



FOOTBALL  
QUEENSLAND

# WALKING FOOTBALL

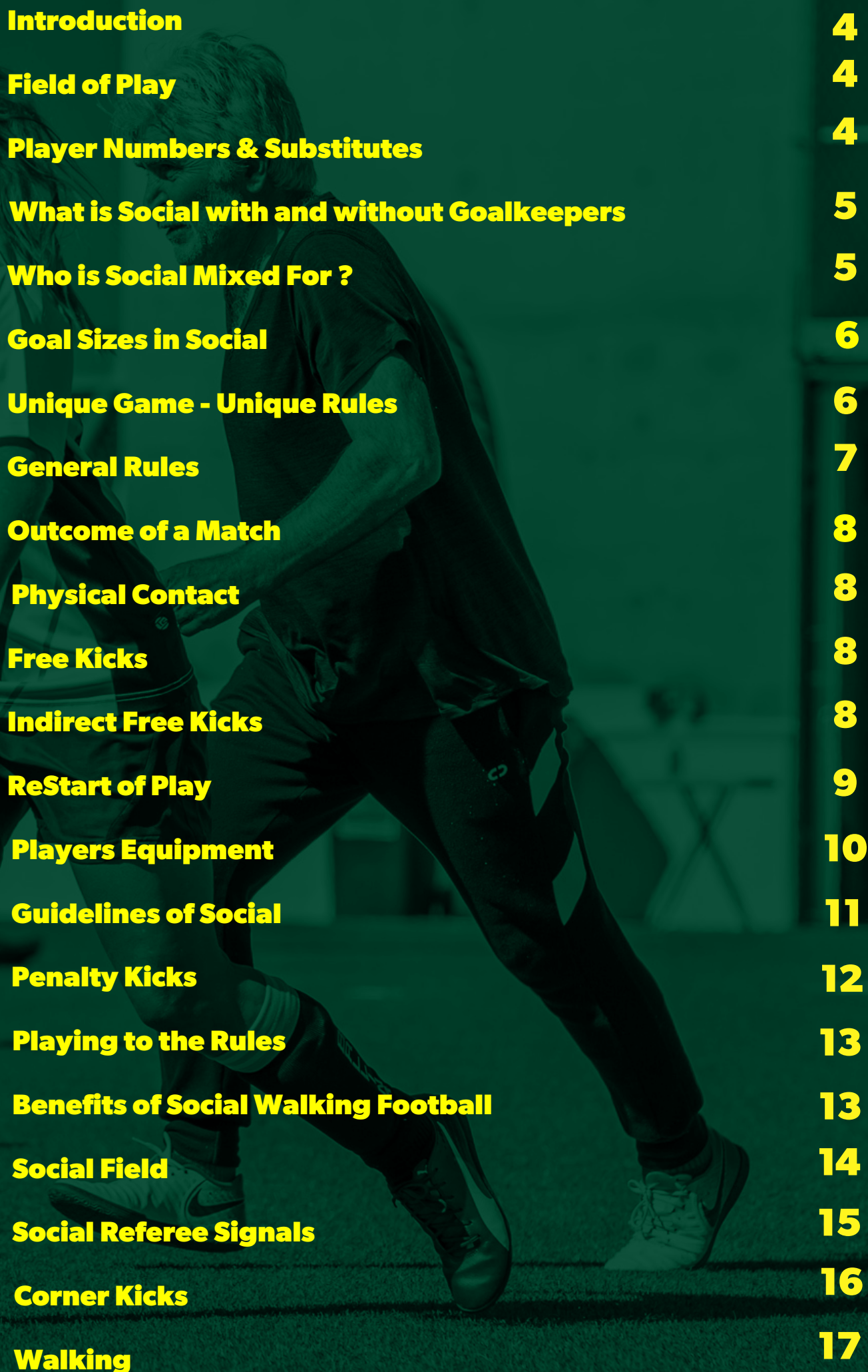
## SOCIAL GUIDELINES MADE SIMPLE

Updated 11/09/2022

# WITH & WITHOUT GOALKEEPERS

PLAY SAFER - PLAY LONGER





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## INTRODUCTION

In principle, the normal Laws of Football apply to Walking Football. There are though, some key differences and we've developed this guide to help players and referees understand the Social format played with or without Goalkeepers. We hope this guide also highlights the significant differences in Social or Social Mixed with or without Goalkeepers.

This guide does not contain information on every Law, refer to the full Laws of the Game for that. Instead, it highlights what we think referees and players need to know in order to make the game safe and enjoyable for all.

## THE FIELD OF PLAY

Walking football should be played on either grass, artificial turf or, if indoors, wood.

