

FOOTBALL

Advantage Rule – This rule is applied when there is no need to stop the play when a foul is noticed by the referee.

Aggregate Score – This is the average score scored by the teams that play in the club competitions. These clubs usually conduct games on the knockout basis. The teams will be paired to play each other twice, one on the home ground of both the teams. The score is then decided by adding the scores in both the matches.

Attacker – The term referred to a striker and someone who is close to the goal post of the opposing team.

Ball in and out of play – The ball to be passed out of the play must be found outside the sideline or the goal line. It can be played even if it is on the side line. The game continues as long as the ball is in the play.

Bicycle kick – This is a style or a volley where the player kicks the ball over his head while doing a somersault. The player has both his feet off the ground and kicks the ball simultaneously while doing a somersault.

Booter – A term used in the game which means to kick the ball. To boot means to kick the ball very hard, long and high.

Clear – This is used whenever a situation or chance to score a goal arises in the game. The player should immediately clear the ball or kick the ball away from the goal mouth so that a goal can be stopped. Sometimes they even pass the ball or start an attack and other times they just boot the ball out of the play.

Captain – A player who is chosen to lead a team in the match and to decide the toss before the match.

Chip – A high and a long shot hit so that the ball passes over the goalkeeper's head directly into the goal.

Dead Ball – When the players are stopped and the ball is not moving this is called Dead Ball. Such a situation arises when there is a chance for free kicks and penalty kicks.

Extra time – This is an additional time of play, whenever there is a tie and is played in two halves of 15 minutes to decide the winner.

Foul – A term used to describe the breach of the laws of Football by a player and this can be punishable by a free kick or penalty.

Free Kick – Granting an unobstructed kick to a stationary ball, especially whenever the opposing team makes a foul.

Goalkeeper – A specialized player who is also called as goalie. The work of a goalkeeper is to stop the ball from reaching the goal post behind him.

Hand Ball – The term used when the players use their hand or arm while playing or passing the ball. This is considered to be offensive in the game.

Head – To head the ball means to play the ball with forehead, be it to clear, pass or to score a goal.

Mark – When the game is in the man to man situation, the defender is said to mark the attacker. The farther he is to him the looser the marking and the closer he plays to him the tighter the marking.

Man of the match – A term used for the best player of the game.

Own Goal – A situation where a player unintentionally kicks the ball into his own goal is conceded as own or self-goal.

Pass – An action where a player kicks the ball to his team mate.

Penalty – The situation where a player kicks the ball from the penalty spot and there is only one defender near the goal i.e. the goalkeeper.

Period – Football game is divided into two halves in time; first half and second half.

Pitch – The Football field is called the pitch for easy use.

Referee – The official in-charge of the game. Referee is the final decision maker in the game; he is the one who checks the time and stops the game when it is over. Players cannot enter or leave the field without his consent. It is the responsibility of the referee to see that the game, ball and players all conform to the rules of the game. There are two assistant referees in the game.

Red Card – A decision of the referee where he decides if a player has made an offence and then asks him to leave the game for the remaining duration.

Scissor Kick – To kick the ball forward while the player leans sideways and the ball is kicked in the direction which he is playing. This kick is performed while the player is completely off the ground.

Scoreline – Indication of scores of both the teams which also has the information about the home ground. If the scoreline shows ABC 0 and DEF 2, this means the game is on ABC's home ground and the winner is DEF with 2 goals.

Tackle – A term used when a player uses his body to take the ball from the opponent, it can be a shoulder charge. Clean tackling means to successfully take the ball from the opponent without a foul.

Time – The Football game is divided into two halves and each half is dedicated to be strictly for 45 minutes in any professional game.

Yellow Card – This is shown to the player, warning him that he has committed a serious offence in the match. It is followed by another yellow card in case of another offence and then the red card.

Tournament

After the World Cup, other most famous and prestigious tournaments are the continental championships which are organized by the confederations of these continents. They are –

- European Championship (UEFA)
- The Copa America (CONMEBOL)
- African Cup of Nations (CAF)
- The Asian Cup (AFC)
- The CONCACAF Gold Cup
- The OFC Nations Cup (OFC)

There is another tournament called FIFA Confederation Cup which is conducted between the winner of all the above mentioned six continents, the current World Cup champions and the country which is hosting it.

Irrespective of these tournaments, there are many champions league tournaments conducted between the Football clubs and the 10 most famous Football clubs among them are –

Club	Country
1. Barcelona	Spain
2. Real Madrid	Spain
3. Juventus	Italy
4. Bayern Munchen	Germany
5. Chelsea	England
6. Sevilla	Spain
7. Manchester United	England
8. Arsenal	England
9. Liver Pool	England
10. Milan	Italy

Football is a team sport; however, one player's brilliance to score the goal gets their team to win. The sport has seen some of the best players over decades. Tackle, attack, shoot, and score past the goal post are collective skill sets of champion players. Here is a list of best football players with a brief look at their stats.

