



FOOTBALL
AUSTRALIA

WALKING FOOTBALL

PROGRAM INDUCTION

What Is Walking Football?

- Walking Football is a social, small-sided, and sustainable version of football played by people worldwide. It is the gentler version of the beautiful game and the rules have been adjusted to make it SOCIAL, SAFE and FUN.
- It has been designed to suit new participants and veterans alike, and provides a safe, inclusive, and enjoyable format of football to increase participation of Older Australians in regular physical activity. It focuses on low-impact and team-based exercise and provides physical and mental health benefits, social connectedness, alongside education and promotion of the benefits of ongoing physical activity.
- The format and rules of the game, and the emphasis on having fun and socialising – makes football available for everyone no matter the age or skill level. The program takes a 'whole of family' approach to include participants of all ages in football and increase inter-generational interaction, whilst also providing participants opportunities to continue their involvement in their local club as members and volunteers.

- **Introduction video:**

<https://www.playfootball.com.au/player/walking-football>



Ambassadors & Testimonials



Shona Bass (Walking Football Ambassador - Socceroos Cap #337)

"It's so important for us as we get older that we keep active. Being active can actually slow the ageing process from a physical perspective, but also it provides such a wonderful stimulus for social and emotional wellbeing, improved mental health, and the opportunity to feel really good about being involved in exercise. Walking Football gives it all."

Paul Wade (Walking Football Ambassador - Matildas Cap #2)

As you may well know, I had epilepsy and I lived with that fear of people knowing and people judging. But it's amazing how relieved you'll feel if you get involved and feel part of a group. Happiness comes from the intention of activity and you can do that by going out and playing Walking Football".

David Mudgee

"I love Walking Football as anyone can play the game we love in an uncompetitive, social environment, the banter is priceless, and it helps to stay fit".

Christine Hindmarsh

"Walking football is about trying something new and suits my motto to a tee - 'have fun, keep moving and keep smiling'.

Gayle Page

"I love playing Walking Football and having fun with a great bunch of different people every week, it really has been the highlight of 2021 for me personally and I can't wait to return".

Nick Bron

"Walking Football allows me to once again safely participate in the game I love. Before it, I wasn't sure I'd ever be able to play again."

Lee Pepper

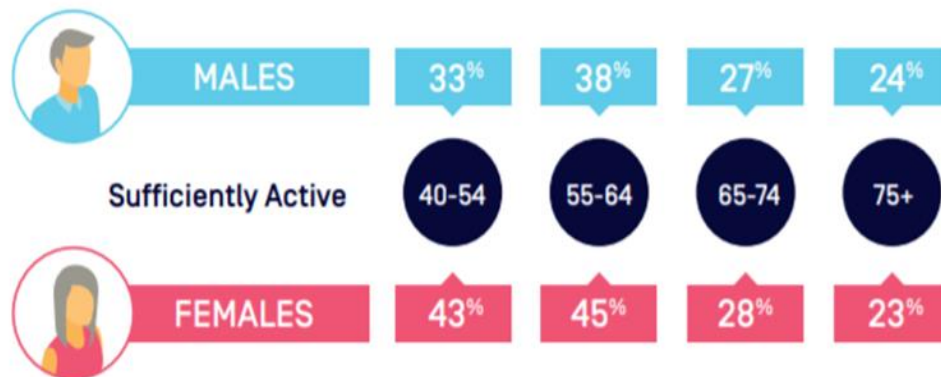
"Walking football has given so many people in my age group an opportunity to play football forever. It is literally forever football! There is no reason that I'm ever going to stop playing this game"



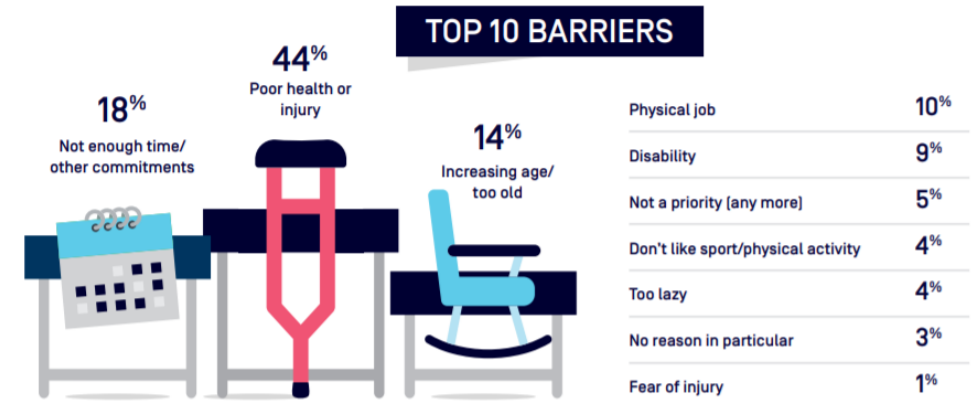


Why Walking Football?