The penalty area is a semi-circle of 3 metres (No keepers) and (with Keepers) 6 metres radius from the centre of the goal line. With Keepers, the penalty spot is located at the 6 metre mark of the semi-circle, while with the No Keeper format, the penalty spot is at the halfway spot. (more information on Page 14). The distance between the goal posts can be 3 to 5 metres. The height of the crossbar can vary between 1.5 metres to 2 metres. (depending on availability of goals at various venues)

## PLAYER NUMBERS AND SUBSTITUTES

Matches are usually **5 or 6 -a-side**. **SOCIAL MIXED TEAMS must have a minimum of 1 female playing outfield in 5 v 5 at all times. For 6 v 6 there must be a minimum of 2 female players out of the 6 players, playing outfield at all times.** Teams can have a maximum of 5 substitutes.

Substitutions can **only take place** when play has stopped, **not during play**.

Players can change places with the goalkeeper when play has stopped and referee informed. Colour of shirts must be changed when swapping goalkeepers, or the GK wears a non-colour-clashing bib.



## What is Social Walking Football

Social Walking Football is exactly what the name says, it is tailored to suit players of all ages and abilities with it being a much more relaxed, fun and safe environment for all players.

- ❖ Low Impact
- ❖ Slower paced
- ❖ Relaxing Environment
- ❖ Fun, Fitness, Friendship
- ❖ No excessively, hard shots at goals

## Who is Social Walking Football for?

- ❖ Players NOT seeking competitive Walking Football and playing the game at a more less intense level
- ❖ New (inexperienced) players to the game, existing and former players, wanting a more relaxed version of the game.
- ❖ This can include established players with disability, injury, ongoing pain management and those who prefer the more 'user friendly' nature of this wonderful game.
- ❖ New players needing more time on the ball to develop their skills and improve their confidence, experienced players should allow new players time on the ball to build more confidence.
- ❖ Players seeking a low impact, slower paced version of the game in a fun, safe and social environment

## Goalkeeper Format

- ❖ Goalkeepers can be used in Social and, Social Mixed, however, if and when used, players need to be conscious of hitting the ball with excessive force at Goals.
- ❖ Inexperienced players in goals can be easily injured from a excessively hit shot at goals.
- ❖ 6 metre semi-circle Penalty Areas.
- ❖ Similar rules as per FA LOTG.
- ❖ Experienced or competitive players are not recommended to play Social formats.

## NO Goalkeeper Format

- ❖ NO Goalkeeper formats can be used in Social and, Social Mixed.
- ❖ A much safer and enjoyable format of the game.
- ❖ Inexperienced players playing in goals can be easily injured from a excessively hit shot at goals.
- ❖ 3 metre Penalty Areas.
- ❖ Goal Kicks to be taken from within the Penalty Area.
- ❖ Kicker must leave the Penalty Area after taking the Goal Kick.
- ❖ Kicker cannot receive the ball again until a 3rd player has touched the ball.
- ❖ Penalties to be taken from the Halfway spot with ALL Players behind the ball.
- ❖ Shot Zone 10 metre from Goal Line (flat markers x 2-3 to indicate distance).
- ❖ Goals can only be scored within the Shot Zone (see pitch markings Page 14).
- ❖ Experienced or competitive players are not recommended to play in Social formats.
- ❖ Similar rules as per FA LOTG.

## UNIQUE GAME - UNIQUE RULES

Walking Football is a very unique game, very different to what we have all experienced previously and it's important to acknowledge, we are playing a completely different format of football where player safety is paramount over anything else.

There is an obligation by everyone to ensure a duty of care to themselves, their teammates and opposition players. There is also an obligation by managers, coaches, and officials, to ensure that players safety is a priority in all aspects of the game. There is no place in any format of the game for aggressive and unruly behaviour. Offenders will be asked to leave the venue.

## SOCIAL GOALS & FIELD SIZE

Social Field Sizes (averages)

- ❖ Field setup is determined by amount of players on a regular walking football pitch. On average, the size varies of from 30m x 16m to 35m x 25m, sizes, with the latter ideal for Social Mixed Walking Football with and without goalkeepers.
- ❖ With goalkeepers, Goals sizes are 3m x 2m with penalty area 6 metre semi-circle.
- ❖ Without goalkeepers, Goals ~can vary from 2m x 1m up to 1.5m x 3m with a 3m semi-circle.
- ❖ Players are not allowed in Goal Area, at any time.
- ❖ Walking Football is an adaptable format of our sport of which can be facilitated on a variety of surfaces including football pitches, green space, indoor centres, tennis courts, etc.
- ❖ Program Hub administrators should undertake a pitch/venue/surface risk assessment before commencing play.
- ❖ Goal Sizes are at the discretion of the Program Hub administrator. Best practice is to enhance player experience by increasing 'scoring moments'.



