



# WALKING FOOTBALL

## SOCIAL GUIDELINES MADE SIMPLE

Ver February 2024

# With and without Goalkeepers

PLAY SAFER - PLAY LONGER







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## INTRODUCTION

In principle, the normal Laws of Football apply to Walking Football. There are though, some key differences and we've developed this guide to help players and referees understand the Social format played without Goalkeepers. We hope this guide highlights the significant differences from competition.

This guide does not contain information on every Law, refer to the full Laws of the Game for that.

Instead, it highlights what we think referees and players need to know in order to make the game safe and enjoyable.

## THE FIELD OF PLAY

Walking football should be played on either grass, artificial turf or, if indoors, wood.

The penalty area is a semi-circle of 3 metres radius from the centre of the goal line. The penalty spot is located at the halfway line (centre spot).

The distance between the goal posts can be between three metres and five metres. The height of the crossbar can be between 1m - 1.5 metres. (depending on venue)

## PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTES

Matches can be 5, 6 or 7-a-side.

Teams can have a maximum of 5 substitutes.

Substitutions can take place either when play has stopped or during play (it depends on the rules of the competition).

**SOCIAL-MIXED Teams comprise of 3 Women/3 Men on PITCH at all times**





## What is Social Walking Football

Social Walking Football is exactly what the name says, it is tailored to suit players of all ages and abilities with it being a much more relaxed, fun and safe environment for all players.

- ❖ Low Impact
- ❖ Slower paced
- ❖ Relaxing Environment
- ❖ Fun, Fitness, Friendship

## Who is Social Walking Football for

- ❖ Players NOT seeking competitive Walking Football and playing the game at a more less intense level
- ❖ New (and inexperienced) players to the game, existing and former players, wanting a more relaxed version of the game. This can include established players with disability, injury, ongoing pain management and those who prefer the more 'user friendly' nature of this wonderful game.
- ❖ New players needing more time on the ball to develop their skills and improve their confidence
- ❖ Players simply seeking a low impact, slower paced version of the game in a fun, safe and social environment





## SOCIAL FIELD SIZE

### Social Field Sizes (averages)

- ❖ Field setup in Walking Football is determined by amount of players on a regulation football pitch. On average, the size varies of from 30m x 16m to 35m x 25m, sizes, which are ideal for Social Walking Football with no goalkeepers. A line or (flat markers) across the field will indicate the 'shooting' or 'Shot' zone. Players can only score within that zone.
- ❖ The 10 metre measurement is taken from the goal line in each half. Goals size are 2m x1m with Goal Area being a 3 metre semi-circle. No players allowed in Goal Area, except when taking a goal-kick, (goal clearance) the kicker must leave the goal area before receiving the ball again.

## GOAL SIZES WITH NO GOALKEEPERS

- ❖ Goal Sizes are at the discretion of the Program Hub administrator. Best practice is to enhance player experience by increasing 'scoring moments'. Goal Size of 2m x 1m are ideal with a 'no go zone' of 3m diameter semi circle for the penalty area. Players are not permitted to enter the goal area during match play, however, they are permitted to enter for a goal clearance only.
- ❖ Walking Football is an adaptable format of our sport of which can be facilitated on a variety of surfaces including football pitches, green space, indoor centres, tennis courts, etc.
- ❖ Program Hub administrators should undertake a pitch/venue/surface risk assessment before commencing play.





## GENERAL RULES

- ❖ Tackles only face to face in a non-aggressive manner
- ❖ Ball height is the Crossbar of the relevant Goals
- ❖ No Contact (however, we do anticipate minimal contact) even in social keep it minimal
- ❖ No Leaning into or shoulder charging a player (result is a free-kick against offender)
- ❖ PLAY THE BALL - NOT THE PLAYER
- ❖ TOTAL RESPECT TO ALL TEAM MATES, OPPOSITION & OFFICIALS AT ALL TIMES
- ❖ PLAY WITHIN YOUR OWN CAPABILITIES
- ❖ No Lunges, No tackles from side or behind, tackle only FACE TO FACE and only when safe to do so
- ❖ PENALTY KICK TAKEN FROM CENTRE SPOT with all players behind the ball
- ❖ **SOCIAL-MIXED Teams comprise of 3 Women/3 Men on PITCH at all times**

RULES KEEP PLAYERS SAFE



## DETERMINING THE OUTCOME OF A MATCH

A goal is scored when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line, between the goalposts and under the crossbar, unless it has been deliberately thrown, carried or propelled by the hand or arm of a player of the attacking side.

