

## FOOTBALL — THE WORLD'S MOST POPULAR SPORT

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**ABSTRACT:** This article provides general information about football, its origins, main rules, and development both worldwide and in Uzbekistan. It highlights football's popularity, its impact on human health and character education. The article also examines the role of football in young people's lives and its importance in developing qualities such as teamwork and diligence.

**KEYWORDS:** football, sport, team, Uzbekistan football, healthy lifestyle, youth, FIFA, World Cup, popularity, sports education

### INTRODUCTION

Today, football is one of the most famous and widely played sports in the world. It is played and loved in every continent, city, and even in small villages. The charm of this sport lies in its ability to unite young and old, rich and poor, and people of different nations and ethnicities around a common goal. Every year, millions of fans follow football competitions and support their favorite teams. Football is not only a sport but also a symbol of friendship, teamwork, and solidarity among people. Football is more than just a game — it is a powerful force that unites millions of hearts. In almost every country in the world, football attracts great attention and enthusiasm. It is considered one of the most popular sports on Earth.

### MAIN PART

#### **The Origin of Football**

Football has existed in various forms since ancient times. The foundation of modern football was laid in England in the 19th century. In 1863, the first Football Association was established in England, and official rules of the game were introduced.

#### **How is Football Played?**

Football is played between two teams of eleven players each. The main goal of the game is to score more goals than the opponent. The match lasts 90 minutes, divided into two halves of 45 minutes each. If necessary, extra time or penalty shootouts are used to determine the winner.

The football field is rectangular with two goals. The ball is played mainly with the feet; only the goalkeeper can use hands within his own penalty area.

#### **Popularity of Football**

Today, football is the most popular sport in the world. According to FIFA (The International Federation of Football Associations), more than 250 million people actively play football. Billions of fans around the world eagerly watch football competitions.

The **World Cup**, held every four years, is one of the biggest sporting events in existence.

#### **Football in Uzbekistan**

After gaining independence, Uzbekistan saw rapid development in football. In 1992, the Football Federation of Uzbekistan was established. Currently, the Uzbekistan Super League, the national cup, and youth leagues are active.

The national team regularly participates in the Asian Championships and continues to strengthen its position on the international stage.

#### **Benefits of Football**

Playing football promotes a healthy lifestyle and helps develop essential human qualities such as teamwork, responsibility, perseverance, and diligence. This sport teaches young people to use their free time effectively and to be disciplined. It also improves physical strength, coordination, and endurance. Regular practice builds self-confidence and leadership skills. Football encourages friendship and unity among players. Overall, it shapes both a healthy body and a strong character. Football inspires motivation and a spirit of fair play. It helps players set and achieve personal goals. The game teaches respect for rules and opponents. Through football, people learn persistence and teamwork.

**TABLE: Overview of Football**

№	Category	Description
1	Type of sport	Team sport, played between two teams of 11 players
2	Match duration	90 minutes (two halves of 45 minutes each)
3	Main objective	To score more goals than the opponent
4	Ball movement	Mostly with the feet; only the goalkeeper can use hands in his area
5	Football organization	FIFA – International Federation of Football Associations
6	Major tournaments	World Cup, Champions League, Euro 2024, etc.
7	Development in Uzbekistan	Super League, Uzbekistan Cup, youth leagues
8	Positive aspects of football	Improves health, teamwork, discipline, goal orientation
9	Role in youth life	Meaningful leisure, making friends, fostering love for sports
10	Famous players	Lionel Messi, Cristiano Ronaldo, Mohamed Salah, Jasur Yakhshiboyev (Uzbekistan)

**CONCLUSION**

Football represents unity, teamwork, determination, and the spirit of sportsmanship in pursuit of victory. Today, it is not only a game but also a major industry, a form of culture, and even a means of diplomacy. Every citizen loves football, supports it, and draws inspiration from it.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. It is recommended to play football regularly, as it greatly contributes to physical health. Being active strengthens the cardiovascular system and improves overall well-being.
2. Youth should attend football clubs to use their free time productively. This helps them stay away from harmful habits and encourages a healthy lifestyle.
3. More football fields should be built in schools and neighborhoods. This will improve sports infrastructure and increase interest in sports.
4. Parents and teachers should encourage children to take up sports, especially football. Through sports, children learn teamwork, discipline, and determination.
5. Football should not be limited to watching only — everyone should try to participate actively. This helps nurture not only healthy but also socially active young citizens.

**SUGGESTIONS**

1. Regular football competitions should be organized at school and college levels. This will strengthen healthy competition and help identify talented players.

2. Free or low-cost football clubs should be opened in local areas. This will provide opportunities for talented youth with limited financial means.
3. Cooperation between local football clubs and schools should be established to help young players progress to the professional level.
4. Sports infrastructure should be improved — especially through building modern football fields — to boost interest in sports among youth.
5. Football should not be viewed only as a men's sport; women's football should also be promoted. Supporting women's football ensures equal opportunities and broadens the scope of sports.
6. Mass media should publish more programs and articles about the benefits of football. This will increase public interest and guide the younger generation in a positive direction.

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