## GENERAL RULES

- ❖ Ball height is the Crossbar of the relevant Goals
- ❖ No Contact permitted in any format of Walking Football
- ❖ No Leaning into or shoulder charging a player (result is a free-kick against offender)
- ❖ PLAY THE BALL - NOT THE PLAYER
- ❖ RESPECT TO ALL TEAM MATES, OPPONENTS & OFFICIALS AT ALL TIMES
- ❖ PLAY WITHIN YOUR OWN CAPABILITIES
- ❖ No Lunges, No tackles from side or behind, tackle only FACE TO FACE and only when safe to do so
- ❖ PENALTY KICK TAKEN FROM CENTRE SPOT - (NO KEEPERS FORMAT)
- ❖ PLAYERS CANNOT HEAD THE BALL
- ❖ AGGRESSIVE & UNRULY BEHAVIOUR WILL NOT BE TOLERATED

## RULES KEEP PLAYERS SAFE



## DETERMINING THE OUTCOME OF A MATCH

In general, scores are rarely recorded in Social, Social Mixed formats, however, if a tournament records results, the following rules apply. A goal is scored when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line, between the goalposts and under the crossbar, unless it has been deliberately thrown, carried or propelled by the hand or arm of a player of the attacking side.

## PHYSICAL CONTACT

Anything other than minimal contact must be penalised.

Players cannot slide tackle, tackle from behind, heel or ankle tap from the back, or side, or back into players when in possession.

## FREE KICKS

All free kicks are indirect. From an indirect free-kick, a goal can only be scored if it is played by another player.

A free kick is given if a player commits offences in a manner considered by the referee to be careless, reckless or using excessive force.



**Opponents of the team taking the kick off must be at least three metres from the ball until it is in play. This also applies to Free Kicks, Kick-ins, Corners, Goal Kicks and Penalty Kicks.**



## START AND RE-START OF PLAY

The team that wins the toss decides which goal it will attack in the first period of the game. The other team takes the kick-off to start the game.

A goal may not be scored directly from the kick-off.

All players must be in their own half, except the player taking kick-off.

The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves.

The kicker may not touch the ball a second time until it has touched another player.



**Opponents of the team taking the kick off must be at least three metres from the ball and in their own half until it is in play**

### **SHINPADS are Compulsory**

### **SHINPADS**

Shin pads are compulsory in All formats of Walking Football. Players will not be permitted to play in tournaments without Shinpads. **NO SHINPADS NO PLAY!**

### **JEWELLERY IS NOT ALLOWED**

### **JEWELLERY**

A player must not use equipment or wear anything that is deemed dangerous by the Referee/Facilitator or Competition Administrator. All items of jewellery (necklaces, rings, bracelets, earrings, leather bands, rubber bands etc) are forbidden and must be removed. Using tape to cover jewellery is not permitted. *Reference: FIFA LOTG Law 4*



**Players 'not walking' ie deemed as running will be penalised with an indirect free kick against them and could also be sin-binned for 2 minutes after 3 offences of running**

**Players consistently penalised for 'not walking' or aggressive play could also be sent off if when they return after a sin bin, if they are deemed to be offending again.**

**This ruling for repetitive runners /offenders should be applied at all Walking Football events.**

## Guidelines to playing Social WF

### Guidelines to Social

- ❖ Players are not allowed to enter the 3 or 6 metre semi-circle, whereas, the goalkeeper must not leave the Goal Area.
- ❖ A penalty Kick is awarded if either offence above occurs.
- ❖ No Contact at all times.
- ❖ Player Safety at all times.
- ❖ For the No goalkeeper format, players can only enter the Goal Area to take a Goal Kick, or if the ball has stopped inside the area.
- ❖ Player must leave the Goal Area immediately after the ball leaves the area and cannot receive the ball until a 3rd player has touched the ball.
- ❖ All goal kicks are taken inside the Goal Area and within 6 seconds of the ball being placed by kicker.
- ❖ Players can only score a goal inside the allotted Shot Zones.