- Many older Australians are not active or do not achieve the recommended amounts and types of physical activity which may result in big health risks and decline in the ability to manage everyday activities and independence. As participation decreases with age, supporting people stay or become more physically active is something we can all do and should do.



- Statistics have also shown that participation in football drastically decreases from the age of 45 years old and are unable to play the beautiful game due to age barriers and health conditions..



- As a result, Walking Football has been designed to offer a modified format and low impact alternative that focuses on fun and enjoyment and provides safe and accessible participation to stay active, learn skills and make friends





National Objectives

- Provide a safe, inclusive and enjoyable form of football to increase older Australians' participation in regular physical activity;
- Promote the social, physical and mental health benefits of football to older Australians;
- Provide opportunities to join local clubs as members and volunteers;
- Create a national network of Walking Football team leaders and volunteers who can grow the game for older Australians;
- Increase the capability and capacity of football administration at national, state and local level to make Walking Football sustainable into the future;
- Increase intergenerational interaction by taking a 'whole of family' approach to include all ages in non-playing roles;
- Work closely with Indigenous and CALD communities to reach participants in those demographics;
- Get more females involved in the game as players, coaches, officials and volunteers, as part of Football Australia's drive towards 50:50 gender equality;
- Deliver through the hub format with weekly sessions running in metropolitan, regional and remote areas.



Your Role As A Club & Team Leader



- As a team leader or club official you can be a powerful motivator or role model in your community and change the way society views older people. You can help your players toward better health, address isolation exacerbated during COVID-19, and continue playing football.
- You will benefit from attracting and increasing numbers of new members.
- By promoting an 'all age friendly' culture, you will address barriers to participation and help your community participate with others, excited about playing football, and feel welcome and valued by:



1. Being aware of their needs, physical abilities, and the reasons to not play or stop playing sport:
 - fear of not fitting in or being embarrassed, practices, competitions or pathways which do not suit them.
 - club culture that is not welcoming and appears to focus on mainly young participation.
 - stigmatisation/prejudice that older people can't play football at a certain age or being too old to play.
2. Helping new players feel part of the club or team, having a point of contact and orientation information, include them in club activities, and value their contribution and celebrate their achievements.
3. Using the right communications: the ways your club communicates with players is very important, from the first impression to the words you use (i.e. terms and language, choosing positive images etc).
4. Let your players speak up about their concerns, listen and acknowledge.
5. Encouraging the wider community to support your players and program.



PlayFootball Set Up & Manual Registrations

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO REGISTER PARTICIPANTS IN PLAYFOOTBALL?

The objectives of the National Registration Regulations are to:

1. Promote, develop and protect the game of football in Australia in all its forms for participants of all abilities and skill;
 2. Ensure football is regulated in a consistent and coordinated manner across the states, territories, districts, zones, and clubs;
- It is also important that participants are registered in PlayFootball to ensure they're covered by insurance.
 - It is vital that participant data is collected through PlayFootball, reporting this data is crucial to show Government the continued success and for the long-term sustainability of the program.
 - Whilst also providing Football Australia, stakeholders, and the community with data for future grant funding opportunities.



MANUAL REGISTRATION SUPPORT & PLAYFOOTBALL SET UP

Please refer to the “Walking Football - PlayFootball Registration guide”, we are more than happy to provide online training with this if required.

We understand that it can be difficult to get this age demographic to register online, therefore, we have put together a paper/manual registration form, and a “Walking Football – manual registration guide” to show how the program lead can manually register participants in PlayFootball. This program lead should contact the local Club/Association/Region/Zone registrar/online services team for access to the system or for support with this process.

Program Surveys

It can take time and effort to collect data from participants, but the outcome is rewarding. Collecting data allows us to provide participants with information about their progress, receive feedback to improve the experience, make Walking Football more sustainable, and communicate to stakeholders the positive impact of the program on health and wellbeing.

All deliverers will be asked to distribute an evaluation survey to their participants. We would really appreciate allocating time to complete these surveys.

