

The Football Association  
25 Soho Square  
London  
W1D 4FA

Telephone  
+44 (0)20 7745 4545  
Facsimile  
+44 (0)20 7745 4546

E-mail  
[info@TheFA.com](mailto:info@TheFA.com)  
Visit  
[www.TheFA.com](http://www.TheFA.com)



**FUTSAL**

# The FA Football Development Programme Futsal Fact Sheet

# The FA Football Development Programme Futsal Fact Sheet



FUTSAL



# Futsal Factsheet

## Futsal: The basics

Ever wondered how some of the world's most skilful players developed their ability to beat opponents at will? How do players such as Luis Figo, Ronaldo, Ronaldinho, Robinho and Roberto Carlos develop skills that set them apart from other players? What did they do as youngsters that provided them with the basis to becoming some of the world's best players? If you are interested in the answer then you need to learn more about a game called Futsal.

## What is Futsal and how does it differ from our domestic versions of Small Sided Football?

Futsal is the format of Small Sided Football that is recognised and supported by FIFA and UEFA with World and European Championships for club and National Teams

Futsal was the name chosen by FIFA, the World governing body of Football for the only version of 5-a-side football that it supports. The name simply combines the Spanish words for 'Hall' – Sala and 'Football' – Futbol into Futsal. It is a 5-a-side game, normally played on a slightly larger pitch with hockey sized goals and a smaller ball with a reduced bounce. It is played to touchlines and all players are free to enter the penalty area and play the ball over head height. As a small sided game players are constantly placed in situations where they must receive or play whilst under pressure or in confined spaces. As a game it places considerable demand on technique, movement, tactical awareness and fitness.

The differences to our traditional versions of Small Sided Football are the absence of rebound boards and some slight

amendments in the laws that favour skilful, creative play above the physical contact that tends to be a feature of English five a side.

FIFA in formulating the laws have also incorporated exciting elements from other indoor sports. Thus an accumulated foul count is in place with each and every team foul after the fifth in any one half resulting in an unopposed ten metre penalty. This really conditions the defensive tactics of teams and rewards attacking play. Teams can also use a bench of up to seven rolling substitutes which means that the tempo of games remains high throughout. Games are played in two twenty minute halves but as the countdown clock is stopped every time the ball is out of play an average game can at International Level last 80 to 90 minutes.

**The main differences between Eleven-a side Football and Futsal are summarised below**

What's the difference?	
Futsal	Traditional English Five a Side Football
Five players on court – rolling substitutions	Five players on court – limited substitutions
Played to lines. Ball is returned to play with a 'Kick-In'	No By or End lines – use of rebound boards. Ball constantly in play
Use of wider and longer pitch	
All players allowed to enter penalty areas	Only Goalkeepers permitted to enter penalty areas
No height restriction on ball	Use of restriction on height of the ball
Use of Square Goals (3m x 2m) Use of Futsal ball (30 per cent reduced bounce)	Use of rectangular goals Use of Football – size 5 for adults
5 Foul Limit - No wall for Direct free Kick from ten metres after fifth Foul	Unlimited Fouls



### Why have FIFA and UEFA shown an interest in this game?

The interest of the Football Governing Bodies has emerged for the three main reasons;

1. The popularity of the game – from its origins in South America the game is now played throughout the world. One hundred and four nations participated in the qualifying phases of the 2004 FIFA World Cup with Spain beating Italy in the Final
2. Commercial rationale – FIFA wishes to develop an exciting and lucrative version of indoor football that has appeal for spectators and is attractive to sponsors and broadcasters.
3. Technical Development – Futsal can make a contribution to the technical development of football players – Andy Roxborough of UEFA commented that 'Futsal is a paradise for the technical player'

### The growing popularity of Futsal – Worldwide

FIFA World Futsal Championship – Participating countries	
Holland 1989	16 teams by invitation
Spain 1996	48
Guatamala 2000	72
Tawain 2004	104

### Why is The FA interested in Futsal?

11 a side football will always be the overwhelming concern of the FA but the FA is also aware that football participation is changing. Recent years have seen a significant growth in the numbers of people playing Small Sided Football. The popularity of Small Sided Football is a reaction to changing work and leisure patterns and a move towards 'Pay and Play' football. It is here to stay!