**Tip of the day! Play Safe at ALL TIMES! ALWAYS!**



## PENALTY KICK

### Taking a Penalty Kick

- ❖ Ball placed on Penalty Spot
  - ❖ ALL Players either in line with or behind the Centre/Penalty Spot
  - ❖ ALL Players a minimum 3 metres away from the Centre/Penalty Spot
  - ❖ Nominated kicker only to take the penalty kick
  - ❖ 6 Seconds from whistle with a one metre maximum distance approach
  - ❖ One direct shot at Goals only
  - ❖ If scored, game resumes from the Centre/Penalty Spot (no keepers)
- 
- ❖ **At a penalty kick, players have to stand:**
  - ❖ Inside the pitch
  - ❖ Outside the penalty area
  - ❖ Behind or to the side of the penalty mark
  - ❖ At least 3 metres from the ball



**The player taking the penalty must do so within a maximum distance of one metre!**

## Why does Social have Rules?

### RULES KEEP PLAYERS SAFE!!

There is an assumption that Social Walking Football is in fact very social and therefore does not require too many rules. This could not be further from the truth, in fact, social formats require all rules to be strictly applied to maintain the ongoing safety of all players.

Accordingly, while we sometimes have goalkeepers in Social Formats, it is imperative PLAYERS DO NOT HIT forceful shots at GOALS, more so, at inexperienced players.

*This format was initiated by Football Australia in 2019 and is implemented at all FQ & Interstate Come & Try programs since that date*

## BENEFITS of Social Rules

### Benefits & Safety

- ❖ A format where there are no "hard Shots" allowed at all - Think safety at all times!
- ❖ Players having more goal scoring opportunities
- ❖ New players to the game should be encouraged by all participating players
- ❖ New players should be allowed more time on the ball to give them more confidence to continue playing
- ❖ **ALL PLAYERS SHOULD BE ACROSS ALL Laws of the Game**
- ❖ Players not wanting this level of Walking Football should either play to these recommendations or consider playing at a more competitive level of the game.

**Social Walking Football is a SAFE GAME FOR ALL!**

## PLAYING TO THE RULES

### CONSISTENCY

Players consistently abiding by the LOTG throughout each match make things much easier for officials and other players around them. Please consider others!!

- ❖ Players playing sportingly and within the laws will require less control than one where players are stretching the laws to their extreme through competitive nature. We recommend they do their best to curb this competitive behaviour. **SOCIAL WF is NOT** for competitive minded players!!!
- ❖ Players consistently disregarding the rules of Social Walking Football will firstly be sin-binned and asked to desist. If they continue their unruly behaviour they will be sent off. The event organiser will determine whether that player continues to play or not.
- ❖ Violent conduct, excessive foul play or excessive displays of dissent must always be acted upon in a positive manner in order to maintain match control.

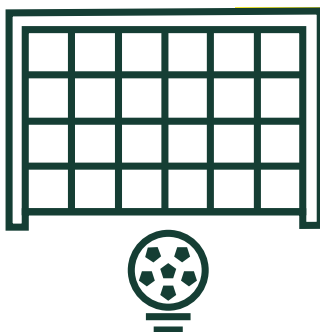
### PLAYER SAFETY

Regulating rules like non-contact, running and of course excessive and aggressive play while maintaining players safety is of the utmost importance in Walking Football from first to last kick of the game.

- ❖ Players must firstly respect that refereeing is not an easy task
- ❖ Officials must be proactive in calling and regulating contact before it leads to problems
- ❖ Players must play the ball and not the player
- ❖ Anytime a player moves their arms to ward off an opponent the official may call a foul
- ❖ Be vocal, preventative and assured in your action
- ❖ Set the standards from the first whistle in all Social Games

## THE GOAL KICK

- ❖ A goal KICK takes place when the whole of the ball, having last touched a player of the attacking team, passes over the goal line, either on the ground or in the air – and a goal isn't scored
- ❖ To take a goal kick, the kicker plays the ball from a stationary position within the penalty area
- ❖ The goalkeeper cannot receive the ball back before the ball is touched by another (3rd) player
- ❖ With No Keeper, anyone can enter the 3m penalty area to take the Goal Kick, they must however, leave the penalty area immediately and cannot receive the ball back until a 3rd player has touched the ball



**A goal cannot be scored directly from any dead ball situation**





Depending on venue, Social fields can vary from 30m x 16m, up to 40m x 25m

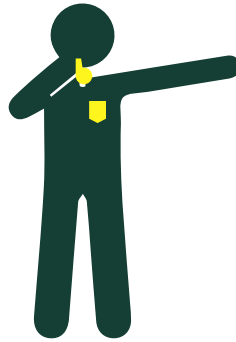


## REFEREE SIGNALS

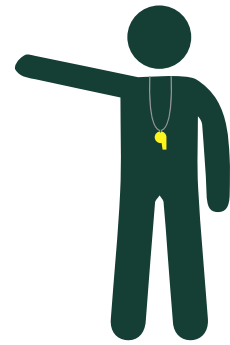
Signalling is an effective way in which referees can communicate their decisions to players.