- Surveys take about 10 minutes to complete and is designed to be completed by an adult independently but, if they require assistance to complete it, the support of program staff or carer would be very much appreciated.
- Uptake can be improved by spending 10 minutes at a session completing it as a group.
- Surveys are available in different formats to ensure a flexible data collection, including links and QR Codes for quick access and scanning during sessions.
- Responses will only be shared with evaluation partners.

Player Survey

https://vuau.qualtrics.com/jfe/preview/SV_80wmOVO8Fv1Rblc?Q_CHL=preview&Q_SurveyVersionID=current

Program Lead Survey

https://vuau.qualtrics.com/jfe/preview/SV_6DSK1nDJdXUxAns?Q_CHL=preview&Q_SurveyVersionID=current



Marketing Guidelines & Expectations



WALKING FOOTBALL MARKETING GUIDELINES

To ensure we align and promote Walking Football effectively, please utilise both the Football Australia and Member Federation's Walking Football logos on any marketing collateral. Vertical and horizontal versions of these logos can be used, to get a copy please contact your Member Federation.

Please ensure that any third-party names, media announcement or social media posts are shared with your Member Federation and Football Australia for review and approval prior to public release.



**WALKING
FOOTBALL**



**FOOTBALL
QUEENSLAND**

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SPORT AUSTRALIA ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- As part of the funding agreement with Sport Australia, it is important we acknowledge the grant in all Walking Football content, using the phrase below in stories & the logo on any graphics/fliers.
- *"This project received grant funding from the Australia Government through Sport Australia"*
- For a copy of this logo, please contact your governing bodies.





Before You Start Your Program – Key Considerations for Delivery

- Before you start, all deliverers are required to complete the **FREE** Walking Football e-learning modules to better understand how to safely support your team play the game and positively impact their health and wellbeing (<https://learn.activeageing.org.au/modules-and-courses/> (Ask your Member Federation for the access code))
- Become familiar with the National Rules and Guidelines (Ask your Member Federation for a copy or download from the website).
- Data is key for your program's growth, so ensure your participants register either by paper forms or online (refer to registration set up or manual registration forms) and accept flexible payment options.
- Have in place a First Aider or First Aid Protocols. Please ensure that an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is available and deployed across your venue to enhance first aid capabilities and response in case of a cardiac arrest. (<https://www.playfootball.com.au/ncdp/toolkits/inclusive-participation/defibrillators>)
- Ensure your program is safely and easily accessible by public transport or walking distance.
- Set regular times and places for older people to attend.

Plan ahead for your program and explore different ways to help older Australians participate more actively.

- Start with hosting a 'Come & Try' as a way for people to become familiar with your program and trail activities before committing to the term or season.
 - Make sure you offer the right format (social or competition) based on your players interest, skill level, fitness and abilities.
1. Social format with modified game play and rules to accommodate people with physical limitations and first-time players.
 2. A competition structure which suits returning and more experienced and competitive players.
- Always prepare them to play by implementing specially designed warm-ups and warm downs to help reduce injuries and improve the body's flexibility.
 - Offer convenient game times and encourage exercises in between games.
 - Encourage participants to exercise at home to remain active in between sessions

Program Sessions Structure and Format

Activities have been designed to assist players participate safely while aiming to improve everyday function. We recommend sessions are delivered for no longer than 60 minutes across 8 to 12 weeks. Never push players to move more than is comfortable for them, it is important that you start slowly and build up gradually.

Brief participants on rules and expectations, it is important to set these in stone early and reiterate as required. Where possible, consider running two games, breaking participants into groups dependent on skill level and experience.

1. WARM-UP: (5 to 10 minutes)

- A 5-minute Warm Up is designed to prepare the player for Walking and includes simple and controlled movements to increase muscle temperature and reduce injury risk. Refer to Program Session Guide, Website and Online Learning for more information.

2. DRILLS AND GAMES: (30 to 40 minutes)

- You can choose your activities based on your participants' needs and levels. Before you begin the game, ensure you brief your players on the rules and run games for no longer than 15-minute halves, allowing 2 to 3 minutes breaks between halves for a quick drink and chat.
- Small-sided games can be modified based on the number of participants. Ideal playing formats are generally 4v4, 5v5, 6v6 or 7v7.

3. COOL DOWN: (5 to 10 minutes)

- Cooling down and stretching reduce soreness and help the body recover from exercise and return to its normal state. It's a great way to conclude your session and encourage post-session gatherings and socialising.