## PHYSICAL CONTACT

Anything other than minimal contact must be penalised.

Players cannot slide tackle, tackle from behind, heel or ankle tap from the back, or side, or back into players when in possession.

## FREE KICKS

All free kicks are indirect. From an indirect free-kick, a goal can only be scored if it is played by another player first.

A free kick is given if a player commits offences in a manner considered by the referee to be careless, reckless or using excessive force.



**Opponents of the team taking the kick off must be at least three metres from the ball until it is in play. This also applies to Free Kicks, Kick-ins, Corners, Goal Kicks and Penalty Kicks.**



## START AND RE-START OF PLAY

The team that wins the toss decides which goal it will attack in the first period of the game. The other team takes the kick-off to start the game.

A goal may not be scored directly from the kick-off.

All players must be in their own half, except the player taking kick-off.

The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves.

The kicker may not touch the ball a second time until it has touched another player.



**Opponents of the team taking the kick off must be at least three metres from the ball until it is in play**

## PLAYERS EQUIPMENT

SHINPADS  
are  
Compulsory

### SHINPADS

Shin pads are compulsory in All formats of Walking Football. Players will not be permitted to play in tournaments without Shinpads. NO SHINPADS NO PLAY!

JEWELLERY  
IS NOT  
ALLOWED

### JEWELLERY

A player must not use equipment or wear anything that is deemed dangerous by the Referee/Facilitator or Competition Administrator.

All items of jewellery (necklaces, rings, bracelets, earrings, leather bands, rubber bands etc) are forbidden and must be removed. Using tape to cover jewellery is not permitted.

*Reference: FIFA LOTG Law 4*



Players 'not walking' ie running will be penalised with an indirect free kick against them and could also be sin-binned for 2 minutes after 4 offences of running.

**4 running TEAM offences will result in a PENALTY KICK**  
**This ruling for repetitive runners /offenders will be applied at all**  
**future events hosted by Football Queensland** as of 10-01-2024



## Guidelines to playing Social WF

### Guidelines to Social

- ❖ Players are not allowed to enter 3 metre semi-circle (except for a Goal kick) or to retrieve the ball if it has become stationary during the game in the goal area
- ❖ Entering the goal area to prevent a goalscoring opportunity will result in a Penalty Kick (see Penalty Kick details below)
- ❖ All goal kicks (goal clearance) are taken within the 3 metre Semi-circle and within 6 seconds of the ball being placed by kicker.
- ❖ Player taking the goal kick must leave the goal area immediately and cannot receive the ball back while in the goal area.
- ❖ Player can receive the ball back from first receiver (different to 3rd player in competitive) and only IF player has left the Goal Area
- ❖ Shooting or (Shot) Zones are marked 10 metres from goal line (as in pic on Page 2)
- ❖ Goals cannot be scored outside of these (Shot) zones.
- ❖ A goal clearance will be given against teams scoring from outside the marked 10 metre goal area

Tip of the day! Play Safe at **ALL TIMES! ALWAYS!**



## PENALTY KICK

### Taking a Penalty Kick - No Keepers

- ❖ Ball placed on Centre Spot
- ❖ ALL Players either in line with or behind the Centre/Penalty Spot
- ❖ ALL Players a minimum 3 metres away from the Centre/Penalty Spot
- ❖ Nominated kicker only to take the penalty kick
- ❖ Penalty kicker to take kick with a One metre approach
- ❖ One direct shot at Goals only
- ❖ If scored, game resumes from the Centre/Penalty Spot
- ❖ if shot goes wide, a goal clearance from within the Goal Area

At a penalty kick, players have to stand:

- ❖ Inside the pitch
- ❖ Outside the penalty area
- ❖ Behind or to the side of the penalty mark (in this case, the centre spot)
- ❖ At least 3 metres from the ball



Why does Social have Rules?

RULES KEEP PLAYERS SAFE!!

There is an assumption that Social Walking Football is in fact very social and therefore does not require rules. This could not be further from the truth, in fact, social formats require all rules to be strictly applied to maintain the ongoing safety of each and every player.

Accordingly, we have removed goalkeepers from Social Format for that reason alone and introduced this format **WITH SAFETY OF PLAYERS IN MIND** (please note some venues) have played this format for over 3 years now and it tends to get more laughter and fun from the participants.

