Football

The pitch, the players and the score, the rules of the game, and the language of commentators and pundits, from A1 to C2.

A1–C2 · English Vocabulary, Lesson 35

two–nil · a penalty shoot-out · against the run of play

The match *A1–A2*

ball	goal
pitch	team
player	goalkeeper
defender	midfielder
striker	captain
coach	fan
gloves	boots

play football (no "the") · goal = gol and portería

Playing and the score *A1–A2*

kick	pass
shoot (shot)	score
save	match
win (won)	lose (lost)
draw (drew)	half-time
first half	second half
at home	away

win a match · beat a team · 2–0 = two–nil

Rules and match language *B1–B2*

Fouls: a foul, handball, a free kick, a penalty, the penalty area

Cards: be booked, a yellow card, a red card, be sent off

Restarts: a throw-in, a corner, a goal kick, kick-off

Cup matches: extra time, stoppage time, a penalty shoot-out, go through

Changes: a substitution, come on, go off, a team-mate, an opponent

UK / US: match / game · pitch / field · kit / uniform · nil / zero · boots / cleats

*He was **booked** in the first half and **sent off** in the second, and we lost the **shoot-out**.*

Offside: nearer the goal line than the ball and the second-last opponent when the pass is played

Commentary and punditry *C1–C2*

Goals: a clinical finish, a screamer, a header, an equaliser, a brace, a hat-trick

Misses: a sitter, hit the woodwork, a clean sheet (for the keeper)

Tactics: park the bus, on the counter-attack, against the run of play, a six-pointer

Refereeing: VAR, a clear and obvious error, an on-field review, overturn, uphold

Metaphors: move the goalposts, a level playing field, score an own goal, on the ball

*United **parked the bus**, then scored **against the run of play** with a **clinical finish**.*

commentator: live, present tense · pundit: analysis and judgement

Talking about a match

- *Who won? What was the score?*
- *We beat them three–one.*
- *It was one–all at half-time.*
- *They're top of the league.*

Common mistakes

- ~~We won them 2–0.~~ → We **beat** them 2–0.
- ~~I play the football.~~ → I **play football**.
- ~~a football party~~ → a football **match**
- ~~two–zero~~ (UK) → **two–nil**

Words with a past

- **nil**: Latin *nihil*, nothing
- **dribble**: from *drib*, to drip
- **offside**: "off" your own side, ahead of the ball
- **hat-trick**: a cricket bowler's prize hat

My new words

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