The FA views Futsal as a high quality format of a small sided game.

- Many Countries that we admire for the technical skills of their players use Futsal as an aspect of youth development. Ball retention, quick and skilful play, tactical awareness – all are promoted in Futsal
- Fairplay – The Laws of the game and an accumulated fouls rule discourages teams from being overly physical or disputing the decisions of the two referees.
- Exit routes – Futsal can offer some very exciting opportunities to its participants that are not available in traditional five a side. There is now a FA Futsal Cup, UEFA Futsal Cup and International representation in European and World Competitions available to talented teams and players.

### What are the game's South American origins?

Futsal began in the South American countries of Uruguay and Brazil where, in the 1930's, two versions of Small Sided Football were being played in the cities of Montevideo and Sao Paulo respectively.

In Brazil, the large crowded cities and a shortage of playing pitches forced a football mad populace to play small sided football. A version began to develop on the streets of Sao Paulo, leading to the publishing of the first rules of the game in 1936 from the country that would soon become the masters of the game.

Skills and techniques honed in Futsal soon began to become apparent in the performance of Brazil's National Team - Pele, Rivelino, and Zico all played the game at some time in their development.

# Futsal Factsheet

'I think the best way to improve your skills is to play football on a smaller pitch. I didn't play 11-a-side football until I was 13. In Brazil most kids play what we call futebol de salao, which is similar to five-a-side. It is played on a hard surface and the ball is smaller and weighted with foam so it doesn't bounce as much. On a small pitch you need to have good control and move the ball around quickly. There isn't much space so you need to be skilful. That is why Brazil always produces players with great skill'.

*Juninho*

## Where is the game played?

The adoption of the game by FIFA has led to its spread throughout the world;

- Holland 60,000 registered Futsal players.
- Brazil 190,000 registered Futsal players.
- Japan 300,000 registered Futsal players.
- Portugal has over 15,000 registered Futsal players
- Italy 2,200 registered Clubs.
- 32 European countries in 2004 FIFA World Cup qualification rounds.
- Professional leagues in Brazil, Iran, Japan, Italy, Portugal, Spain & Russia.
- National leagues in 50+ countries
- Terrestrial TV coverage. Very popular in Spain, Italy, Brazil, Croatia, Romania, Ukraine and Russia

## What demands does it place on coaches?

Futsal is a very tactical game and at its highest level is compared to Basketball in that teams once in possession can perform choreographed movements in order to create scoring opportunities. Having only four outfield players means that there is little room for personal errors and each individual must maintain their tactical

awareness in order for the team to be successful.

Unlike 11-a-side football the Coach has far greater opportunity to directly influence play on the pitch in that substitutions are unlimited and can be repeated. A coach also has the ability to call a one minute time out in each half. Futsal coaches seldom sit down in the course of a game!

A variety of formations are used with 3-1 and 2-2 being the most popular. However the World and European Champions Spain employ a unique 4-0 structure and any team chasing a game will consider replacing a goal keeper with an outfield player to create a 5-4 overload in attacking positions.

The natural assumption of many English Coaches coming to Futsal is that it is similar to traditional five-a-side football and as such may offer few benefits other than fun and fitness. However the popularity of the game throughout the rest of the world is for a good reason and there are many elements of it that are transferable to 11-a-side football. For instance the ingenuity and interplay

required to open up a close marking defence in Futsal could enhance creative play in Football.

## How is The FA supporting the development of the game in England?

### Coaching qualifications

The FA introduced in May 2006 the 'FA Introduction to Futsal' Course. This is a Seven hour programme designed to provide a starter for coaches. The Course is open access.