This format was initiated by Football Australia in 2019 and is implemented at all FQ & Interstate Come & Try programs since.

During that time FQ have also introduced shot zones and penalty kicks from Centre Spot

BENEFITS of Social Rules

#### Benefits & Safety

- ❖ Players who do not want to play in Goals
- ❖ A format where there are no "hard Shots" allowed at all
- ❖ Players having more goal scoring opportunities
- ❖ New players to the game should be encouraged by all players taking part
- ❖ New players should be allowed more time on the ball to give them more confidence to continue playing
- ❖ PLAYERS SHOULD BE ACROSS ALL Laws of the Game
- ❖ Players not wanting this level of Walking Football should either play to these recommendations or consider playing at a more competitive level of the game, whether that be in Walking Football or not.

**Social Walking Football with No Goalkeepers is a SAFE GAME FOR ALL!**

**With Goalkeepers - NO Excessive force in shots and tackles permitted**



## PLAYING TO THE RULES

### CONSISTENCY

Players consistently abiding by the LOTG throughout each match make things much easier for officials and other players around them. Please always consider others!!

- ❖ Players playing sportingly and within the laws will require less control than one where players are stretching the laws to their extreme through competitive nature. We recommend they do their best to curb this competitive behaviour. **SOCIAL WF is NOT for competitive minded players!!!**
- ❖ Players consistently disregarding the rules of Social Walking Football will firstly be sin-binned and asked to stop their behaviour. If they continue their unruly play they will be sent off. The event organiser may ask them to leave the venue.
- ❖ Violent conduct, excessive foul play or excessive displays of dissent must always be acted upon in a positive manner in order to maintain match control



Referees ensure Player Safety

Regulating rules like non-contact, running and of course excessive and aggressive play while maintaining players safety is of the utmost importance in Walking Football from first to last kick of the game.

- ❖ Players must firstly respect that refereeing is not an easy task
- ❖ Officials must be proactive in calling and regulating contact before it leads to problems
- ❖ Players must play the ball and not the player
- ❖ Anytime a player moves their arms to ward off an opponent the official may call a foul
- ❖ Be vocal, preventative and assured in your action
- ❖ Set the standards from the first whistle in all walking football formats

## THE GOAL CLEARANCE

A goal clearance takes place when the whole of the ball, having last touched a player of the attacking team, passes over the goal line, either on the ground or in the air – and a goal isn't scored.

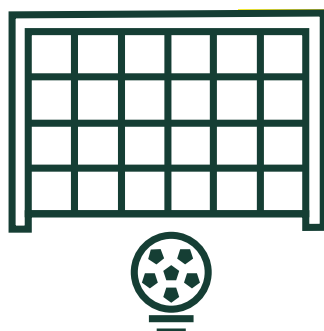
To take a goal clearance, ( NO KEEPER) the kicker kicks the ball from a stationary position within the penalty area. The kicker must leave the area immediately after releasing the ball.

The kicker cannot receive the ball back while in the goal area

He can receive the ball upon leaving the area (different to competitive with 3rd man to play ball)

If kicker receives the ball back while in the goal area, it is a Penalty Kick

Where Goalkeepers are used, the same rules from the Competitive LOTG are APPLIED!



