

Football Association Law 18 - Walking

The Law is about Walking and relates to how a player moves around the pitch with or without possession of the ball.



This includes on and off the ball from the first whistle including when the ball is dead. So many players still think that when a ball is dead and waiting for a kick in or corner to be taken, they can run into position, this can gain a player an advantage and therefore is illegal.

For example, the ball goes out of play by just a short distance and a player runs to collect the ball place it on the side-line and takes a quick kick in. Other players who continued to walk may not have been able to get back into position and as such the player taking the kick in has gained an advantage.

One huge myth that needs putting right is the one foot on the ground myth. In the FA Laws there is a vague description that walking is always having one foot on the ground, this is not a law but a description which could be better explained as:

Walking Definition: To advance or travel on foot at a moderate speed or pace; proceed by steps; move by advancing the feet alternately with the heel down so that there is always one foot in contact with the ground. This does not mean just because you have one foot on the ground it's Walking. Jogging, skipping, hopping, dragging your feet or any combination of this is NOT Walking and should be penalised as such.

Speed Walking Definition: This differs from running in that it requires the player to always maintain contact with the ground and requires the leading leg to be straightened as the foot makes contact with the ground. It must remain straightened until the leg passes under the body.

A good indicator for referees when making decisions on walking or not walking is the body position of the player. When adopting a gait akin to the speed walking technique a player is more upright and maintains a steady head position (with arms swivel more horizontally) but when jogging the body position is leaning forward, the knees are bent, and the head moves up and down through the movement.
