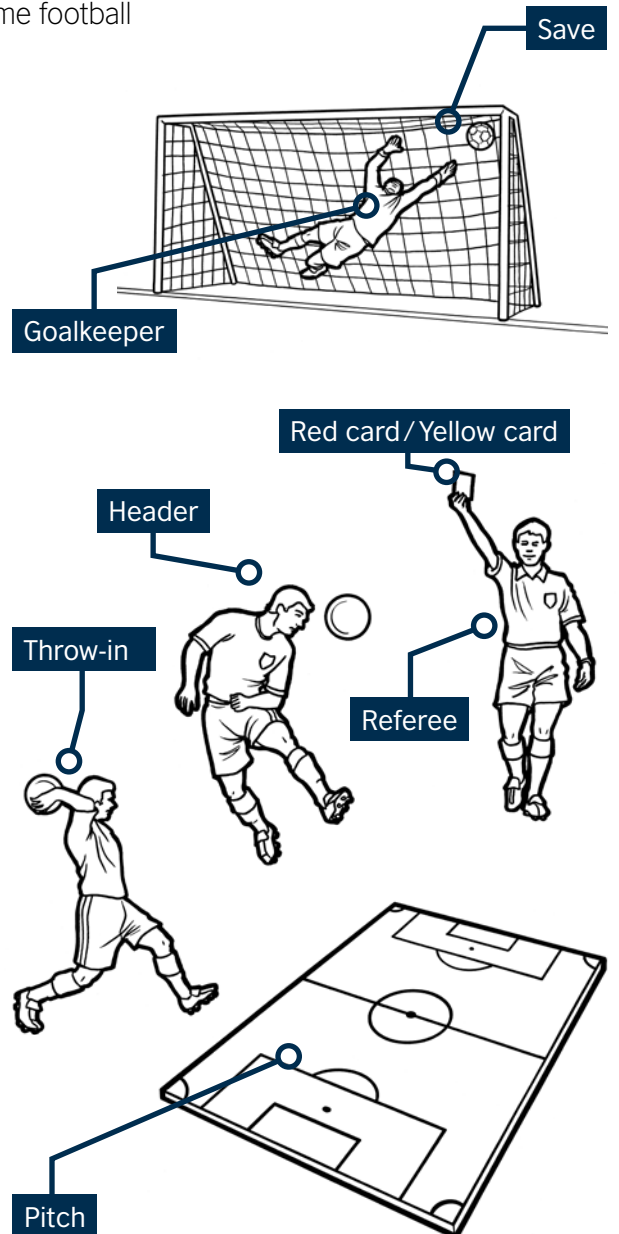


Football

When athletes come together from around the world to compete in the Olympic and Paralympic Games, they are fulfilling their dreams and competing at the highest level. Billions of people across the globe join in; watching, listening to and reading about the greatest global celebration of sport. To celebrate the London 2012 Games, the British Council is making a wide range of classroom resources available for learners of English worldwide.

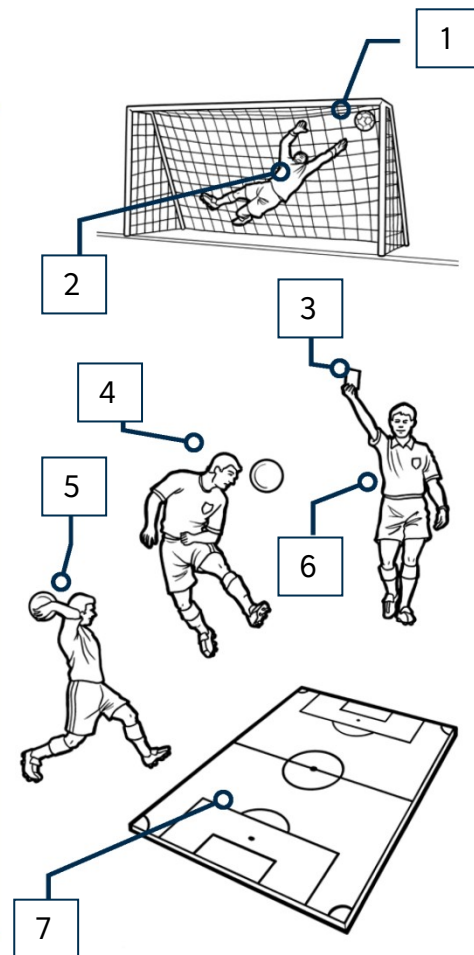
Everyone knows football, don't they? It is a very popular sport but not many know that football has a long Olympic history too. The rules of Olympic football are almost exactly the same but there are some differences. What are they? Find out more about the history of the sport and learn or revise some football vocabulary and useful language.