Course details can be found at [TheFA.com\grassroots\smallsided](http://TheFA.com\grassroots\smallsided).

### England Futsal Team

An England Team has been established for the dual purpose of participating in UEFA Competitions and helping to promote and publicise the sport. The team draws its players predominately from the few senior Futsal Clubs and semi professional 11-a-side football. The team schedule for 2006 is based upon preparing the team for the qualifying process of the UEFA Futsal Championship in January 2007 and the FIFA World Futsal Cup in 2008.

'In Futsal a successful team may use any or all of the four most popular formations; 3 – 1, 4-0, 1-2-1, 2-2. Futsal is not a game for players who only feel secure in their own few square metres of the pitch. What Futsal develops is speed and quality of decision making'

*Javier Lozano – Manager of Spain – FIFA Futsal World Cup Winners 2004*



### FA Futsal Cup and Futsal League

The FA has now run this tournament on three occasions with teams qualifying for the national Finals via local leagues. The winners of the 2005 Tournament were Doncaster College for the Deaf who qualify as the English entrant for the 2006 UEFA Futsal Club Cup.

The three –day competition also provides an opportunity to showcase youth, women's and disability Futsal as well as staging coaching and referee seminars.

The 2006 National Finals will take place at the English Institute of Sport, Sheffield July 21 – 23rd. There are 16 qualification places available for teams progressing from local leagues and regional play- offs. Established Futsal Clubs such as Tranmere Victoria, Santos, Sheffield Hallam, London White Bear, Doncaster College, Baltic will contest with the growing number of new Futsal Clubs emerging on the scene

### UEFA Futsal Cup

This is an annual competition that brings together the domestic champions of each country. The competition to date has been dominated by the professional teams of Spain, Portugal, Russia and Belgium. England has staged the pre-qualifying tournament for this competition on the last two occasions with Sheffield Hallam and London White Bear FC representing England. White Bear were extremely unfortunate not to progress from the competition staged at Crystal Palace in September 2005 despite winning two of their three matches against the champions of France and Armenia.

### Futsal Leagues

The FA is keen to see the organisation of new and additional Leagues. Support is offered to League Organisers in relation to promotion, referees, equipment and facilities. Further details are available on the Grassroots section of the FA.com

### FA Futsal Leagues – Operating Criteria

- The pitch must be rectangular, have Futsal markings and it's dimensions must fit into the following criteria:
- Width: minimum 15m, maximum 25m
- Length: minimum 25m, maximum 42m
- The goal posts must measure 3m wide x 2m tall
- A minimum of 2 referees must be used for each game
- There must be a minimum of 8 competing teams
- Games should last two equal periods of between 15 and 20 minutes in length with 1 time out per team per half. Note that matches do not have to be played 'real time'.
- The league must be affiliated to the County FA
- All league fixtures must comply with the competition rules for the National Championships and be completed by the 30 June 2006

# Futsal Factsheet



## Futsal in Education

Futsal is now available as an option of FA's and CFA's Education programmes. Free equipment and training is available to FA Charter Standard Schools and to School Sports Partnerships interested in developing the game. Applicants should consult

<http://www.thefa.com/Grassroots/FootballInSchools/>

## Referees

The FA will be producing its FA Futsal Referees Qualification in 2006 to provide officials for this growing sport. Futsal offers exciting opportunities for referees to progress quickly and become involved in local leagues, The FA Futsal Cup and international fixtures.

