

Walking Football: Guidelines

Walking Football is recognised by the Football Association of Wales as an inclusive small sided format of the game. Walking Football is recognised as an opportunity to maximise participation for all groups and to encourage sustained participation for players of all abilities.

The below guidelines are set out to enable a consistent development of Walking Football across Wales and to enable competition to be organised where desired. If a competition is being organised the organiser should define clear rules (within the scope of these guidelines) to the participants prior to the start of the competition.

The Football Association of Wales recognises the recreational nature of Walking Football and encourages flexibility to provide an appropriate and enjoyable experience for all players.

1. Team Size

- 1.1 Walking Football is recognised as a small sided format of the game.
- 1.2 A team size of 5 or 6 a-side is recommended.
- 1.3 The team size can be altered based on the number of participants relative to the size of the playing area.

2. Ball Size

- 2.1 A size 4 or 5 football is recommended.
- 2.2 The ball shall be appropriate to the age group and ability level of the players.
- 2.3 A futsal ball can be utilised on a suitable playing surface (i.e. indoor hard court).

3. Pitch Dimensions

- 3.1 Walking Football may be played on pitches with or without barriers, indoors or outdoors. Any flat, consistent, free of trip hazard playing surface may be used. Ensure players have foot wear suitable to playing surface.
- 3.2 The playing area must be rectangular.
- 3.3 The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line.
- 3.4 The size of the pitch should be suitable to the number of players participating.

For competition purposes:

- 3.5 The playing area should be clearly marked with lines.
- 3.6 The playing area is divided into two halves by the halfway line.
- 3.7 A centre mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line.
- 3.8 A semi-circle penalty area is defined at each end of the pitch - the extremities of these semi-circles should reach the goal line, barrier or wall regardless of whether or not the goal posts encroach onto the playing area.
- 3.9 A penalty mark should be drawn a defined distance from the midpoint between the goal posts and equidistant from them.

3.10 Where no penalty mark exists penalty kicks can be taken from the edge of the penalty area - midpoint between the goal posts and equidistant from them.

4. Goals

- 4.1 A goal should be placed at either end of the playing area at the midpoint of each goal line.
- 4.2 The goal size should be relative to the size of the pitch, number and ability of players - both goals must be the same size.
- 4.3 It is recommended that a 12ft x 6ft Mini Goal or a 3m x 2m Futsal Goal be utilised.
- 4.4 The goals may be portable but they must be anchored securely to the ground as per manufacturer guidelines and Health and Safety requirements.

5. Substitutes

- 5.1 Any number of substitutes may be used at any time (Rolling substitutes).
- 5.2 Players may re-enter the game (repeat substitutions).
- 5.3 Substitutions should take place at a suitable break in play.

6. Kick Off

- 6.1 Is taken in the centre of the playing area to start the game and after a goal has been scored.
- 6.2 The opposition must be 3 yards away from where the ball is placed.
- 6.3 In recreational play - the game can be restarted from the goalkeeper after a goal has been scored.

7. Ball In and Out of Play and the Method of Scoring

- 7.1 Laws 9 (Ball in and out of play) and 10 (The method of scoring) apply to Walking Football.

8. Off-Side

- 8.1 There is no off-side (Law 11) in Walking Football.

9. Kick In

- 9.1 Although Law 15 (The Throw In) applies this should be taken as 'kick in' by placing the ball on the touchline.
- 9.2 Kick ins are only applicable where it is deemed practical and necessary. Where pitches are indoors/arenas/sports halls the ball may be played off the touch line wall.
- 9.3 The ball is dead if it is stationary outside the touchlines (in netting, baggage) and becomes the Goalkeeper's possession of the team who were NOT last to touch the ball.

10. Corner Kicks

- 10.1 Law 17 (The Corner Kick) applies to corner kicks except the opposition must be at least three yards away.
- 10.2 Corners kicks are only applicable where it is deemed practical and necessary. Where pitches are indoors/arenas/sports halls the ball may be played off the goal line back wall and no corner kick is necessary.
- 10.3 The ball is dead if it is stationary behind the goal line (in netting, baggage) and becomes the Goalkeeper's possession.

11. Free Kicks

- 11.1 Law 12 (Fouls and Misconduct) applies to free kicks although they are all indirect and the opposition must be at least three yards away.
- 11.2 No sliding tackles are allowed at any time.

12. Height Restriction

- 12.1 No height restrictions apply for the ball when in play.
- 12.2 A height restriction rule can be introduced if appropriate and agreed prior to play.

13. Goalkeepers

- 13.1 Can handle the ball in their goal area and there are no restrictions on the number of steps they may take holding the ball.
- 13.2 The Goalkeeper cannot leave the goal area - Should they do so the opposing team receives a direct free kick from the penalty mark.
- 13.3 When handling the ball in the goal area can either throw the ball under arm or kick the ball from the floor - Should a goalkeeper throw the ball with an over arm action a direct free kick is awarded to the opposing team from the penalty mark.
- 13.4 Players can pass the ball back to their own goalkeeper, for the goalkeeper to handle the ball.
- 13.5 A Goalkeeper cannot score direct from the penalty area unless the ball has struck or deflected off another player on the pitch.

14. Goal-Kicks

- 14.1 Goal kicks are taken when the ball crosses the goal line after last being touched by the attacking team.
- 14.2 Goalkeepers may take the goal-kick from the floor from any position within the penalty area or restart play with an underarm throw.
- 14.3 Goal kicks are only applicable where it is deemed practical and necessary. Where pitches are indoors/arenas/sports halls the ball may be played off the goal line back wall and no goal kick is necessary.
- 14.4 The ball is dead if it is stationary behind the goal line (in netting, baggage) and becomes the Goalkeeper's possession.

15. Players in the Penalty Area

- 15.1 No outfield players are allowed in the penalty area during open play.
- 15.2 Where a defending player deliberately enters the penalty area a direct free kick is awarded to the opposing team from the penalty mark.
- 15.3 Where an attacking player deliberately enters the penalty area the ball is awarded the opposing goalkeeper to restart play in the usual manner.

16. Walking

- 16.1 All players must not run or jog at any time during the game.
- 16.2 In the act of moving a player must have one foot on the ground at all times.
- 16.3 If a player is penalised for jogging or running the opposition is awarded a free kick (indirect) from the position the offence started.

17. Match Duration

- 17.2 The match duration can be set as required it is recommended the minimum match duration is 10 minutes (two halves of 5 minutes).
- 17.1 The maximum match duration should be 60 minutes (two halves of 30 minutes).
- 17.2 The match duration should be appropriate for the ability level of players participating.
- 17.3 In competition - at the completion of the usual match duration – the competition organiser should define the method of deciding a winner; either extra time or penalty kicks or a combination of both should be utilised. This procedure should be made clear to participants prior to the start of the competition.

18. Players of Mini Football Age

- 18.1 Any Walking Football competitions organised incorporating players of Mini Football age (Academic Years 1 – 6) must be organised in a format appropriate to the FA Wales Mini Football Regulations. Guidance should be sought from the relevant Area Association.