

Goal Post Safety

Auckland Football Federation encourages safe practices when installing and moving football goal posts. These guidelines are not mandated by legislation but expected to be applied by Auckland Football Federation Clubs. The application of this guideline is to reduce risk and prevent injuries or fatalities associated with goal posts (fixed or portable).

This guideline is in association and further to the FIFA Regulations outlined by Law 1. The guideline is designed to outline the potential dangers and the necessary precautions to be implemented. Law 1 states that:

“For safety reasons, goals (including those which are portable and not installed permanently at a playing pitch or practice field) must always be anchored securely to the ground. Portable goalposts must be made of lightweight material. Particular attention is drawn to the fact that if not properly constructed, portable goalposts may tip over and cause injury or even death. Portable goals should not be left in place after use, but should be dismantled, removed, tied together face-to-face or secured to a permanent structure such as a fence.”

Health and Safety is not only the responsibility of Auckland Football Federation but that of the associated clubs and members. *Assessments should be undertaken at the start of each season for fixed goal posts and monthly thereafter. Portable goal posts should be checked at the start of each tournament.



MANAGING THE HAZARD

You are required to take ‘all reasonable and practicable steps’ to control the hazard and associated risk at your grounds. This can be achieved through elimination or minimisation. Two examples are below:

Eliminate

Portable goal posts can be permanently installed in correct ground sockets. This would eliminate portable goal posts from being knocked over.

Minimise

Ensure that the portable goal posts are being installed by appropriately trained persons, using correct processes and ensuring the goalposts have been anchored.

If the Hazard/Risk can only be minimised then it needs to be monitored on an ongoing basis. This would require checking that the goal posts remain correctly installed and fit for purpose throughout the event.

GOAL POST TYPES

There are a number of goal post types available with equal covariance in fixing methods used. The following are the most common types of goal posts and installations methods are listed below. The dimensions outlined are an average guideline.

- Junior Posts - often 50mm tubular pipe (plastic or metal) construction, or wooden posts bolted at top corners when fixed, or “pop up” training goals.
 - Minimum measurements 1500mm x 900mm
 - Maximum measurements 2000mm x 1000mm
- Junior Posts - often 50mm tubular pipe (plastic or metal) construction, or wooden posts bolted at top corners when fixed, or “pop up” training goals.
 - Minimum measurements 1800mm x 900mm
 - Maximum measurements 2000mm x 1000mm
- Junior Posts - often 75mm tubular pipe (plastic or metal) construction, or wooden posts bolted at top corners when fixed.
 - Minimum measurements 3800mm x 1900mm
 - Maximum measurements 4000mm x 2000mm
- Intermediate Posts - often 75mm tubular pipe (aluminium or metal) construction, or wooden posts bolted at top corners when fixed.
 - Minimum measurements 4000mm x 2000mm
 - Maximum measurements 5000mm x 2000mm
- Senior Posts - often 100mm tubular pipe (aluminium or metal) construction.
 - Minimum measurements 6400mm x 2100mm
 - Maximum measurements 7300mm x 2400mm

PORTABLE GOAL POSTS

Portable goal posts are designed to be moved at any time both on and off the field. Goal posts configurations can be either full size or smaller and are designed to be free standing. A fixed goal post remains in one position and is a permanent fixture.

