**A to Z of soccer terms**

**Soccer or football, has its own unique language, learn here unfamiliar terms and test your understanding of some well known but often mis understood phrases.**

**angles** - most often used for goal keepers, "narrowing the angles"

**angle of the pass** - the direction of a pass in relation to defender, attacker

**angle of run** - the direction of the run from a supporting player

**back four** - often used to describe the defensive line, e.g. right and left back and two central defenders

**ball** - the spherical object that the game revolves around!

**ball watching** - describes a soccer player who is not aware of what's going on around them as they are more intent on focusing on the ball rather than players and situations building around them

**blind side** - playing the ball to the opposite side of where an opponent is focused

**block tackle** - strong frontal tackle

**box** - the penalty area / 18 yard box where strikers do the damage

**breakaway** - counter attack where rapid movement is made into forward space. Counter attacking soccer is a strategy employed by teams when playing away from home.

**calling** - communication between soccer players e.g. give him a call

**channels** - area approximately 15 yard from the touchline

**chip** - short lofted pass or shot that gets the ball in the air

**closing down** - players should advance to an opponent with the ball in an attempt to stall play or win back possession

**commit** - getting your opponent to commit to a course of action that your player can then do the opposite too

**conditioned play** - where an artificial restriction is placed upon players so that they are forced to perform a specific technique, skill or tactic

**control (ball)** - bringing the ball under control by cushioning its arrival at a player with a surface on the body

**control (play)** - possession and tempo are the key to having control of the soccer game. Oh yes, and a couple of goals!

**corner** - dead ball restart situation where a player touches the ball last and it travels over their own goal line.

**cover** - defensively where a second soccer player provides cover to another player. This follows the defensive soccer principles of first and second defender.

**cross** - a long pass often in the air that is played diagonally from the flanks or channels into the box

**cross, inswinging** - a cross which arcs from the center of the pitch to the goal area

**cross, outswinger** - a cross which arcs from the by line out to the center of the soccer pitch

**cross, far post** - long cross from a corner that misses out the penalty box and aims for the furthest post

**cross, near post** - shortish cross aimed at the nearest post

**decoy run** - where a soccer player executes a run to draw attention from the intended play. Also known as creating space.

**defenders** - players who should stop, hold up and minimize any attempts on goal

**dribbling** - the art of close control while moving with the soccer ball at the feet

**dummy** - similar to decoy, any trick, technique or skill that unbalances or confuses an opponent and can send them the wrong way in order to gain an advantage

**early ball** - simple phase of soccer play where an immediate pass is played to a team mate at the earliest opportunity, often to exploit space

**fakeover** - technique where a player looks as if they are to take the ball from their team mate who is in possession but they don't and just run past each other

**feint** - an action that attempts to confuse and trick an opponent e.g. step over, scissors, Beardsley, Ronaldhino, Ronaldo, Cryff all have feints named after them.

**first touch** - vital skill of any soccer player is to be able to get the ball under control and set up their next option, often known as their first touch

**flank** - the 10 - 15 yards from the side lines, often where crosses come in from

**flight** - referred to the flight of the soccer ball

**free kick** - dead ball restart situation when play has been stopped by the referee for an infringement of the laws of the game

**give and go** - were a player passes the ball and them moves to receive the ball back from the player they played it to also known as wall pass or 1 - 2

**goal** - something every team needs to focus on, whether its defending or scoring!

**goal side** - the area between ball and the goal when defending

**half volley** - when a player volleys (using their laces)an upward bouncing ball that has just landed in front of them

**heading** - using the head to direct the balls flight

**high press** - tactical deployment of the soccer team where all players apply immediate pressure to the opponents when possession is conceded, often in opponents half

**hollywood ball** - an ambitious pass that is only seen in the movies!

**instep** - upper surface of the foot, when coaching players it's the laces part of the boot!

**inswinger** - where the flight of the ball arcs towards the target

**jockeying** - delaying and holding up play, not diving in with a tackle but staying up right and preventing the advancement of the opponent