**A goal cannot be scored directly from a goal clearance**

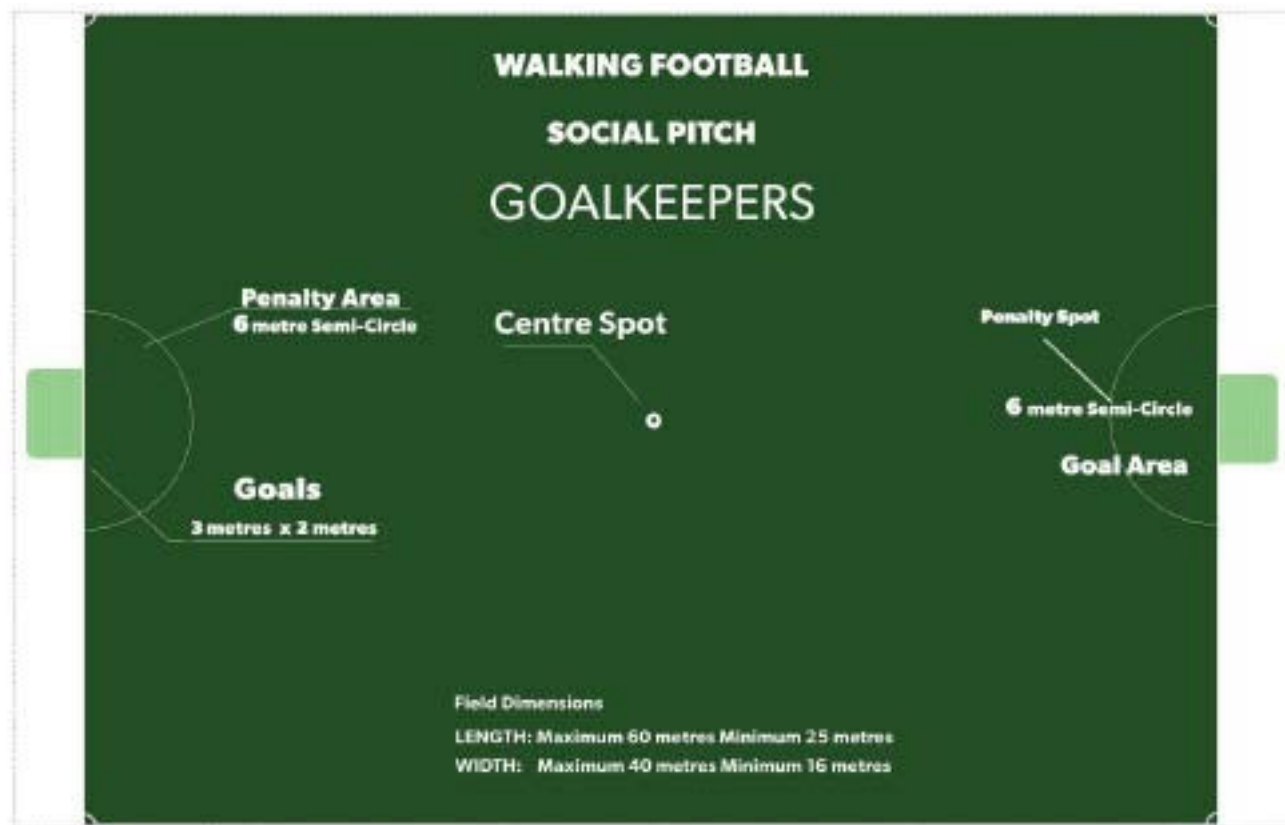


SOCIAL WALKING FOOTBALL PITCH



Depending on numbers, fields can vary from 30 metres x 16 metres, up to 60 metres x 25 metres

**No Excessive shots or tackles permitted in Social with Goalkeepers**





## REFEREE SIGNALS

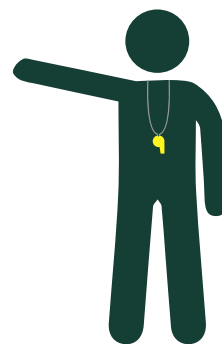
Signalling is an effective way in which referees can communicate their decisions to players.



PENALTY KICK



CORNER KICK



MAIN ADVANTAGE



MAIN ADVANTAGE 2



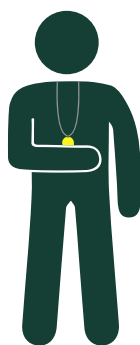
INDIRECT FREE KICK



GOAL KICK



SIX SECOND COUNT



NOT WALKING



TACKLE FROM BEHIND



EXCEEDING HEIGHT RESTRICTION

## THE CORNER KICK

A corner kick is given when the whole of the ball, having last touched a player of the defending team, passes over the goal line, either on the ground or in the air, and a goal isn't scored.

A goal may NOT BE scored directly from a corner kick.

Opponents must remain at least 3m from the ball until it is in play

Where the playing area is surrounded by barricades, there are no corner kicks. When the ball leaves the field of play, play is restarted with a goal clearance, by the goalkeeper whose half of the field the ball was in when leaving the field of play.