Design

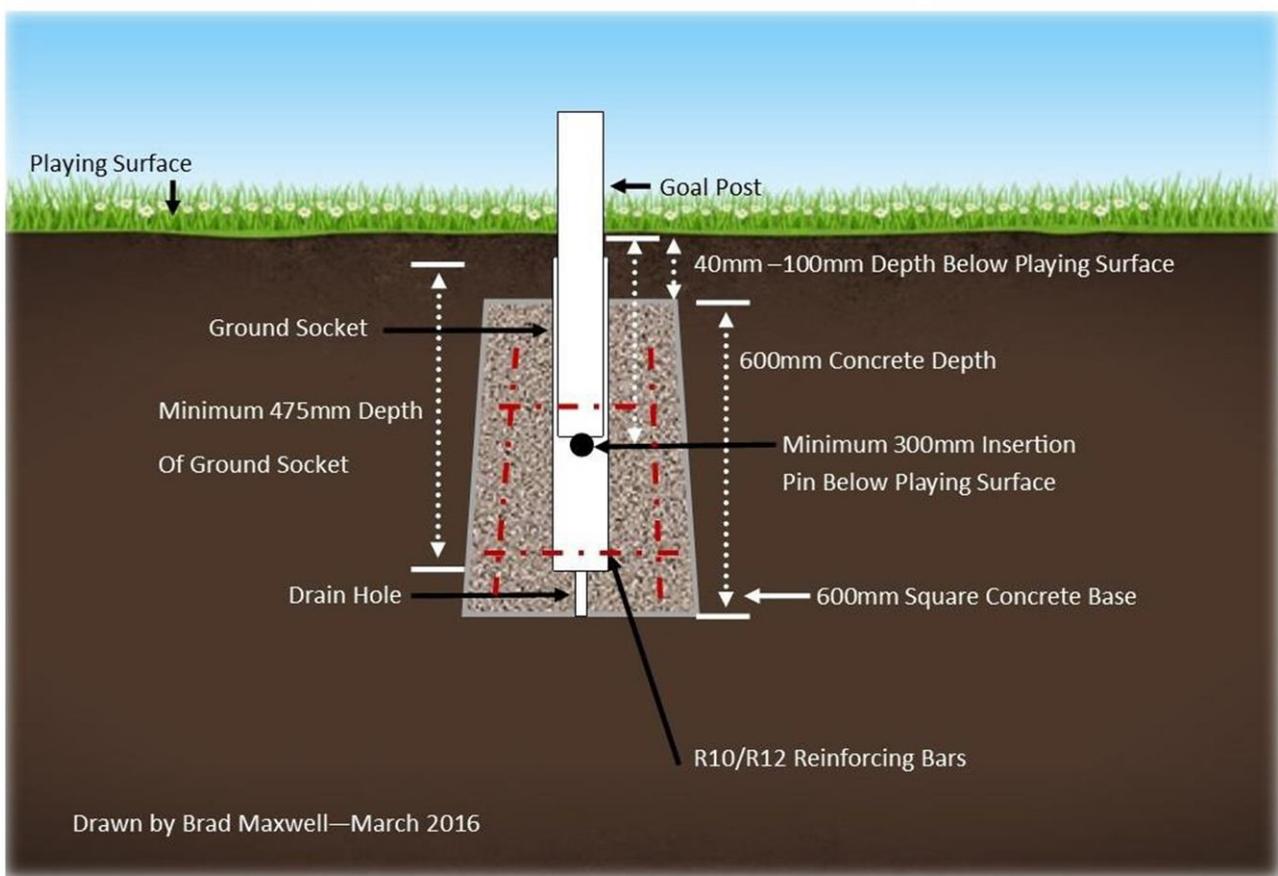
Goal posts should be constructed out of aluminum, steel tubing, a combination of both or PVC tubing. ‘Home made’ goal posts are not to be used at any time. All portable goal posts are to be in good condition with a rear ground bar connecting the two side supports. At all times this ground bar should be in place to increase stability and reduce the possibility of the goal posts overbalancing.

Attention should be made to the fact that incorrectly assembled goalposts may overbalance and cause injury to an individual.

Standards Australia note that the material used for portable goal posts (with the exception of netting) “*should be designed to maintain their structural integrity for outdoor use for at least a period of five years, but preferably longer, depending on whether the goal is stored indoors or outdoors. Any materials used in the construction of the portable goalposts should be protected against corrosion.*”

Socketed Goals

It is recommended that all socketed goal posts be set into concrete with a square base. Goal posts are always to be inserted into the socket at the correct depth and secured appropriately. Where sockets cannot be anchored within cement, the soil surrounding the socket is to be compacted with a soil ramming device. These goal posts need to be checked prior to each match to ensure stability. The below diagram outlines the recommended dimensions of concrete foundations.



Stability

Portable goal posts of any size must be anchored securely to the ground. This may require pinning or weights to prevent them from overbalancing. Where possible anchorage should be permanently attached to the portable goal posts. Some anchorage methods include:

- Steel pegs such as a 'J' hook. Lengths of steel pegs can vary from 250mm to 600mm. These pegs should be entirely driven into the ground but clearly visible. A sufficient number of stakes should be used to secure the goal posts;
- Anchors such as spiral screws can be used;
- Semi-Permanent anchors. An anchor is under the surface of which the goal posts are attached with tethers or utilises a buried tube; or
- Sandbags or counterweights can be used where the ground surface cannot be penetrated. The number of anchors needs to be relevant to the size of the goal posts and to ensure that it is secure.

