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Introduction

What do you need English for Football for?

Read about five people who speak English in their football lives. These people will feature in the different chapters of the book. Then answer the questions about yourself.



Name: Takuma Ihara
Job title: Professional football player
Profile: Professional footballer for five years, moved from Japan to play for a club in Germany; possible transfer to other leagues in Europe
Biggest challenge in English: To follow the coach's instructions through the interpreter

Name: Pierre Essomba
Job title: Student, youth footballer
Profile: Attending Douala football academy in Cameroon; finishes next year and wants to play in the Premier League
Biggest challenge in English: As a native speaker of French, English pronunciation is quite difficult



Name: Helena da Silva
Job title: Talent scout
Profile: Former professional striker from Brazil, played in Europe and in the US; now working for a US club looking for new talent, both male and female; based in Brazil
Biggest challenge in English: To understand the business aspects of football

Name: Steven Potter
Job title: Manager
Profile: Former professional footballer, then manager of clubs in Scotland and England; current team plays in the Premier League and European contest
Biggest challenge in English: To communicate clearly and understandably to his international team



Name: Natasha Rebič
Job title: Blogger on #mygametoo
Profile: Amateur player and football fan, blogs about all possible aspects of football and looks to increase her subscribers
Biggest challenge in English: To be able to write in good English using all the football jargon

Over to you:

Name:

Job title:

Profile:

Biggest challenge in English:

0.1-0.5 Now listen to the five people talking about their job.

What activities do these people do in English? Tick them in the table.

Then answer the questions about yourself. What do you want to be able to do in English?

	Takuma	Pierre	Helena	Steven	Natasha	You
Communicate with players						
Handle press conferences						
Write match reports						
Explain strategy and tactics						
Talk about strengths and skills						
Understand strategy and tactics						
Handle interviews						
Read articles						
Hold meetings with owners						

What are your goals? Write them down and keep track of your work towards them.

After studying this book, I want to be able to...



1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

On the pitch



After this unit, you will be able to...



- name the parts of a pitch correctly
- describe where things are in a stadium
- understand and talk about the positions of players
- name the different parts of football kit and equipment



KICK-OFF

The field or pitch might often be overlooked, but no play without a field. What are the important parts of a pitch? Here are some key figures. Match them to their definitions.

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 1. 100m x 64m | a. line width |
| 2. 1.5m | b. international minimum length by width |
| 3. 12cm | c. radius of centre circle |
| 4. 5.4 yds | d. depth of goal box |
| 5. 16.5m | e. width of goal |
| 6. 9m | f. height of corner flag post |
| 7. 7.32m | g. depth of penalty box |



FIRST HALF: THE PITCH

A. Understand the layout

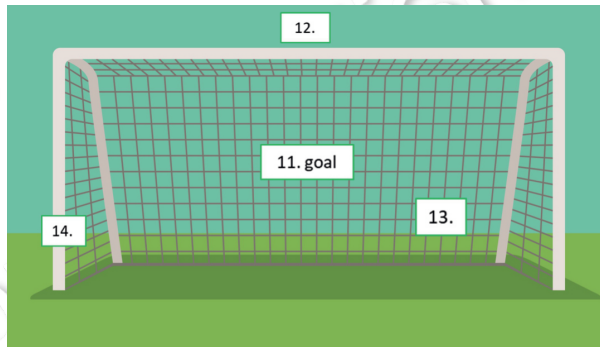
There are a number of words that will help you discuss a football match: they will help you talk about where the ball and the players are, and whether a team should be awarded a penalty or a corner.

Football or soccer is played in a stadium or park, and it is played on a field called the **pitch**. The pitch is marked by a number of lines. Let's start with the line in the middle: this is the **halfway line** which divides the pitch into two halves. In the centre of the halfway line, you can find the **centre spot** where the match is kicked off, and the **centre circle**. The rectangle of the pitch is marked by the touch lines along the long sides, also known as **sidelines**, and the shorter **goal lines**. There are also four **corners**, each marked by a quarter-circle and fitted with a **corner flag**, and the two **penalty areas or boxes**. Inside each penalty area, there is a **penalty spot** and a **six-yard box**. The penalty line, parallel to the goal line, is joined by the **penalty arc**. The **goals** on either side of the pitch are made up of two **goalposts**, the **cross-bar** and the **net**.



Task 1: Look at the words in bold in the text. Match the parts of the pitch to the blanks in the picture.

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| 1. the pitch | 11. the goal |
| 2. _____ | 12. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 13. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 14. _____ |
| 5. _____ | |
| 6. _____ | |
| 7. _____ | |
| 8. _____ | |
| 9. _____ | |
| 10. _____ | |



Task 2: Describe where the lines are on the pitch. Complete the text below with the right expressions to say where things are.

along - by - centre of - inside - in - in the middle - into - on -
on either side - where

A match is played a) _____ the pitch. The pitch is marked b) _____ a number of lines. Let's start with the line c) _____: this is the halfway line which divides the pitch d) _____ two halves. In the e) _____ the halfway line, there is the centre spot f) _____ the match is kicked off, and the centre circle. If you look at the pitch g) _____ the picture above, you can see a rectangle which is made up of the touch lines h) _____ the long sides and the shorter goal lines. Plus there are the four corners and the two penalty areas. i) _____ each penalty area, there is the penalty spot and the six-yard box. The goals j) _____ of the pitch are made up of two goalposts, the cross-bar and the net.