1. Vocabulary

a. Write the correct words in the spaces provided.

a. Header	b. Red card / yellow card	c. Throw-in	d. Pitch
e. Goalkeeper	f. Save	g. Referee	



2. The rules of football

- Two teams of 11 players play on a pitch. Each team tries to score more goals than the other.
- A game lasts 90 minutes, divided into two 45-minute halves.
- Players can use any part of their body except their arms and hands to move the ball. The exception is when a player takes a throw-in.
- Goalkeepers can use their hands, especially when making a save.
- If a player commits a foul, then a free kick is awarded to the other team.
- If there is a foul inside the penalty area, a penalty kick is awarded to the other team.
- If there is a more serious foul such as a bad tackle or handball, the referee can show a yellow or red card. Two yellow cards or one red card mean a player is expelled from the game.
- If teams have the same score (a draw) then extra time and penalty shootouts are used to decide the winner.
- In Olympic football male players must be under 23 years old, though they can have three older players in each team. There are no age restrictions for female players.

a. Match the words in the table with their definitions below.

a. foul	b. free kick	c. goalkeeper	d. handball	e. pitch
f. referee	g. save	h. score	i. tackle	j. throw-in

1. An attempt to take the ball from a player in the other team
2. An opportunity to kick the ball without opposition from the other team
3. Get a goal
4. Something against the rules
5. Stop the ball from going into the goal
6. The act of throwing the ball from the sideline after the ball has gone out of play
7. The area of grass where the game is played
8. The person who is in charge of the game and who makes sure that the rules are followed
9. The player who stands in the team's goal to try to stop the other team from scoring
10. When a player intentionally touches the ball with their hand or arm

3. Questions & Answers

There's football at the Olympics? You don't hear much about it. I mean, it's not like the World Cup, is it?

You're right – the World Cup is definitely the biggest prize in football, but the sport has a long Olympic history, too.

You're not going to tell me the ancient Greeks played, are you?

No, but football has been on the Olympic programme since 1900. And women's football since 1996. In comparison, the first World Cup only took place in 1930.

Ok, but I suppose the same teams always win: Brazil, Italy, Germany ...

Actually no. Italy's won once and Germany (the old German Democratic Republic) once also, but Brazil has never won.

Really? So who's won all the medals?

Hungary, the former Yugoslavia and the former Soviet Union have each won five medals in the men's competition and the USA women three golds.

Who's playing in London in 2012?

Some of the best players in the world.

Only some? They aren't all coming?

Since 1992 male footballers have to be under 23 years old, though they can have three older players in each team. But you still get to see some real stars – in Beijing 2008 Messi and Ronaldinho both played.

And I can see them all in London?

No. Football is the only sport where events will take place outside England. Games will be played in Glasgow and Cardiff, as well as Manchester, Newcastle, Coventry, and of course London..

So fans might have to go to Scotland or Wales? That's a lot of travelling.

Not compared to the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles. Then, some games were played in Boston, more than 3,000 kilometres away!

Wow! You seem to know a lot about it – can I ask you just one more question?

Sure, what is it?

Can you explain the off-side rule?

Um ... not unless you've got all day ...

Glossary

The World Cup: an international football competition held every four years and organised by the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA).

Off-side rule: a law in football which states that a player cannot be actively involved in the play if he is closer to the opponent's goal line than both the ball and the second-to-last defender when the ball is touched or played by a teammate.

a. Decide if the following statements about the text are true or false.

1. The World Cup is a more important football competition than the Olympics.
2. Football was played at the ancient Olympics.
3. European teams have won more medals than other countries in the men's competition.
4. Messi and Ronaldinho will both be playing at the London Olympics.
5. It is further from London to Glasgow or Cardiff than it is from Los Angeles to Boston.
6. The off-side rule is complicated.

True	False

b. Complete each question by following the instructions below.

Complete each sentence with a word/words from the table. In some cases more than one answer is correct.

and	as well	but
in comparison	then	though

Both Mary (.....1.....) Tina are coming to the party.

I really like football, (.....2.....) I hate basketball.

I've visited many countries in Europe, (.....3.....) I've never been to Asia.

Take the first street on the left, and (.....4.....) go straight ahead for 300 metres.

The weather has been terrible this summer. (.....5.....), last summer was beautiful.

They sell pizzas and pasta, and hamburgers and fish and chips (.....6.....).

4. Solution

Exercise 1a

1. f; 2. e; 3. b; 4. a; 5. c; 6.g; 7. d

Exercise 2a

1. i; 2. b; 3. h; 4. a; 5. g; 6. j; 7. e; 8. f; 9. c; 10. d

Exercise 3a

1. True; 2. False; 3. True; 4. False; 5. False; 6. True

Exercise 3b

1. and; 2. but/though; 3. but/though; 4. then; 5. In comparison; 6. as well