## What are the laws of the game?

The official laws of Futsal –are available to download from the FIFA website as a standalone publication - [www.fifa.com](http://www.fifa.com)

As an initial introduction to these laws, the basic principals of the game that make it different from any other versions of 5-a-side are highlighted below:

- The pitch – Futsal is played on a marked pitch and the ball can go out of play (see illustration for dimensions and layout of pitch).
- The ball - Is a fundamental factor in making the game and is by virtue of the laws of the game required to be a smaller, heavier, 'low bounce' version of 11-a-side ball
- Head height – There are no restrictions (apart from the ceiling of the sports hall!) as to how high the ball can be kicked in Futsal.
- Rotating substitutions – Up to 12 players can be used in one match and there is no limit on how long a player must stay on or off the pitch. Players must enter and leave the field of play via the 'substitution zone' that is marked on the pitch in front of the team benches.

- Kick-ins – In order to restart the game after a ball has gone out of play the ball is kicked back into play from the touchline and from corners. The ball must be placed stationary on the touchline and the standing foot of the player taking the kick-in must not be on or behind the line.
- The 4 second rule – For kick-ins, free kicks, goal clearances and corner kicks the player in possession of the ball has 4 seconds to restart play which the referee will count with their fingers in the air. If play isn't restarted within four seconds an indirect free kick will be awarded to the opposing team. The goalkeeper is not allowed to control the ball for more than 4 seconds in his own half.
- The 5m rule – Players are required to keep 5m from the player in possession of the ball on free kicks, corners, goal clearances, kick-ins and penalties.

- Goalkeepers – Goalkeepers are allowed to come out of and players are allowed to go into the penalty area. A goal clearance must be thrown out and the goalkeeper cannot touch the ball again until it has crossed into the opponents half or a member of the opposition has touched the ball
- Accumulated fouls – Each team will be allowed to give away 5 direct free kicks in each half, then on the sixth foul a direct kick is awarded to the opposing team and the defending team is not allowed to position any players (other than the goal keeper) between the ball and the goal. The kick may be taken from the 10m mark or, if the foul was committed closer to the goal than the 10m mark, then the kick may be taken from the position where the foul took place.
- Real time – A Futsal match consists of two twenty minute halves that are played real-time which means the clock stops whenever the ball goes out of play.
- Time outs – Each team is allowed a one-minute time out in each half.
- Sliding Tackles – Sliding tackles are not allowed in Futsal but players ARE allowed to slide on the pitch, for example to stop the ball from going out of play. For a player sliding to be considered an offence, the tackler's opponent must have possession of the ball. Referees will not give a foul for a slide if the opponent does not have possession of the ball.
- Red Cards – If a player is sent off then the team to which the player belongs must remain with 4 players until either two minutes have passed, or the opposition have scored a goal.
- Goalkeeper – The goalkeeper can make slide tackles in the area as long as they are not deemed to be dangerous by the referee.
- In an International Futsal match there are three referees and one timekeeper.





## Basic techniques of Futsal

The following practices provide an introduction to the key techniques of Futsal. It is essential that a Futsal ball is used when these drills are staged as it is important that the players get accustomed to a smaller low bounce ball that performs differently from that used for 11 a side.

## The Warm Up

With a Futsal ball players should look to dribble and move the ball using all parts of their foot, especially sole of foot. Practice stop, starts, turns with both feet. Drag the ball with the sole of the foot. Keep the ball up whilst moving forward.

## Passing and control

### Passing and control.

In Futsal passing should usually be done with speed and must be accurate. Keep the ball moving to maintain the advantage of possession.

### Practice 1

Org. In pairs, 10 metres apart.  
*Dia. 1*

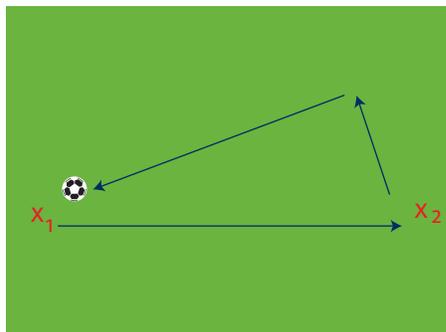


Diagram 1

**Coaching points** - Crisp passing using inside, outside, laces of foot.

Two touch (control and pass), one touch.

