



Soccer Vocabulary

The following is a list of words and terms that are commonly used in the game of soccer along with their explanations/definitions.

As coaches, we should teach our players the meaning of these terms and use them as much as possible when communicating with our players about matters relevant to the game.

Term/Phrase	Definition/Explanation
"Get Wide"	To move in a direction towards the outside of the field, closer to the sidelines. This attacking movement is most commonly used to find space and/or stretch out the shape of the defending team.
"Pinch (or Tuck) In"	To move in a direction towards a fellow team mate, normally towards the center of the field. This defensive movement is most commonly used to limit the amount of space between 2 team mates.
"Pressure"	Is when a defender confronts the attacker in possession of the ball to try and steal the ball away from them, or: When a defender is in or moves towards the area immediately surrounding an attacker to limit the space in which they can play.
"Time!"	Indicates to the player with (or about to receive) possession of the ball that there is no immediate pressure from a defender.
"Man On!"	Indicates to the player with (or about to receive) possession of the ball that there is immediate pressure from a defender.
"Switch"	To Switch the ball is to quickly move the ball laterally or diagonally from one side of the field to the other - normally with one or no more than 2 direct passes. Also called "changing the point of attack".
"Push Up/Out"	To move as an individual or group further up the field and/or away from your own penalty area.
"Drop (back)"	To move as an individual or group down the field towards your own penalty area.
"Stand Up"	This is an instruction to encourage a defender not to over-commit to making a tackle (by diving in) but rather to "contain" the attacking player with possession by slowing their progress and being difficult to beat.
"Drive"	To aggressively dribble the ball forward at speed into open space (penetrate).

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Term/Phrase	Definition/Explanation
"Goal Side"	"Goal Side" is a defensive, positional term that explains to the defender that they should position their body between the goal they are defending and the player they are marking.
"Check to the ball"	To make a quick, disguised movement towards the ball commonly following a movement away from the ball.
"Stay On(side)"	Instruction to your forward players to make sure they don't drift into an offside position. Forwards should be encouraged to look along the defensive line and quickly assess whether they are onside or offside. If offside, they should quickly adjust their position.
"Move the ball"	Is a simple instruction to keep the ball moving from player to player quickly by taking fewer touches and making quicker passes rather than dribbling.
"Inside"	Is a directional or positional term that refers to the area through the central spine of the field that runs from one end of the field to the other. It can also refer to movement towards that area.
"Outside"	Is a directional or positional term that refers to the areas along the sidelines that run from one end of the field to the other. It can also refer to movement towards those areas.
"Get tight"	Is a defensive term that instructs your defender to get closer to the player they are marking. The purpose of this is to limit the amount of time and space the attacking player will have should they receive the ball. The term is most commonly used when defending set pieces (corners, free kicks, throw ins etc) can also be used in open play. "Touch tight" means getting close enough to be able to touch the person being marked.
"Shift across"	Instruction for your player/s to move as a unit across the field of play while maintaining their shape.
"Fix your shape"	Is a simple instruction to your team to look quickly at their shape and make sure their positioning in relation to each other is consistent with your system of play and set up.
"Face the ball"	Is an instruction for your players to turn their bodies so they can see what is happening with the ball - Normally used after the ball goes out of play and the other team has possession.