Pele alias Edson Arantes do Nascimento is a great Brazilian footballer. He holds the record for being the youngest player to score in the World Cup. At the age of 17, he opened the goal count against Wales in 1958. Since then, there was no looking back for him. He represented Santos at club level since 1956 and called quits to the game in 1977. He is fondly called as "The King of Football", and port city Santos celebrates November-19 as Pele day that marks the day he scored his 1000th goal.



George Best Born in Northern Ireland, George Best, was one of the finest and greatest players of all time. He was equaled with Pele during his playing days. He debuted for Manchester United club at 17. Speed, skill, and aggressive style of play were his attributes. However, his off-field liaisons and lifestyle were too much for a club like Manchester United to accept. Hence, he was dropped from the team and later injuries forced him to quit the game at a very early age of 27. Unfortunately, this legend never got an opportunity to represent his country on bigger stage.



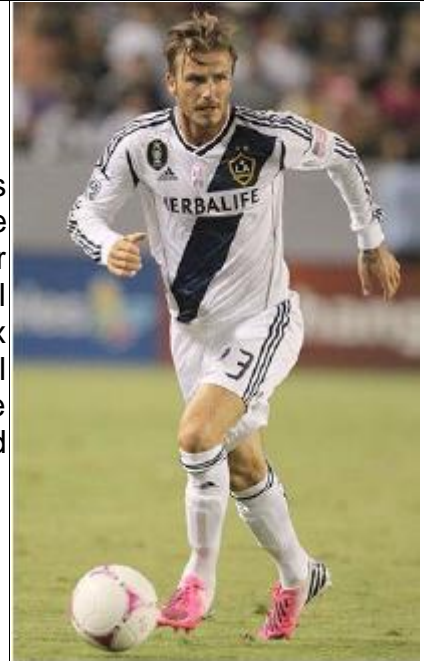
Diego Maradona Speed with technique and a magical left-foot made Argentine football player, Diego Maradona, a legend. He was called "The Golden Boy of Football". He started playing football at the age of 15 for Argentinos Juniors club. Later, he played for Barcelona, Sevilla, and Napoli clubs. He made headlines when he scored a controversial hand-ball goal in 1986 World Cup final. He scored 34 goals for the national side during his 17-year long career.



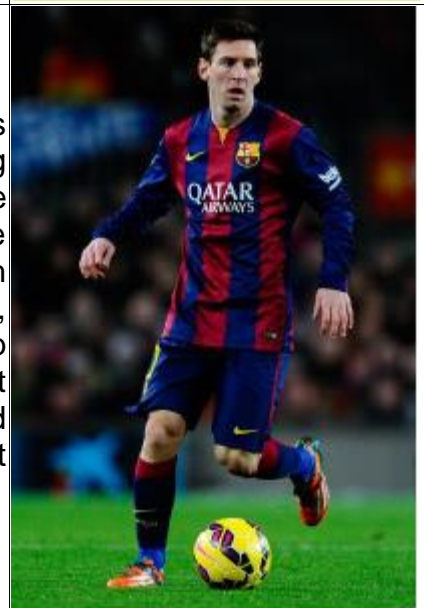
Ronaldo The Brazilian striker was considered next to Pele in legends of the game. He took part in four World Cup finals and won twice. Ronaldo is the second highest goal scorer for his nation with 62 goals. He is one amongst the players who won FIFA World Player of the Year three or more times. Ronaldo won Ballon d'Or twice, once in 1997 and again in 2002. Barcelona, Real Madrid, Inter Milan, and PSV are few popular clubs that he played for and finally retired in 2011 after a long streak of injuries.



David Beckham Bend it like Beckham! The popular saying was coined with reference to Beckham's style of bending free-kicks. He was known for his accurate passing and creating opportunities for strikers to net the ball. Beckham started playing professional football at the age of 17 for Manchester United. He captained England for six years. In his 20-year long career, he represented top clubs like Real Madrid, LA Galaxy, and PSG other than Manchester United. Off the field, he was also popular for his stylish lifestyle and charity. He retired from professional football in 2013.



Lionel Messi After Maradona from Argentina, Messi is considered as his successor in football. Lionel Messi born in 1987 started playing professional football at a very young age and has already played three World Cups. Speed, technique, and intelligent play are his prime attributes. Alike Maradona, Messi is also known for his free kicks with left foot. He is yet to win the World Cup for his national team. Currently, he plays for Barcelona at club level and holds almost every club record. Most geniuses of the game have rated him as the best footballer ever. Lionel Messi has won top FIFA award three times and Ballon d'Or four times (2009, 2010, 2011, 2012), which is the highest for any player till date.