Receiver controls close to body with sole, inside and outside of foot.

Emphasise sole of foot technique.

Control ball forwards, sideways and backwards.

## KEY to diagrams

Player movement



Ball movement



2 Number refers to ball movement in sequence

### Practice 2

Org. In 6's. One ball. Two lines of three facing each other, 10 metres apart.

*Dia.2*

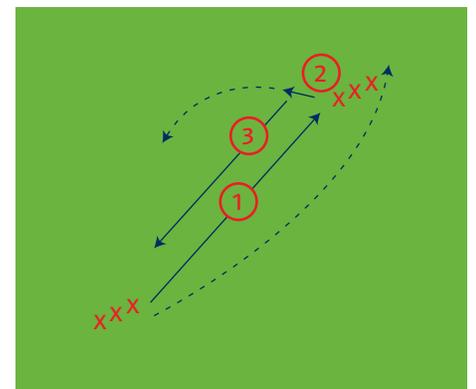


Diagram 2a

(a). Pass across to player in front of opposite line, following direction of pass and go to back of opposite line of players. Receiver controls sideways and passes ball to opposite player and follows direction of pass going to back of opposite line. Repeat.

**Coaching points** - Vary part of foot used for pass emphasising accuracy and speed. Use ground and flick pass. Receiver varies control and pass sequence. Receive sole of one foot; pass with outside of other foot.

# Futsal Factsheet

## Practice 3

*Dia.3*

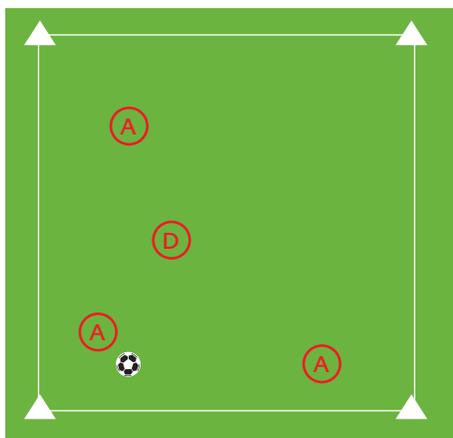


Diagram 3

Org. 3 v 1 in 10m x 10m area. Play 'keep ball'.

Coaching points - Coach different techniques of pass/control including sole of foot control. Body movement. Take ball in stride pattern etc.

Introduce aerial passes and control in 20m x 20m area. (unopposed).

Use flick pass to lift ball over short and longer distances.

Progress to 5 v 2 in 20m x 20m area.

Coach movement, receive/control and support.

Devise practices to include aerial control situations using feet, chest, thigh and head.



### Moving with the Ball and Dribbling.

#### Practice 4

Org. In pairs, 30 metres apart.  
Running with ball across to partner.

Coaching points - Dragging ball with sole of foot.

Close control. Move as quickly as possible. Good balance. Body shape facing forward.

#### Dia.4

Org. Two lines of three players facing each other 10 metres apart. First player runs with ball towards opposite line. First player in opposite line moves towards the runner. As they meet the runner with the ball back heels or drags the ball with sole of foot for the other player to control and run across to opposite side. Repeat.

Coaching points - Quick running; timing and technique of back-heel dragback control in running stride.

#### Practice 5

#### Dia.5

Org. (3's in 20m v10m). 1, 2 in line facing 3, 20m apart.

1 runs with ball approximately 5 metres, passes to 3 and follows pass.

3 controls ball and runs with ball towards 1. 3 drags ball sideways to beat 1 and passes to 2.

Repeat. Each player moves to opposite side after completion of movement.

