

## The Language of Offside *March 2nd 2012*

On this week's main listening report we focus on some of the language that is used with one of the most controversial laws of the game: offside. You can listen to the report by clicking [here](#) while vocabulary support can be found at the end of the worksheet.

### A. Main Idea – True or False

Listen to the report and decide whether the following statements are true or false. Give a reason for your choice.

1. T / F Law 11 is connected to the issue of offside
2. T / F A player can be offside even when he or she is level with the last defender
3. T / F A player can be offside in his / her own half
4. T / F A player is always offside when standing in front of the ball
5. T / F A player can be offside from a corner kick
6. T / F The offside trap often reduces the space on the pitch

### B. Listening - vocabulary

Listen to the report and fill in the gaps with the appropriate word or phrase.

1. ... according to the [FIFA website](#) \_\_\_\_\_ when an attacking player is nearer to the opponent's
2. The person who \_\_\_\_\_ whether a player is in an offside position or not is the assistant referee ( \_\_\_\_\_ the linesman) who can see across ...
3. ...when a player is offside and the referee blows for an infringement and \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ free kick.
4. However there are \_\_\_\_\_ to these laws.
5. A player has to be \_\_\_\_\_ with play, which means that he or she is directly involved in the move taking place.
6. ... to prevent players from standing near the goal waiting for a chance to score: to - \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ - and its introduction

## ANSWERS

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1. T / F Law 11 is connected to the issue of offside  
**Law 11 of football is all about offside**
2. T / F A player can be offside even when he or she is level with the last defender  
**A player is not in an offside position when he or she is level with or behind the second last opponent**
3. T / F A player can be offside in his / her own half  
**A player cannot be offside in his or her own half of the pitch**
4. T / F A player is always offside when standing in front of the ball  
**standing in an offside position does not always mean that a player is offside.**
5. T / F A player can be offside from a corner kick
6. T / F The offside trap often reduces the space on the pitch  
play the offside trap then space becomes squeezed and it is difficult for a team to find space to play in

### B. Listening - vocabulary

*Listen to the report and fill in the gaps with the appropriate word or phrase.*

1. ... according to the [FIFA website](#) **occurs** when an attacking player is nearer to the opponent's goal line than the ball
2. The person who **decides** whether a player is in an offside position or not is the assistant referee (**formerly** the linesman) who can see across the pitch.
3. ...when a player is offside and the referee blows for an infringement and **awards an indirect** free kick.
4. However there are **exceptions** to these laws.
5. A player has to be **interfering with** play which means that he or she is directly involved in the move taking place.
6. ... to prevent players from standing near the goal waiting for a chance to score: to **goal hang** and its introduction

## Transcript

Law 11 of football is all about **offside** which according to the [FIFA website](#) occurs when an attacking player is nearer to the opponent's goal line than the ball and the second last opponent. A player is not in an **offside position** however when he or she is level with or behind the second last opponent or indeed the last two opponents. A player cannot **be offside** in his or her own half of the pitch: they must be in the attacking half of the field. The person who decides whether a player is in an offside position or not is the assistant referee (formerly the linesman) who can see across the pitch. He raises his or her flag when a player is offside and the referee **blows for an infringement** and awards an **indirect free kick**.

That all seems simple enough. However there are exceptions to these laws. For instance, standing in an offside position does not always mean that a player is offside. A player has **to be interfering with play** which means that he or she is directly involved in the move taking place. One question to be asked is whether that player is gaining an advantage from this offside, FIFA defines **interfering with play** as 'playing or touching the ball when it has been passed or touched by a team-mate', that is, by standing in front of the keeper, preventing a defender from playing or scoring a goal from a position that is beyond the final defender. There are other exceptions when a player is not considered as being in an offside position. A player is not offside if he receives the ball directly from a goal kick, a throw-in or a corner kick.

Offside was originally introduced to the game to prevent players from standing near the goal waiting for a chance to score: to **goal hang** and its introduction was meant to open up the game, to spread the play though if a team decides to play **the offside trap** then space becomes squeezed and it is difficult for a team to find space to play in. FIFA claims that the law is as easy as one-two-three but the list of exceptions and the subtle differences in interpretation means that the offside law will remain one of the more controversial laws of the game.

## Links

- [FIFA Laws of the Game](#)
- A Coach from St John's Soccer Team [explains the offside law](#)
- Not everyone still understands the law - the [Guardian Newspaper](#) report on the UK's 50p coin that tried to explain the rule that was subsequently proven to be wrong

## Vocabulary

**To be offside:** To be in an illegal position

**To be caught offside:** To be played into an illegal position by the opposing team

**To spring the offside trap:** To avoid the trap, to beat the offside trap

**To beat the offside trap:** To spring the offside trap, to avoid the trap

**To play on the shoulder:** A forward who likes to stand near the last defender and hopes that his or her speed will help beat the offside trap

**blows for an infringement:** The referee whistles to give a free kick

**An indirect free kick:** One that is awarded after an offside call (the kick has to be touched by another player before it can be shot at goal for instance).

**To be active:** When a player is deemed to be part of the play (is nearby for instance) and so can be offside

**To be inactive:** Even though the player looks offside he or she is not directly involved in the play so is not offside

**To be interfering with play:** To be directly involved in the play (so is probably offside)

**goal hang:** To simply wait in front of the goal for a chance to score (sign of a lazy player)

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