



Goalpost Safety Guidelines

Making Safety The Goal

The Football Association launched a major campaign in August 2000 aimed at highlighting goalpost safety throughout grassroots football. The drive comes after the deaths of nine children in accidents involving goalposts over the last few years.

The campaign highlight the potential dangers of using goalposts without undertaking the necessary checks and precautions and are designed to attract as much attention as possible at local levels.

The FA's campaign, which builds on guidelines circulated by the game's governing body in 1991 and 1999, identifies four easy-to-follow golden rules for the safe use of goalposts. These are:

- Check It - make sure goalposts are in good condition and properly constructed. Home-made goalposts never be used - they do not have built-in safety features and may be particularly hazardous for younger players.
- Secure It - goalposts of any size must be securely anchored to the ground. Portable goalposts must be pinned or weighted down to prevent them toppling forward, and should be removed from the pitch when not in use and stored securely.
- Test It - adults should test the goalposts to make sure they are stable by exerting a downward force on the crossbar, backward force on both upright posts and forward force on both upright posts.
- Respect It - goalposts should only be used for their intended purpose; in particular, children should not swing on them.

Play Your Part

The Football Association, along with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, the Health and Safety Executive and the British Standards Institution, would like to draw your attention to the following guidelines for the safe use of goalposts. Too many serious injuries and fatalities have occurred in recent years as a result of unsafe or incorrect use of goalposts. Safety is always of paramount importance and everyone in football must play their part to prevent similar incidents occurring in the future.

- For safety reasons goalposts of any size (including those which are portable and not installed permanently at a pitch or practice field) must always be anchored securely to the ground.
- Portable goalposts must be secured by the use of chain anchors or appropriate anchor weights to prevent them from toppling forward.
- It is essential that under no circumstances should children or adults be allowed to climb, swing on or play with the structures of the goalposts.
- Particular attention is drawn to the fact that if not properly assembled and secured, portable goalposts may topple over.
- Portable goalposts should not be left in place after use. They should be dismantled and removed to a place of secure storage.

- It is strongly recommended that nets should only be secured by plastic hooks or tape and not by metal cup hooks. Any metal cup hooks should if possible be removed and replaced. New goalposts should not be purchased if they include metal cup hooks which cannot be replaced.
- Goalposts which are "home made" or which have been altered from their original size or construction should not be used. These have been the cause of a number of deaths and injuries.

Guidelines To Prevent Toppling

(i) Follow manufacturer's guidelines in assembling goalposts.

(ii) Before use, adults should:

- Ensure each goal is anchored securely in its place
- Exert a significant downward force on the cross bar
- Exert a significant backward force on both upright posts
- Exert a significant forward force on both upright posts

(These must be repeated until it is established that the structure is secure. If not, alternative goals/pitches must be used).

Let us all ensure that for the safety of the children, we carry out the inspection and testing of the equipment prior to its use on all occasions.

The message must be:-

- **Check it**
- **Secure it**
- **Test it**
- **Respect it**