FOOTBALL CLOTHING GUIDE

At ICFA, we want every child to participate safely, comfortably, and confidently. Appropriate football clothing and equipment help players move freely, reduce the risk of injury, and allow our coaches to deliver structured, high-quality sessions.

We do **not** require children to wear an ICFA kit. However, we do expect all players to arrive dressed appropriately for football training. This means suitable sportswear, safe footwear, and the correct protective equipment for their age group.

Please review the guide below to choose appropriate clothing before your child's first session. For winter clothing guidelines you can refer to our Winter Wear Clothing Guide with embedded links.

General Clothing Requirements

All players should wear clothing that allows them to run, turn, stretch, and kick comfortably.

Suitable clothing includes:

- Sports trousers, leggings, joggers, or shorts
- A sports T-shirt, long-sleeved top, sweatshirt, or training jacket
- Layers in colder weather
- A waterproof or water-resistant outer layer when needed

Do not attend in:

- Jeans or stiff trousers
- Dresses, skirts, or fashion clothing
- Heavy coats that restrict movement
- Clothing with loose cords, dangling accessories, or unsafe fastenings
- Shoes that slip off easily

Children should be able to move freely and take part in all activities without needing to adjust their clothing repeatedly.

Minis Clothing Requirements

For our **Minis classes**, children should wear comfortable sports clothing and suitable trainers or football boots.

For Minis, trainers are acceptable, especially for younger children who are still developing balance, coordination, and confidence on the ball.

However, football boots are strongly preferred once a child is attending regularly, as they provide better grip on the pitch.

Minis should wear:

- Comfortable sports clothing
- Trainers or football boots
- Weather-appropriate layers
- A named water bottle

Shin guards are recommended for Minis.

Academy Clothing Requirements

For **Academy classes**, football-specific equipment is required.

Academy players must wear:

- Football boots
- Shin guards
- Long football socks covering the shin guards
- Suitable sports clothing
- A named water bottle

Academy players take part in more structured football activities, including passing, tackling, match play, and higher-speed movement. Correct footwear and shin guards are therefore essential.

Players who arrive without suitable equipment may be unable to take part fully in contact or match-based activities.

Football Boots

Football boots are important because they provide grip, stability, and safety on the pitch. For our venue, children should wear boots suitable for artificial grass or astro-style surfaces. Good options include:

- Artificial grass boots
- Astro turf trainers
- Multi-ground boots, if suitable for the surface

Please avoid:

- Metal studs
- Flat fashion trainers for Academy players
- Slippery running shoes
- Shoes with poor grip
- Boots that are too large or too small

Boots should fit securely. Children should be able to run, stop, and turn without their feet sliding inside the shoe.

Shin Guards

Shin guards protect children during football activities and are required for Academy players. Shin guards should:

- Fit the child's leg properly
- Be worn under long football socks
- Stay in place during movement
- Cover the front of the shin

Small, lightweight shin guards are usually best for younger players. They do not need to be expensive, but they do need to fit correctly.

Cold Weather Clothing

Football continues in colder weather, so children should be dressed appropriately. Recommended cold-weather clothing:

- Base layer or thermal top
- Tracksuit top or training jacket
- Sports leggings or tracksuit bottoms
- Gloves
- Hat or headband, if needed
- Waterproof layer in wet conditions

Please avoid very bulky coats during training, as they restrict movement and can make it harder for children to participate properly.

Wet Weather Clothing

Children should come prepared for light rain and damp conditions.

Recommended items:

- Water-resistant jacket
- Quick-drying sportswear
- Spare dry top for after training
- Towel or dry layer for the journey home

Please note that cotton clothing can become cold and heavy when wet, so sports fabrics are preferred.

Hot Weather Clothing

In warmer weather, children should wear light, breathable sports clothing.

Please provide:

- A named water bottle
- Sun cream applied before class
- A hat or cap if appropriate
- Light sports clothing

Children should not wear overly heavy or dark clothing in hot weather.

Jewellery, Watches, and Accessories

For safety reasons, children should not wear jewellery during football sessions.

Please remove:

- Necklaces
- Bracelets
- Dangling earrings
- Watches
- Hair accessories with hard or sharp parts

Long hair should be tied back securely.

Water Bottles

All players should bring a named water bottle to every session.

Please make sure the bottle is:

- Clearly labelled
- Easy for your child to open
- Filled before class
- Large enough for the session

Children should not need to leave the pitch area to search for water during training.

Labelling Clothing and Equipment

Please label your child's clothing, boots, shin guards, and water bottle.

Football sessions are busy, and many children have similar items. Labelling helps avoid lost property and confusion at the end of class. Lost property can be found in the Powerleague lockers at the entrance to the Powerleague courts.

Final Reminder

Children do not need expensive football clothing to participate at ICFA. The priority is that they are safe, comfortable, and properly equipped for football.

For Minis, suitable sportswear and trainers are acceptable, although football boots are preferred.

For Academy players, football boots, shin guards, and long football socks are required.

Thank you for helping us maintain a safe, organised, and enjoyable football environment for all ICFA players.