understanding the Laws of the Game

Understanding the Laws of the Game

The official rules for Futsal – 'The FIFA Futsal Laws of the Game' are published by FIFA and cover all aspects of the rules that the game should be played to and the disciplinary actions that players face when they infringe on those rules. There are 18 laws in all, ranging in focus from the technical requirements of the ball and pitch through to the exact workings of the accumulated foul rule. They are available to download from the FIFA website as a standalone publication. Consult the 'Regulations and Directories' section of FIFA.com.

As an initial introduction to these laws, the basic principals of the game that make it different from any other versions of 5-a-side that you might have played are highlighted below:

- The pitch - Futsal is played on a marked pitch and the ball can go out of play (see illustration for dimensions and layout of pitch)
- The ball - Is a fundamental factor in making the game and is by virtue of the laws of the game required to be a smaller, heavier, 'low bounce' version of 11-a-side ball
- Head height - There are no restrictions (apart from the ceiling of the sports hall!) as to how high the ball can be kicked in Futsal
- Rotating substitutions - Up to 12 players can be used in one match and there is no limit on how long a player must stay on or off the pitch. Players must enter and leave the field of play via the 'substitution zone' that is marked on the pitch in front of the team's benches
- Kick-ins - In order to restart the game after a ball has gone out of play the ball is kicked back into play from the touchline and from corners. The ball must be placed stationary on the touchline and the feet of the player taking the kick-in must not cross the line
- The 4 second rule - For kick-ins, free kicks, goal clearances and corner kicks the player in possession of the ball has 4 seconds to restart play which the referee will count with their fingers in the air. If play isn't restarted within four seconds an indirect free kick will be awarded to the opposing team. The goalkeeper is not allowed to control the ball for more than 4 seconds in his own half
- The 5m rule - Players are required to keep 5m from the player in possession of the ball on free kicks, corners, goal clearances, kick-ins and penalties
- Goalkeepers - Goalkeepers are allowed to come out of and players are allowed to go into the penalty area. A goal clearance must be thrown out and the goalkeeper cannot touch the ball again until it has crossed into the opponents half or a member of the opposition has touched the ball
- Accumulated fouls - Each team will be allowed to give away 5 direct free kicks in each half, then on the sixth foul a direct kick is awarded to the opposing team and the defending team is not allowed to position any players (other than the goal keeper) between the ball and the goal. The kick may be taken from the 10m mark or, if the foul was committed closer to the goal than the 10m mark, then the kick may be taken from the position where the foul took place
- Real time - A Futsal match consists of two twenty minute halves that are played real-time which means the clock stops whenever the ball goes out of play
- Time outs - Each team is allowed a one-minute time out in each half lasting 60 seconds
- Sliding Tackles - Sliding tackles are not allowed in Futsal but players ARE allowed to slide on the pitch, for example to stop the ball from going out of play. For a player sliding to be considered an offence, the tackler's opponent must have possession of the ball. Referees will not give a foul for a slide if the opponent does not have possession of the ball
- Red Cards - If a player is sent off then the team to which the player belongs must remain with 4 players until either two minutes have passed, or the opposition have scored a goal



Understanding the Laws of the Game (continued)

In an International Futsal match there are three referees and one timekeeper whose responsibilities are outlined below:

First referee

The first referee is responsible for controlling the match and has full authority to enforce the laws of the game. They will keep a record of the match and provide the appropriate authorities with a match report if required and will act as a timekeeper if one isn't present.

Second referee

The second referee is also permitted to use his whistle to stop the game for any infringement of the laws and will ensure that the substitutions are carried out correctly.

Third referee

The third referee assists the timekeeper and the other referees by recording details of the game on the match report sheet such as times of goals, stoppages and the number of