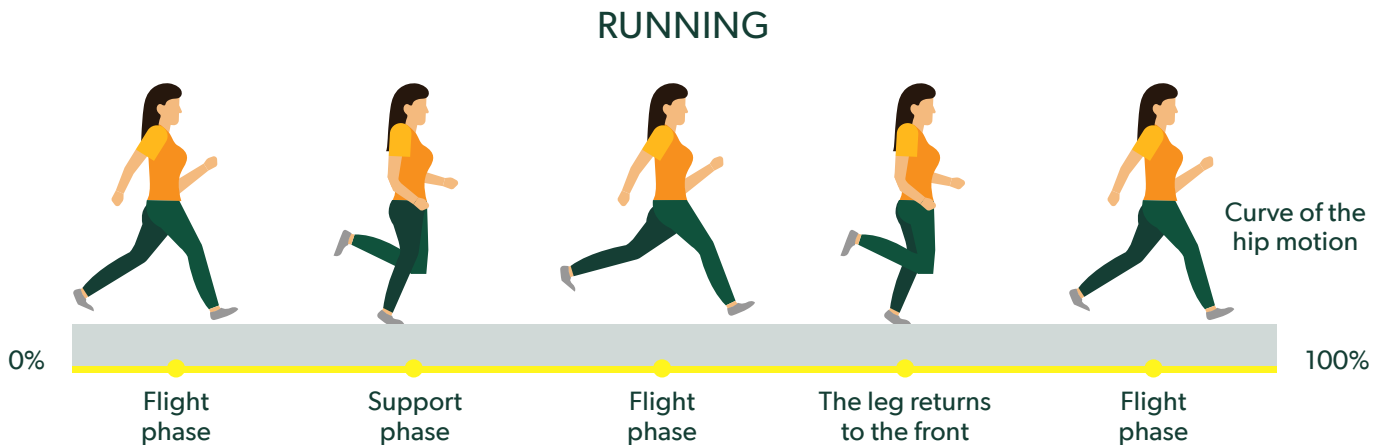
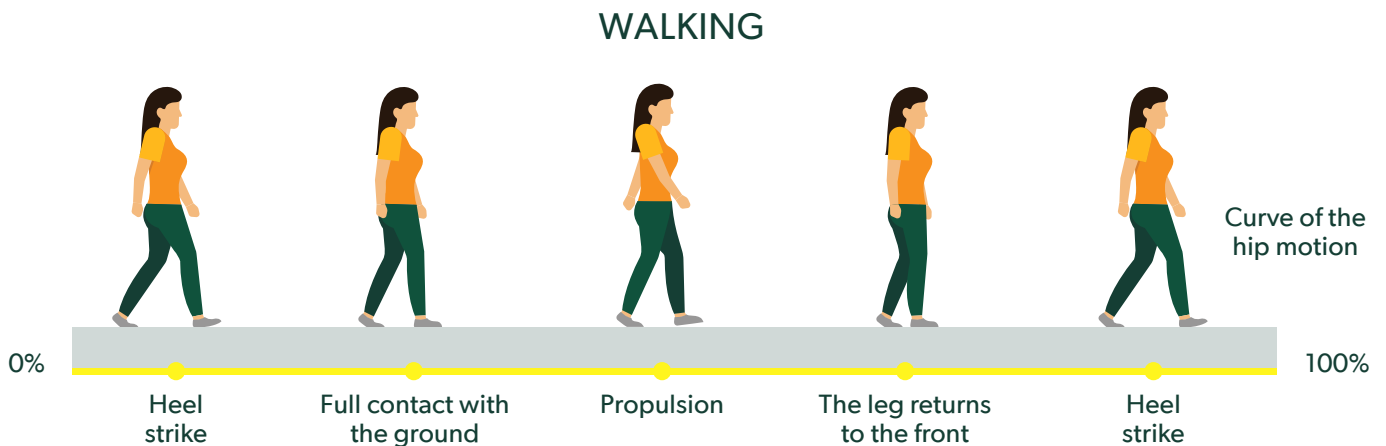
## WALKING

Walking is defined as 'always having at least one foot in contact with the ground'.

A walking action will generally be determined as the progression of steps throughout which there is constantly at least one foot in contact with the ground; both are momentarily grounded with the advancing leg straightened i.e. heel to toe action.

The referee will award an indirect free kick against any player who is not walking, unless there is a clear attacking opportunity for the team in possession, where advantage can be played and the offender sanctioned once play has stopped, or the advantage has not accrued.

A player who is penalised three times for a walking offence will receive a yellow card and temporarily dismissed from play for a duration of between two and five minutes.



## WALKING OFFENCES

We see many players consistently 'not-walking' and gaining advantage from doing so. While it's difficult to identify at times, we will be asking referees to stamp this out as much as possible, not only at major events, but also at weekly programs.

Unfortunately, some weekly programs do not have the luxury of WF Referees, however, it is the responsibility of facilitators and organisers at these venues & clubs to ensure the safety of all players on a more consistent basis by overseeing the game in a safe and controlled manner.