4. HOME EXERCISES: (2-3x times per week)

- Exercising at home is a simple, safe, low cost and effective way to improve strength and balance. We encourage all participants to exercise at home to help improve their abilities in the game and everyday living. Check the Walking Football website for home exercises and activities.



Rules and Regulations (1)



People may not know that Walking Football rules have been carefully designed to make it more enjoyable, safer, and more suitable for a wide range of physical abilities. The game is more social and less physical, slower pace, passing is the focus rather than speed and running. The rules include:

- **Walking instead of running** identified as the Walking Rule – ‘always having one foot on the ground’ – putting less demand on the heart and lungs. An indirect free kick will be awarded to the opposition should the game leader deem a player to be "not walking".
- There is **no offside, handling, or heading** the ball to make sure participants have fun and stay safe.
- **No slide tackles**, trips, strikes, pushes, shoulder barge, excessive force – reducing potential injuries and falls.
- The 'height' should be deemed to be the **height of the crossbar or body waist**. For example, if the crossbar is 1.2m high, the permitted height of the ball would be deemed as 1.2m high (approximately above waist height). An indirect free kick will be awarded to the opposition should the ball be raised above this height.

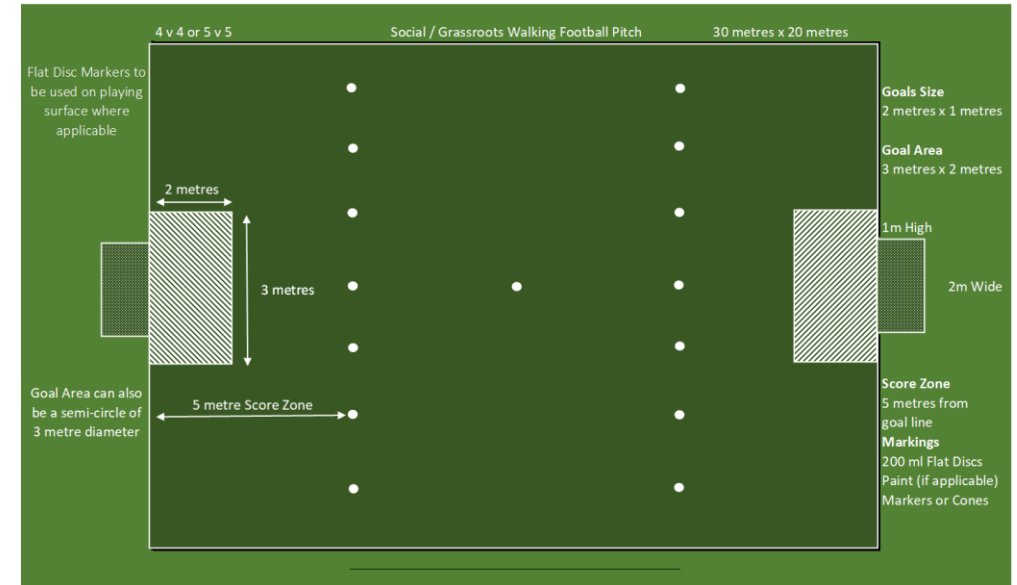
- There are **no Throw ins**, players are to kick/pass the ball back into the field of play once the ball crosses the sideline. Corner kicks and goal kicks are permitted, and indirect free kicks are awarded to the opposing team if a player or team is guilty of an offence.
- During games, a penalty can be awarded and must be taken from the centre spot with the kicker using the 'one step only' method to strike the ball towards goals.



Rules and Regulations (2)

Facilitators, game leaders, or program administrators have the adaptability to incorporate varying playing formats and field dimensions with the aim of providing the best possible player experience within their facility.

- Field Sizes are smaller and can be adjusted to suit numbers – 30m x 20m to 40m x 30m most common in programs.
- Goals' size are 2m x 1m to 2.4m x 1.2m with a 3 metre semi-circle or a 3m x 2m rectangle goal area or 'no go zone'.



- Games can be played without goalkeeper, particularly for social programs and new players. Best practice is to enhance player experience by increasing 'scoring moments' and reduce the possibility of contact in the goal area.
- Cones, markers, or painted line markings are suitable - this includes the penalty areas. Flat disc markers are recommended for marking out the defined goals area, penalty spots, and centre spot where paint markings are not allowed or available.
- Walking can be facilitated on a variety of surfaces including football pitches, green space, indoor centres, courts, etc. Program administrators should undertake a pitch/venue/surface risk assessment before commencing the program. Always check if players are wearing dangerous equipment.



Q & A ?

THANK YOU!