Task 3: Pitch quiz

1. Work in pairs.
2. One person describes one part of the pitch.
3. Your partner will guess what it is.
4. Then take turns to describe other parts of the pitch.

B. Who is in the starting eleven?

Each team starts playing on one half. This is decided before the kick-off when the referee tosses a coin, and the winning captain can choose either which half they want to play on or if they want to kick off the match.

Where are the players on the pitch?

Well, of course, there is the **goalkeeper** guarding the goal. In front of the keeper, there is the defence where the **defenders** play, usually the **centre-backs** and the **full-backs** on the left and right. Moving on, we come to the **midfield**. Depending on the formation, there can be a **defensive** and an **attacking midfield**. Again, you have **centre or central midfielders** and players known as **wingers** who play on the outer parts of the pitch. The **attack** is made up of the **forwards or strikers**. The formation you can see here is a four-four-two, in other words, four backs (or defenders), four midfielders and two strikers. If you change a player, you bring on a **substitute** from the bench. The team is led by the **captain**. Each position has a number, from number 1 to number 11. Often, these numbers are used to discuss positions.

Task 4: Match the sentence halves to describe the position of the players.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 1. The full-backs play | a. of the forwards or strikers. |
| 2. The attack is made up | b. play on the outside, one on the left, one on the right. |
| 3. The job of the goalkeeper is | c. at the back of the pitch, on the left and right. |
| 4. The central defenders play | d. to guard the goal. |
| 5. The wingers | e. in front of the goalkeeper. |

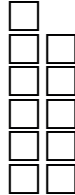


Task 5: Look at this line-up. Enter the positions of the players in the right boxes.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____
- f. _____

1.1 Task 6: Listen to Steven Potter describing the line-up of the blue team above. Put the numbers to the right positions.

- a. goalkeeper
- b. centre-back
- c. full-back
- d. winger
- e. midfielder
- f. striker



Task 7: Describe the line-up on the right: Who is playing in which position?

Can you describe the difference to the formation Steven Potter described?



Task 8: Comparing line-ups. Work in pairs.

- Your teacher will give each of you a card with a line-up, or you can select a line-up of a team for a match from the internet.
- Describe the line-up to your partner.
- Your partner draws a picture of the line-up.
- Compare how much the picture matches the line-up. Then change roles.



If you use this book in self-study, record the description on your phone and listen to it.



Half-time: Football idioms



Football is a very popular sport, so it is no surprise that many football idioms made it into everyday English. Have a look at these expressions about the pitch:

He only **watched from the sidelines** when the other students were debating.
to watch from the sidelines = to observe action instead of getting involved

They were clearly **moving the goalposts** on how to reach good grades.
to move the goalposts = to change the rules, often to make things more difficult

She was never **taking sides** when her two brothers argued.
to take sides = to support one party in an argument

They **kicked off** the project with a big meeting.
to kick off sth = to start something



SECOND HALF: FOOTBALL KIT AND EQUIPMENT

A. What are you wearing?

Although the most important piece of football equipment is the ball, to a player, the most important piece of gear is probably their shoes or boots.



1.2 Task 1: Read and listen to what Pierre says about his gear.

"A full football **kit** is quite expensive. Thankfully, the academy pays for your **outfit**. You do need clothes for practice and for the matches. We all have **tracksuits, shirts** and **shorts** in the colours of the academy, but a lot of players practise wearing the shirt or **jersey** of their favourite player. We have long **socks** and wear **shin pads** inside the socks to protect ourselves if we get kicked. Socks, shirts and shorts often come at special pack prices for team orders, like, say, 30 or 40 dollars, but the academy still needs to pay extra for flocking the **logo** and the numbers on each shirt. The most important item, and the most expensive one, believe me, are the **boots**. I mean, you don't get anything decent for less than 100 dollars, which is a lot of money here in Cameroon. That's why the academy is keen on finding sponsors, too. Depending on the season and the condition of the pitch, there are different **studs** fixed to the boots, too. They can really make the difference when hitting the ball. Our goalkeeper, of course, also needs special **gloves** to help him catch the ball. They actually make his hands look really huge."

Task 2: Look at the picture of Pierre in his gear. Label the blanks with the correct words in bold from the text.



Often, you use more than one word to describe the same item of the player's outfit.

Task 3: Match the words on the left with their synonyms on the right.

- | | |
|--------------|----------------|
| 1. kit | a. jersey |
| 2. shoes | b. shin guards |
| 3. cleats | c. gear |
| 4. shirt | d. boots |
| 5. shin pads | e. studs |

B. How much does it cost?

Comparing information

Many teams have their own preferred suppliers, but price does matter when you have to pay for your own gear. If you want to compare products, you often use the *comparative forms* of adjectives, for example:

- The green boots are *more expensive than* the blue boots. The black boots are *the most expensive*.
- The green boots are *cheaper than* the black boots. The blue boots are *the cheapest*.
- The green boots are *less expensive than* the black boots. The blue boots are *the least expensive*.