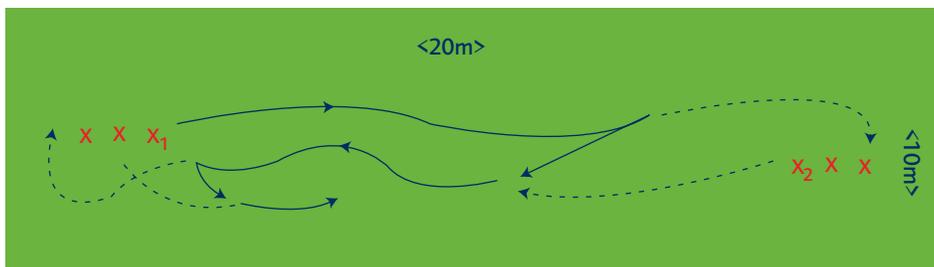


Diagram 4

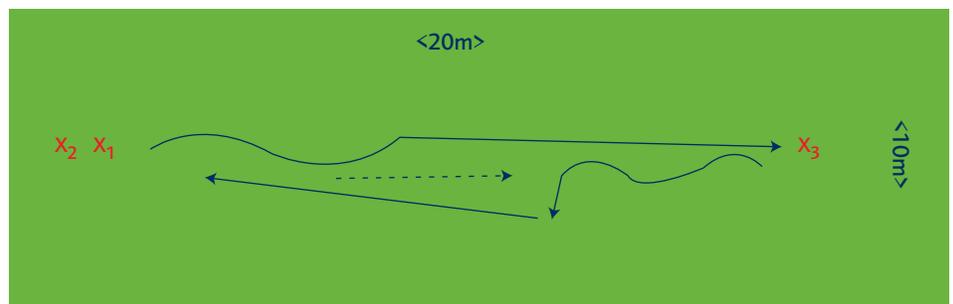


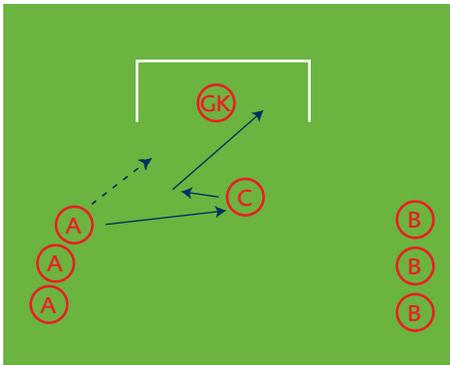
Diagram 5

# Futsal Factsheet

## Shooting.

### Practice 6

Dia.6



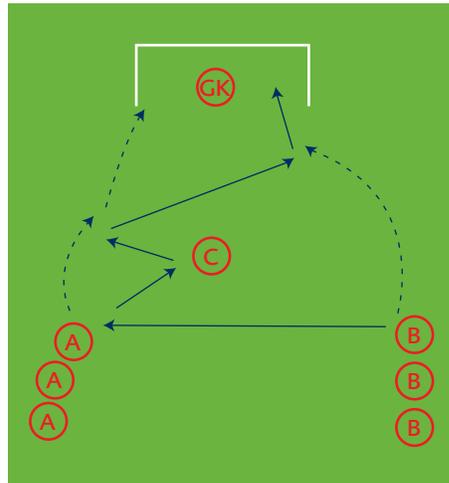
Org. (7 plus GK). Two lines of three players, 20 metres from goal, three metres apart. Each player with a ball. First player passes ball to centrally placed coach or player. Coach sets ball sideways for first player to run on to and shoot. Repeat from alternate sides. Players change sides in order to practice with both feet.

**Coaching points** - Coach use of instep, inside and outside of foot. Encourage accuracy. Target areas - corners of goal.

Vary set up pass for volley and half volley shots. Aim for low and high corners of goal.

### Practice 7

Dia.7



Progress to support player at far post area.

Org. 'B' players start with a ball each. 'B' plays ball to 'A'. 'A' controls and passes to 'C'. 'C' plays ball back to 'A'. 'A' shoots or drives ball across face of goal for support player 'B' to shoot.

On completion 'A' returns to back of 'B' line and 'B' to back of 'A' line.

Repeat from other side.