Ground conditions can affect the stability of the goal posts and anchoring methods chosen. Therefore, it is important to take into consideration the ground conditions and potential changes during the tournament. Portable goal posts should not be left in place after use and should be stored securely (face to face).

Pegs and stakes should be easy to see and retrieve from the ground to prevent them being left on or in the ground and becoming a hazard / risk when mowing.

Nets

When installing nets on the goal posts it is important that safety considerations have been made. Ensure that the net is the correct size and attach the net using plastic clips, Velcro or tape.

Older style goal posts have metal hooks of which the nets are to be attached. These have been banned overseas due to the potential to cause injury. As reasonably practical with other attachment methods these metal hooks should be removed from the goal posts.

Before installing the nets ensure that the appropriate equipment is available to you. Nets should be installed with two people for full size goal posts and can be installed by a single person on smaller goal posts. Working from the ground is the best practice using a pipe or net pole to lift the net into position. If required a working platform may be used.

Under no circumstances is someone to climb the goal posts to install the nets.

Installing the Net

1. Unfold the net on the ground and find the top edge.
2. Ensure you have the side of the net correct. (Ensure that it is being installed correctly).
3. Using either a net pole or work platform, lift the net over the top crossbar, positioning it correctly.
4. Secure the net with hooks or clips evenly. Where necessary use Velcro or tape to secure the net.
5. Ensure the net does not sag by starting from the centre and working out to the edges.
6. Similarly, attach the net to the upright posts.
7. Secure the net to the ground with appropriate anchorage at the side posts.
8. Locate the bottom corners of the net. Secure these corners to the ground to make the goal.
9. Anchor the rear edge of the net evenly as to ensure the ball cannot leave the net during a match.

The net should be free from sags, tight and anchored properly so that the ball cannot escape during use.

Testing and Safety

Portable Goal posts need to be tested to ensure they are in good condition and stable by exerting a downward force on the crossbar and a backwards and forwards force on the uprights. Goal posts need to be of correct dimension. Should any elements of the goal posts be damaged or missing, replacements need to be sought immediately.

Under no circumstances are persons to use the equipment other than its intended use. Climbing, swinging or playing on, or around the goal posts is not acceptable and not permitted at any time. Incidents associated with goal posts can affect personal, accident and public liability insurance.

Installing and Removing the Goal Posts

The following steps should be taken when installing and removing the goal posts from operation.

1. Complete a Safe Work Method Statement on the tasks required to safely install and remove the goal post from their ground socket prior to work commencing.
2. Conduct a briefing (Toolbox Talk) of all persons involved with the installation and removal of the goal posts, ensuring that all persons wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). PPE includes enclosed shoes such as safety boots and general purpose work gloves. Where there is a risk of an item or cross member falling hard hats should be worn.
3. Ensure that there is a trained First Aider present and appropriate First Aid Kit.
4. Ensure that the work area restricts access to unauthorised persons by using cones or tape to define the work area.
5. When installing the posts:
 - a. Ensure that the field has been measured correctly.
 - b. Mark and dig the holes to the appropriate requirements of the ground socket.
 - c. Ensure that all tools are in good condition or persons using mechanical tools are appropriately trained.
 - d. Pile the excess soil away from the hole.
 - e. Follow correct manual handling procedures and position the socket appropriately.
 - f. Ensure that manufacturers guidelines are followed and the ground is compacted around the sockets.
 - g. Once the goal posts are position ensure that they are checked for stability.
 - h. Keep a record of installation and ensure these goal posts are checked before each game.
6. When removing the goal posts:
 - a. Remove the goal posts using correct lifting techniques.
 - b. Dig out the sockets and remove these using correct lifting techniques if required. Otherwise cover the ground sockets with ply wood to protect the bolts and cover with soil.
 - c. Ensure that there are no tripping hazards and store the goal posts correctly ensure they cannot fall and injure a person.
 - d. Check the goal posts for any maintenance requirements for next season.

Conclusion

Goalposts are to be inspected regularly and missing components or disrepair needs to be rectified immediately. If goal posts are owned and managed by the local council, then a written document needs to be sent requesting repairs. Goalposts that are not secured are not to be used; similarly, all portable goal posts are to be anchored to the ground at all times when in use. These goalposts should be dismantled if possible and stored where children cannot gain access.

Goalposts are to be used as intended and adequate workers are to move the goal posts where required taking into consideration correct lifting techniques. Ownership of the goals is to be determined and records maintained.