Cristiano Ronaldo The Portuguese football player was born in 1985 and started playing professional football at the age of 12. His heroics soon became known globally and the manager of Manchester United roped him for season of 2003-04. Accurate passing, excellent chop and scissor moves are a couple of his exceptional football playing skills. At club level, he is currently playing for Real Madrid and Manchester United was his former. He is believed to be the best finisher of all time by greats. He held the record for highest number of goals in European championship for a long time until Messi broke it.



Leagues

National Football League (1996–2007)

Founded in 1996, the [National Football League](#) was the first football league of India to be organised on a national scale.^[26] The aim was to develop the sport in the country and give a platform for Indian footballers to showcase their talent. The [second division](#) was soon introduced by AIFF in 1997 to supplement the top division.^[27] Ten years after formation, a third division was briefly introduced for one season in 2006^[28]

I-League (2008–present)

After the end of [2006-07](#) season, AIFF disbanded the NFL after missing the aim of professionalism. Supportive to this decision was also the presence of poor infrastructure and financially weak clubs. To replace NFL, AIFF introduced a fully professional [I-League](#), with ten clubs from the last season of NFL, participating in the [maiden](#) I-League season.^[29]

I-League 2nd division (2007–present)

The National Football League's second division was succeeded by the I-League second division in 2008. The State FAs nominate top teams from their respective State leagues to AIFF who then select the clubs based on criteria fulfilled. The number of clubs in this league varies each season. Since 2017–18 season, the league saw introduction of I-League reserve sides and these teams aren't eligible to get promoted since I-League is a top division.^[30]

Indian Super League (2014–present)

The [I-League](#) which was promised to be a professional league, soon began to suffer from lack of popularity due to poor marketing as the seasons passed by.^[31] The deal between [Zee Sports](#) and AIFF which was initially signed for a ten-year term in 2006 was terminated in 2010 after disagreement between both the parties. AIFF then signed a massive 700-crore deal with [Reliance Industries](#) and the [International Management Group](#) on 9 December 2010.^[32] The Indian Super League was officially launched on 21 October 2013 by [IMG–Reliance](#), [Star Sports](#), and the [All India Football Federation](#) with an aim of growing the sport of football in India and increasing its exposure in the country, this time with the big names and high professionalism.^[33] A total of eight franchises were bought by big corporations, [Bollywood stars](#) and [cricketers](#).^[34]

In 2017, The AFC were against allowing the ISL as the main league in India while I-League clubs [East Bengal](#) and [Mohun Bagan](#) wanted a complete merger of the ISL and I-League.^[35] A couple weeks later, the AIFF proposed that both the Indian Super League and I-League should run simultaneously on a short-term basis with the I-League winner qualifying for the [AFC Champions League](#) and the ISL champion to [AFC Cup](#) qualification stage.^[36] The proposal from the AIFF was officially approved by the AFC on 25 July 2017, with the ISL replacing the domestic cup competition, the [Federation Cup](#) which was a true knockout cup competition.^[37]

Two seasons later, the AIFF and AFC met again to determine the roadmap for Indian football. After the meeting, it was announced that the Indian Super League was officially the top-tier league of India with [AFC Champions League](#) slot while I-League was now the domestic cup tournament with [AFC Cup](#) slot. The AFC also mentioned some of the key recommendations. The first recommendation was to open a pathway for two I-League clubs to enter into the ISL by the end of the 2020–21 season, subject to the criteria being fulfilled. The second recommendation was, allowing the winner of I-League to stand a chance of getting promoted to the ISL with no participation fee, basis fulfilling sporting merit and the national club licensing criteria to be set out by the AIFF starting with the 2022–23 season. In its final recommendation, it was agreed that there would be no relegation in the ISL for now. The introduction of promotion and relegation into the top league would be implemented by the end of 2024–25 season and the existence of two parallel leagues will be abolished.

Cup competitions

Federation Cup

Federation Cup (abbreviated as Fed cup) is an annual knockout style club football tournament in India. It has started in 1977. From its inception till [I-League](#) has been started in 1997 (then called [NFL](#)), it was the most prestigious national level club football tournament in India. Previously, the winning club of Federation fused to get a chance to compete in the continental level in [AFC Cup](#) along with I-League champion team. Presently, the cup has been discontinued since the [2017–](#)

[18](#) season and a new [Super Cup](#) was inaugurated from the same season and this tournament is the country's top tier cup competition.

Durand Cup

The Durand Football Tournament was started by then, India's Foreign Secretary, Mortimer Durand at Simla, India, in 1888, initial matches were played in Dagshai. It was basically initiated, as a recreation for British troops stationed in India. The Durand Cup was twice suspended, during the two world wars. In 1940 the venue was shifted to [New Delhi](#).