**killer pass** - a perfectly timed and weighted pass through a defense on to the foot of a team mate

**late tackle** - an unfair challenge, where a soccer player commits a tackle after an opponent has already played the ball

**line (holding the)** - defensive term where the defenders keep an imaginary line to catch opponents offside

**line of recovery** - when a player is beaten, this is the line on which they retreat back towards their own goal to get goal side of the attack

**lofted pass** - a high pass executed by kicking the bottom half of the ball sending it into the air

**mark** - to cover a player who may or may not have the ball, prevent a player from receiving the ball

**man to man marking** - a system that can be deployed where individuals are given specific tasks of marking individuals

**narrowing the angle** - closing down a player so that the angle they have to shoot or pass is reduced significantly

**offside trap** - when a defender(s) acting on a common understanding or trigger moves forward in a line to catch one or more opponents offside

**off the ball** - movement of players, to create space and provide options

**one touch soccer** - players move the ball quickly and immediately when they receive it

**one two** - see give and go

**outswinger** - when a ball is played but curls away from the target

**pace** - the speed of a player or ball

**pass** - technique to move the ball from one player to another. Various techniques apply, chip, half volley, push, lofted etc.

**penetration** - a phaseof play where a team breaks through the opponents defense

**peripheral vision** - being able to see wider than just what's direct in front vision

**pitch** - the lovely green turf, where soccer should be played

**play on the break** - counter attacking soccer

**play maker** - a designated player who has good vision, excellent passing ability, can open up defense lines and create opportunities

**plyometrics** - drills and exercises that develop explosiveness in players

**pressure training** - a method of training that requires rapid repetition for a limited time

**receiving** - technique required to control an incoming ball

**running with the ball** - player in possession exploits space by carrying the ball quickly and efficiently, different to dribbling a player must beat an opponent

**save** - when the goal keeper or defender prevents a goal!

**scouts** - quite often volunteers that watch local junior and youth soccer for professional clubs to eye the talent and recommend them for academy trials

**service** - used to describe whether or not the attackers / strikers as getting quality balls played into them e.g. "attackers are just not getting the service!"

**shadow play** - playing without opponents

**shielding** - keeping possession and control of the ball by using the body to come between the ball and the opponent

**show** - when a player makes themself available

**sliding tackle** - when a defending player goes to ground and uses an extended leg to win the ball

**space** - creating , exploiting and running into space

**square ball** - a ball that is played from one side of the pitch to another, laterally

**stretching the play** - making the pitch big, wide and deep

**support play** - team mates move into and create space and options for the player in possession

**sweeper** - specific role on the pitch where a player will sit just in front or behind the defense

**switching play** - changing the angle of attack

**tackle** - a challenge to win the ball off an opponent

**taking a player on** - when a player in possession runs at a defending player with the aim of going past them

**target man** - a striker / attacker (often big and shields the ball well) who should always be available for a pass from the midfield who can then hold up the play until reinforcements arrive

**thirds** - the pitch can be segmented roughly into a defensive, a midfield and attacking third all of which are approximately 35 yards (give or take a couple)

**through pass** - a pass which is played between two defenders for an attacker to run onto

**travel team** - serious youth / junior soccer where teams regularly play out of state games. US term

**trials** - term used to describe a process of evaluation on a players ability and suitability for a team e.g. "we are holding trials to bring in some new players."

**turning an opponent** - when running at an opponent, the use of feints and fakes to trick the opponent into turning or by pushing the ball past them and causing them to turn

**volley** - striking the ball before it lands, difficult skill to master but very powerful

**wall** - line of players that organise themselves to prevent a direct attack on goal from a dead ball situation

**wall pass** - see give and go

**weight of the pass** - key ingredient to a perfect pass, the pace or power of

**wide players** - often called wingers who play near the touch line

**work rate** - players and teams contribution to the game

**wrong side** - when and opponent is allowed to get between the defender and the goal

**zonal marking / defense** - a system where players have a specific area that they have to cover