**Coaching points** - Pace and angle of pass; movement and timing of support player's run; decisions to shoot or pass; support runs.

### **How can I start playing Futsal?**

Since the sport is only just beginning to develop in England, initially it may be difficult to find the facilities already established that will allow you to play Futsal - but don't be put off!

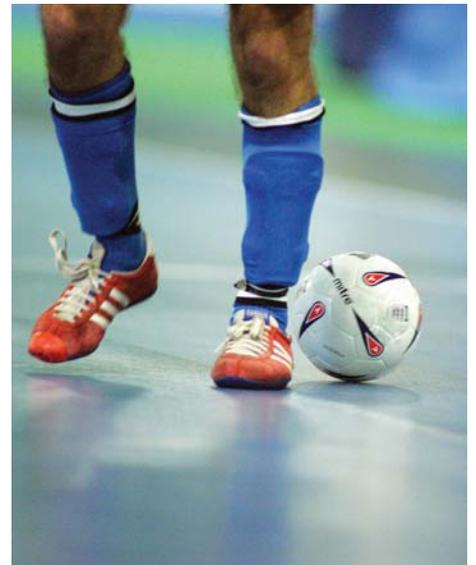
Any reasonable sized school or sports hall can accommodate Futsal and the floor markings can be laid down with tape – even if it is only temporary at first. Futsal Goals resemble Handball or Hockey Goals so try to use these if you can't access the real thing. Alternatively Goals used for Mini Soccer would also be fine to start off with.

### **Can I play on any surface?**

At an International level Futsal must be played on either a wooden floor or a suitable synthetic floor that is smooth and flat. At any other level Futsal can be played – Indoor or out - on a variety of firm surfaces. Futsal can also be played on Artificial Grass. Although the surface slightly slows up the pace of the ball it is suitable for introducing the game.

### **Do I need to use a special type of ball?**

Yes, Futsal balls are smaller than 11-a-side balls and are made with a reduced bounce.



# Futsal Factsheet

## **Are three referees and a timekeeper really necessary?**

Only at an international level – though it is recommended that you play with a minimum of two referees as the game by its nature is very fast and will be difficult for one person to referee on their own.

## **Where can I get hold of Balls, Goals, and other equipment?**

Futsal Goals can be obtained from the following suppliers that goals at different specifications;

[sales@edsports.co.uk](mailto:sales@edsports.co.uk)  
[mel@ybsinsulation.com](mailto:mel@ybsinsulation.com)  
[john@itsagoal.net](mailto:john@itsagoal.net)  
[www.harrod.uk.com](http://www.harrod.uk.com)  
[www.thefpl.com](http://www.thefpl.com)  
[www.newitts.com](http://www.newitts.com)

Grants to assist some groups to purchase Futsal Goals and equipment may be available from the Football Foundation;

[www.footballfoundation.org.uk](http://www.footballfoundation.org.uk)

Futsal balls can be viewed or purchased from;

[www.newitts.com](http://www.newitts.com)  
[www.thefpl.com](http://www.thefpl.com)  
[www.sheffieldfa.com/development/Futsal/Futsal+Equipment](http://www.sheffieldfa.com/development/Futsal/Futsal+Equipment)  
[www.Mitre.com](http://www.Mitre.com)

Useful web sites for leagues and general Futsal information

The FA	<a href="http://www.thefa.com/Grassroots/SmallSidedFootball/">www.thefa.com/Grassroots/SmallSidedFootball/</a>
Futsal Premier League	<a href="http://www.thefpl.com">www.thefpl.com</a>
UK Futsal information	<a href="http://www.futsal.org.uk">www.futsal.org.uk</a>

Also contact your local County Football Association who may also have information on local Futsal Opportunities.

Useful web sites for international futsal

[www.fifa.com](http://www.fifa.com)  
[www.uefa.com](http://www.uefa.com)  
[www.futsalplanet.com](http://www.futsalplanet.com)

