

The FA's guidelines for the safe use of goalposts.

The FA, 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 as per the manufacturer's instructions
- Under no circumstances should children or adults be allowed to climb on, swing or play with the structure of the goalposts
- Particular attention is drawn to the fact that if not properly assembled and secured, portable goalposts may overturn
- Regular inspections of goalposts must be carried out to check that they are properly maintained
- Portable goalposts should not be left in place after use. They should be dismantled and removed to a place of secure storage
- The use of metal cup hooks on goals was banned from the commencement of 2007-08 season and match officials have been instructed not to commence matches where such net fixings are evident for safety reasons. Nets should only be secured by plastic hooks, net grips or tape and not by metal cup hooks. Any metal cup hooks should have been removed and replaced. New goalposts should not be purchased if they include metal cup hooks
- 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

There is no BS/CEN standard for wooden goals and it is unlikely that wooden goals will pass a load or stability test. The FA recommends that wooden goals should be replaced when necessary with compliant metal, aluminium or plastic goalposts. All wooden goals previously tested by independent consultants have failed strength and stability tests.

For reference, you should note that The FA and BSI, in conjunction with the industry, have developed two standards for goalposts – BSEN 748 (2004) and BS 8462 (2005). It is strongly recommended that you ensure that all goals purchased comply with the relevant standard. A Code of Practice BS 8461 has also been completed and copies of all of these three standards are available from the British Standards Institute.

Funding for replacement goals is available via the Football Foundation and eligibility criteria and further details can be obtained on their web site – www.footballfoundation.org.uk