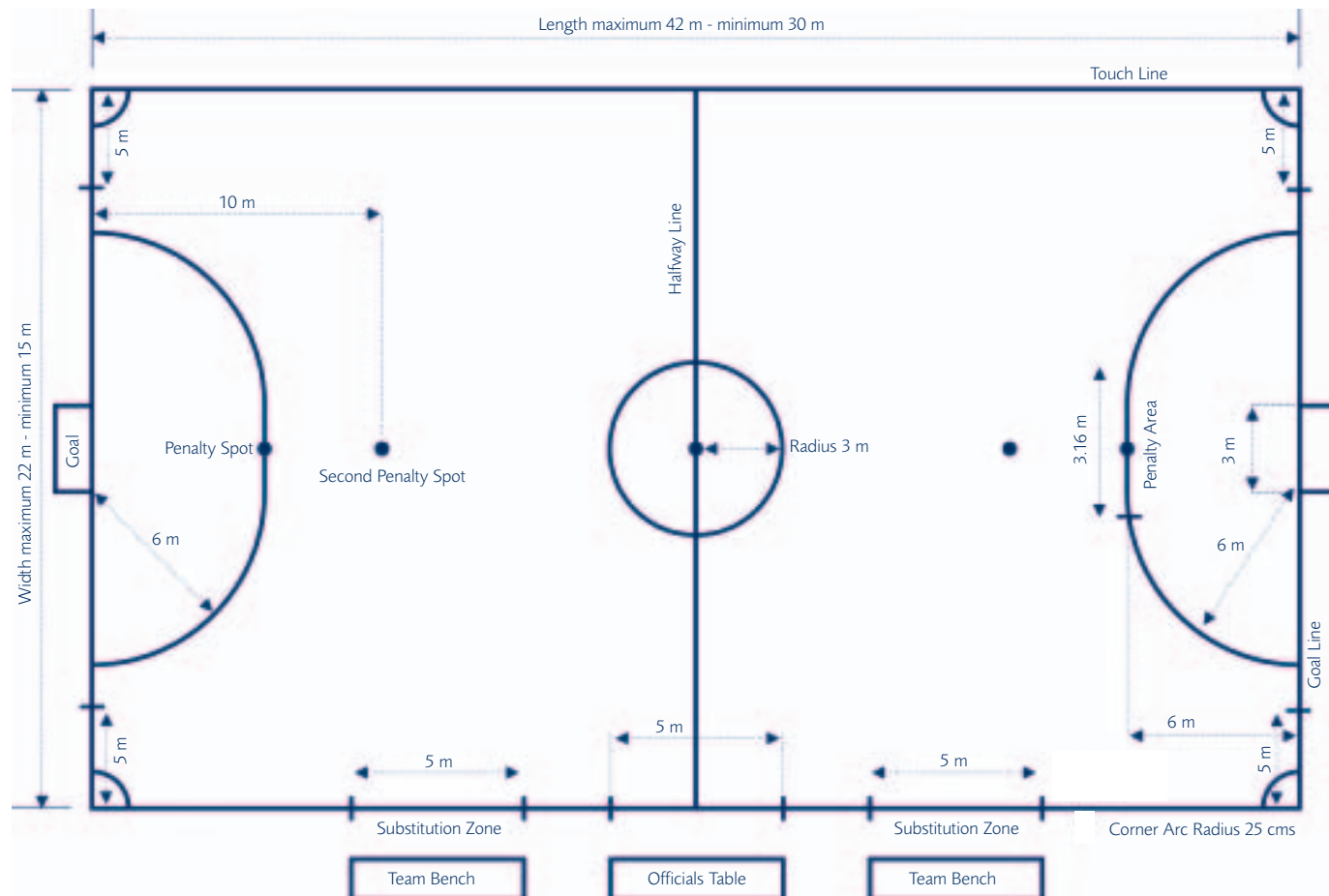
accumulated fouls. The third referee should also try to control the bench area for the two teams, only allowing the coach to stand a give instruction to the players.

Timekeeper

The timekeeper is responsible for controlling the duration of the match by starting and stopping the clock when the ball goes in and out of play and the match is stopped by the referees. They also control the one-minute timeout and the two-minute effective time punishment period when a player has been sent off.

Illustration of the Pitch

If official dimensions are required, you are advised to use metric measurements.



Goalpost Safety Guidelines

The Football Association, along with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and Safety Executive and the British Standards Institution, would like to draw your attention to the following guidelines for the safe use of goalposts. Too many serious injuries and fatalities have occurred in recent years as a result of unsafe or incorrect use of goalposts. Safety is always of paramount importance and everyone in football must play their part to prevent similar incidents occurring in the future.

1. For safety reasons goalposts of any size (including those which are portable and not installed permanently at a pitch or practice field) must always be anchored securely to the ground.

- portable goalposts must be secured as per the manufacturer's instructions
- under no circumstances should children or adults be allowed to climb on, swing or play with the structure of the goalposts
- particular attention is drawn to the fact that if not properly assembled and secured, portable goals may overturn
- regular inspections of goalposts must be carried out to check that they are properly maintained

2. Portable goalposts should not be left in place after use. They should be dismantled and removed to a place of secure storage.

3. Nets should only be secured by plastic hooks or tape and not by metal cup hooks. Any metal cup hooks should be removed and replaced. New goalposts should not be purchased if they include metal cup hooks that cannot be replaced.

4. Goalposts which are 'homemade' should NOT be used and under no circumstances should goalposts be altered from their original size and construction or extra fittings welded onto the equipment. These have been the cause of a number of deaths and injuries.

5. There is no BS/CEN or PAS standard for wooden goals and it is unlikely that wooden will pass a load or stability test. The FA recommends that wooden goals should be replaced when necessary with compliant metal or plastic goalposts.

For reference, you should note that European and British Standards exist and you should ask manufacturers if their goals conform with these before purchasing new goals.

The FA have produced a Goalpost Safety Leaflet, if you would like to receive copies for your organisation, please send an e-mail with your name, address and the quantity of leaflets you require to Emma.clark@thefa.com

In addition to the leaflet, The FA together with representatives from the industry, sports governing bodies and government have prepared guidelines for pitch users and pitch providers together with technical parameters for goalpost manufacturers. Full copies of these can be downloaded from our website at www.thefa.com/grassroots

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