

The Sport of Soccer - When Your Goal Is Fun

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Kicking a soccer ball is one of the most popular sports on Earth. Now it's often played with state-of-the-art balls on the highest quality synthetic turf supplied by premium distributors like Watersavers Turf. More than 2,000 years ago, soccer started out as a humble game played on nothing more than dirt. Players in ancient China were some of the first to enjoy the game. They kicked a ball into a net, and called it "Tsu Chu." The rules were simple, and of course, they didn't have the classic black and white ball we have now. They used to score goals with a rough, roundish brown ball made from animal hide. It got the job done, but it sure wasn't high-tech!

Most of the rules we play by today come from England, which was the first country to come up with official standards for the game. They added the penalty kick during Victorian times, in 1891. Red and yellow penalty cards weren't used until 1970. New rules are added all the time, as referees and coaches find ways to improve play. Most of the changes these days are about what moves get a red card penalty. At the pro level, tackles from behind didn't earn a red card until 1998!

Artificial turf is another newcomer to the soccer field. Over the last couple of decades, more and more pro teams have been saving water and reducing injuries by playing on the highest quality synthetic turf, instead of on traditional live grass. Wouldn't you want your game on a smooth field that boosts safety, and helps the planet? The World Cup does. In fact, 2015 Women's World Cup in Canada is the first one to be played completely on artificial turf. For many fans, soccer is all about the World Cup. These epic playoffs last for weeks, with games in multiple stadiums. The 2016 games will be in Rio, from August 3-19, but teams are already on the road to the championship. The U.S. team's qualifying meet against Guatemala happens March 29th. Next week, U.S. coach, Jurgen Klinsmann will name his team. Everyone's guessing what players he'll pick! Center back, John Brooks, is having a great year and is a frontrunner for the team. Real Salt Lake's captain, Kyle Beckerman, is another favorite at the top of the hot list. Pundits are throwing out names left and right, but until the final roster is announced, it's anybody's game.

At FIFA's last count, more than 240 million people around the world play soccer on a regular basis. From kids in the backyard to professional players, the game is easy to learn, and a top team is fun to watch live or on TV. It can be exciting to join a league, but there's nothing like a casual game among friends! To play, all you really need is a ball, some smooth and safe ground, and a couple of goal nets. You can buy goals at a sports equipment store, or DIY your own out of simple supplies like PVC pipe and deer netting. To shrink the risk of injury, make sure your field is level and soft. You can get an even playing surface with a high-quality synthetic lawn, since the grass won't wear down to dirt patches. Using the right padding underneath your artificial grass will absorb impact, too, so you can run fast and fall safely.

The waterless grass pros at Watersavers Turf are in the artificial grass game to win it. We stock many sports field products, and PVC pipe for setting up home goal nets. All of our live grass substitutes are lead-free so anything you buy from us is safe to play on, whether you're a kid or a world-class athlete. We offer free estimates and product samples, so you get just the grass you want at the price you need. Visit us online, at a store location, or call 1-844-974-8873. For more fun weekly Sports Newsletters, "Like" our Facebook page, or download a copy of the newsletter here: www.watersaversturf.biz