Rule: when adjectives are short (one syllable or two syllables ending in -y), they use *-er* and *the ... -est* in comparisons. Longer adjectives use *more* and *the most* or *less* and *the least* if it is a negative comparison.

Task 4: Read these two offers from Sigyn and Cougar.

Do the maths: How much do you need to spend on a squad of 20 players?

 Cougar Cougar - all the gear you need		 Sigyn Sigyn - your gear for success	
Bolt super shoes with cleats	\$199.99	Superb quality	
Team jerseys - team orders only	\$29.99	Great grip boots (studded)	\$249.99
Shorts black/blue	\$39.99	Strike team shirts	\$39.99
Classic socks	\$ 11.99	Shorts (any colour)	\$39.99
Shin guards (blue)	\$9.99	Knee-high socks	\$17.99
		Shin pads (any colour)	\$7.99
Special offer			
Black long socks	\$12.99 now 7.99	Low shipping fees!	

Task 5: Write sentences to compare the prices.

Use these expressions to help you.

are more expensive than - are cheaper than - are the same price as - are a bit more expensive than - are less expensive than - are on special offer

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____



Task 6: What is your favourite gear?

Go to the website of the company and compare their prices and features with another student.

If we buy..., we will spend around...

We should buy... because they are cheaper.

If we buy..., we can save money on...



If you use this book as a self-study course, write a brief report and do the maths: how much would an entire outfit cost?



EXTRA TIME: A STADIUM TOUR

Before you read: Have you ever been on a stadium tour? What do you think people are interested in? In your opinion, what is the most beautiful stadium in the world?

Read Natasha's blog about her visit to a stadium. You can also listen to her story here 1.3.



Hi footie lovers—today, I have a special treat for you. I went on a tour in the most beautiful **stadium** in the world—or so the supporters and the press say. Let me tell you where I have been.

When we got to the place, it was already dark (it was five pm in winter), and the stadium was lit up in blue which made it look like a UFO.

A bit spooky if you ask me. Then all the people in our group were given visitor badges and the **tour guide** welcomed us.

We kicked off our tour in the main hall, their hall of fame, where they have those oversize banners of their most important players in history and, of course, all the **trophies** they have won. Very impressive, though a lot of that happened before my time, of course.

Then, we went on to the **changing rooms**—now that was really exciting, thinking about all the great players who have got ready here. The home changing room is equipped with all **comforts**, and each player on the current team have their own **spot**. And, like in a real match, we entered the **players' tunnel** where the players from the two teams meet and wait to enter the field.

We also went on the **pitch**, and I can tell you, this pitch is huge. You can hardly see people at the other end, I mean, there was the **groundskeeper**, that's the guy looking after the grass. He was renewing the **lines**, and he looked so small, honestly. And those **floodlights** are really bright, I mean, today stadiums have lights installed just below the roof, and they have really high wattage, but down on the pitch it looks very different to what you see from your seat in the **stands** or **terraces**.

We had a break in one of the **VIP lounges**, but I'm not sure I like them. **WDYT***, is that really football culture if you sit and have your champagne and your smoked salmon instead of your beer, shouting with all the other **supporters**? Okay, next, we went to the **press room** where they usually hold all the press conferences after a match. Both coaches can share their view of the match, and they are often joined by one of their key players. The tour ended in the **fan shop** where we got a discount on all the purchases so I couldn't resist getting another shirt to complete my **OOTD***. I hope you enjoyed this look behind the scenes.

***Task 1: WDYT - Understanding Acronyms**

Natasha uses WDYT in her text. Bloggers often use acronyms to shorten their texts and make them less formal. This one stands for "What Do You Think?" Do you know what the acronyms below stand for?

- AFAIK GG
- AMA OOTD
- FOMO TIL
- FTW WBU

Task 2: True or false?

Answer the questions on the text. Correct the false statements.

True or False?

1. The stadium was lit in red.	
2. The trophies are kept in the changing room.	
3. The players have to wait in the players' tunnel.	
4. The person looking after the grass is the gamekeeper.	
5. The coaches talk after the match in the press room.	

Task 3: Write your own stadium tour blog.

- Highlight the phrases you can use from this text.
- Check that you understand all the words in bold (translate them into your own language if needed).
- Write a text about your favourite stadium.
- If you find a virtual stadium tour of the place you have chosen, you can watch it without sound and use your own text to describe it.

Tip: How to read a text for building vocabulary: The language Natasha uses in her blog is full of technical terms and building blocks, in other words, phrases you can use again for your own description. Whenever you read a text about football, like a blog entry or a match report, highlight the phrases and words that can help you to speak about football, copy them to your vocabulary app or file and start learning them by heart.

Sports English Press

Final whistle: revision of unit 1 

In this unit, you learned to...

- name the parts of a pitch correctly
- describe where things are in a stadium
- understand and talk about the positions of players
- name the different parts of football gear and equipment

