

FOOTBALL EXPRESSIONS KEY

Back of the net! to score a goal

- *You should've seen it, it was such a great goal. **Back of the net!***

Man on! this is usually shouted out during a match to warn someone that a player of the other team is right behind them. Often a call to pass the ball.

- *Quick! **Man on!** Pass the ball to Jones!*

We were robbed: a phrase used to express that a defeat was unjust, possibly due to an injustice committed by somebody else.

- *The referee didn't see that foul. If he'd given that player a yellow card he wouldn't have scored that goal. **We were robbed!***

He's (she's) got a sweet left foot: referring to a player who is very skillful at kicking the ball with his / her left foot (most players use the right foot)

- *She's one of the best players on the team, and she's **got a sweet left foot.***

He (she) pulled off a great save, what a save! referring to a very quick, acrobatic stop of a shot by the goalkeeper.

- ***What a save** by the goalie. That was fantastic!*

Hit the woodwork: when a player intends to shoot into the goal but hits the crossbar or the post of the goal instead, and was very unlucky not to have scored.

- *He almost had it, but unfortunately **it hit the woodwork.***

Ran the defence ragged: referring to an attacking player who made the defenders from the opposing team look uncomfortable or incompetent.

- *He deserves to be Man of the Match. He scored a hat-trick and **ran the defence ragged!***

He (she's) got a lot of pace: a very fast player

- *Jones is definitely a great player, he's **got a lot of pace.***

The goalkeeper made a howler: used when the goalkeeper makes a very basic mistake (and probably lets the other team score a goal).

- *They were in the lead, but then **the goalkeeper made a howler** and the other team scored.*

It's a game of two halves: an expression referring to the fact that a football match can change unexpectedly throughout the 90 minutes. Especially between the first half and second half of the match.

- *Well, they may be losing now, but **it's a game of two halves!***

FOOTBALL-RELATED IDIOMS

Idioms are different from the above expressions because they can be used in conversation about any topic and not just football.

Get the ball rolling: to get something started. Begin a process.

- *We need to have everything ready for the party by next week, so if you could please **get the ball rolling** by inviting everyone, that would be really helpful.*

Get a kick out of something: to enjoy watching or doing something.

- *If you **get a kick out of** horror movies, then you'll love the new Quentin Tarantino film!*

To kick something off, to kick-start something: to begin or cause something to begin.

- *We're going to **kick-start** the summer with a lovely weekend trip to the countryside.*
- *If you want to be a successful businessman, you need to **keep your eye on the ball** all the time.*
- *He **took his eye off the ball** when he shouldn't have done, and the rival company managed to snatch the deal from him.*

To watch from the sidelines: a position where someone is observing a situation rather than being directly involved in it.

- *You never supported me when I needed you. You just **watched from the sidelines!***

To move the goalposts: to unfairly change the rules or conditions of a procedure during its course.

- *Jessica quit her job because her boss kept **moving the goalposts** about her promotion prospects.*

To be on the ball: someone who is very quick to respond and very aware of new ideas and methods.

- *What's wrong with you? You used to **be on the ball** with your work all the time.*

A political football: a topical issue that is the subject of continued argument or controversy.

- *Retirement age is a big **political football** in the European Union'*

At this (late) stage in the game: this simply means 'at this point'.

- *There's nothing we can do **at this stage in the game**. You should've told me earlier.*

To kick someone around: to treat someone roughly or disrespectfully.

- *I don't think it's fair the way you **kick him around** all the time. He deserves some respect.*

To score an own goal: an act that unintentionally harms one's own interests.

- *Unfortunately, Sarah **scored an own goal** by quitting her job before signing her new contract.*

To take sides: to support one person, or stand against another, in a dispute or contest.

- *I'm not **taking sides**. I think you're both wrong, so I'm not getting involved!*

League: a class or category of quality or excellence.

- *When it comes to achieving perfection, John is in **a league** of his own.*

To blow the whistle on someone: to bring an illicit activity to an end by informing on the person responsible.

- *She was offered a lot of money as a bribe, because she threatened **to blow the whistle** on the company's illegal activities.*

A game plan: a strategy worked out in advance

- *We need to come up with a better **game plan**; this idea will never work!*

Know the score: to be aware of the essential facts about a situation.

- *I don't need to explain anything else to my boss, **he knows the score.***

A game changer: an idea, procedure or event that significantly changes the current way of doing or thinking about something.

- *The new software had become known as the new '**game-changing**' entertainment experience.*