Super Cup

The Super Cup is a [knockout football](#) tournament. The top six teams from both the top-tier leagues for professional football in India, the [I-League](#) and [Indian Super League](#), qualify directly for the main round of the competition. The bottom four clubs from each league participate in qualification round to complete.

IFA Shield

The IFA Shield is an annual football competition organized by the [Indian Football Association](#) (IFA), [West Bengal](#). It is the fourth oldest club cup competition in the world (started in 1893) after the [FA Cup](#), the [Scottish Cup](#) and the [Durand Cup](#). Along with local clubs of Bengal, clubs all around the nation and even overseas are duly invited to participate in this tournament.

Senior National Football Championship / Santosh Trophy

Santosh Trophy is an annual Indian football tournament which is contested by states and government institutions. The trophy is named after the late Maharaja Sir Manmatha Nath Roy Chowdhary of Santosh. The first winners were Bengal, who also lead the all-time winners list with 32 titles till date.

Lal Bahadur Shastri Cup

The Lal Bahadur Shastri Cup, also known as the Lal Bahadur Shastri Memorial Football Tournament, is an Indian [association football](#) tournament held in [Delhi](#) and organized by the Shastri Football Club.^[39] Named in honor of former Indian prime minister [Lal Bahadur Shastri](#), the tournament was first held in 1978. Apart from some top clubs from Delhi, clubs from neighbouring states have also participated in the tournament.

INDIAN FOOTBALL TEAM :

Goalkeepers: Gurpreet Singh Sandhu, Amrinder Singh, and Prabhsukhan Gill.

Defenders: Pritam Kotal, Seriton Fernandes, Rahul Bheke, Hormipam Ruivah, Sandesh Jhingan, Anwar Ali, Chinglensana Singh, Subhasish Bose, Akash Mishra, and Roshan Singh.

Midfielders: Bipin Singh, Anirudh Thapa, Pronay Halder, Jeakson Singh, Brandon Fernandes, VP Suhair, Danish Farooq, Yasir Mohammad, and Aniket Jadhav.

FORWARDS: Manvir Singh, Liston Colaco, and Rahim Ali.

INDIAN FOOTBALL STARS:

1. Bhaichung Bhutia:

Famously described as “God’s gift to Indian football”, the AFC Hall of Fame striker played more than 100 international matches for his country, a national record, and inspired his nation to win the AFC Asian Cup in 2011 ending an absence of 27 years. A trailblazer who became the first Indian footballer to sign a contract with a European club and the first to play professionally in England, Bhutia also helped India to win the 2008 AFC Challenge Cup as well as multiple South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) titles.

2. Sailen Manna:

It wasn't for nothing that Sailendra Nath Manna came to be recognised as India's 'Footballer of the Millennium'. In addition to being a part of the first Indian football team to go on a tour abroad in 1948, Manna was also the captain of the Indian team when they won gold at the first-ever Asian Games in 1951. The talented defender also led India at the 1952 Olympics in Helsinki. While it was Howrah Union who gave Manna his first chance in football, he spent most of his club career at India's oldest club Mohun Bagan, where he became a fan favourite during a 19-year stay.

3. Neville D'Souza:

Indian football flourished during the 1950s and 1960s, making waves at home and abroad. One of the most notable individual performances of this period took place at

the 1956 Melbourne Olympics. Neville D'Souza's feat may not be common knowledge in Asia today but fact is that he was the first player from the continent to score a hat-trick in the Olympics football tournament. He achieved this in the quarter-final against hosts Australia. India went on to lose the subsequent semi-final but D'Souza did end up as the joint top-scorer with four goals.

4. Chuni Goswami:

One-club man Chuni Goswami is still revered by fans of Mohun Bagan for his years of devotion to the team. After joining the Kolkata club at the tender age of eight, Goswami rose through the ranks to finally captain the team. At the international level too, Goswami was to show his quality. He skippered the national team to Asian Games gold in 1962 before adding a runners-up place in the 1964 AFC Asian Cup. The latter achievement remains India's best ever showing in the continent's premier tournament.

5. I.M. Vijayan:

After the heydays of the 1960s, football in India suffered a gradual decline until the 1990s when a host of young stars broke on to the scene and a new nationwide league was launched. Among them was I.M. Vijayan, a forward of extraordinary skill. Starting out in his native state of Kerala, he soon started attracting the attention of big clubs from around India. This led to Vijayan donning the jerseys of clubs like Mohun Bagan, East Bengal, JCT and Churchill Brothers. Vijayan also starred for India, scoring over 40 goals, including a strike against Bhutan that came within 12 seconds of kick-off.