**PENALTY KICK**



**CORNER KICK**



**MAIN ADVANTAGE**



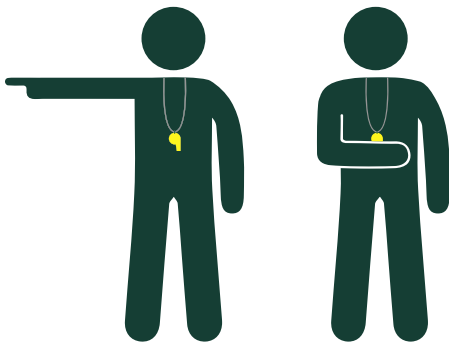
**MAIN ADVANTAGE 2**



**INDIRECT FREE KICK**



**GOAL KICK**



**SIX SECOND COUNT**



**NOT WALKING**



**TACKLE FROM BEHIND**



**EXCEEDING HEAD HEIGHT**

## THE CORNER KICK

**A corner kick is given when the whole of the ball, having last touched a player of the defending team, passes over the goal line, either on the ground or in the air, and a goal isn't scored.**

A goal can NOT BE scored directly from a corner kick.

**Opponents must remain at least 3m from the ball until it is in play**

Where the playing area is surrounded by barricades, there are no corner kicks. When the ball leaves the field of play, play is restarted with a goal kick or side kick in, by the goalkeeper whose half of the field the ball was in when leaving the field of play.





## WALKING

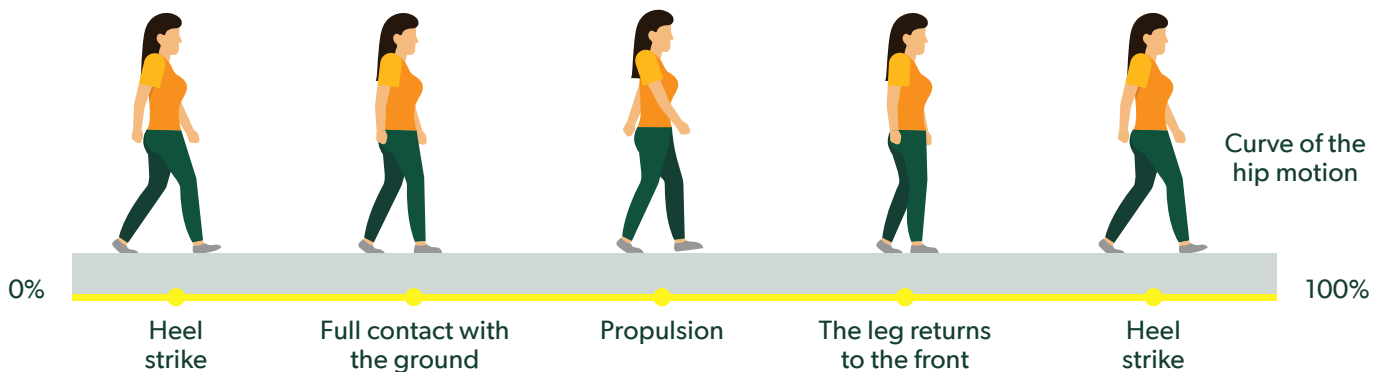
Walking is defined as 'always having at least one foot in contact with the ground'.

A walking action will generally be determined as the progression of steps throughout which there is constantly at least one foot in contact with the ground; both are momentarily grounded with the advancing leg straightened i.e. heel to toe action.

The referee will award an indirect free kick against any player who is not walking, unless there is a clear attacking opportunity for the team in possession, where advantage can be played and the offender sanctioned once play has stopped, or the advantage has not accrued.

A player who is penalised three times for a walking offence will receive a yellow card and temporarily dismissed from play for a duration of between two and five minutes.

## WALKING



## RUNNING



## WALKING OFFENCES

We see many players consistently 'not-walking' and gaining advantage from doing so. While it's difficult to identify at times, our referees will try to stamp this out as much as possible, not only at major events, but also at weekly programs.

Unfortunately, some weekly programs do not have the luxury of WF Referees, however, it is the responsibility of facilitators and organisers at these venues & clubs to ensure the safety of all players on a more consistent basis by overseeing the game in a safe and controlled manner.

PLAYERS SHOULD TRY TO NOT RUN AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE - FAIR FOR ALL CONCERNED!



**PLAY SAFE - PLAY LONGER**



# WALKING FOOTBALL

