

Courtroom Soccer

Sometimes it is easier to understand something if you compare it to what you already know. Although certainly not a game, the court system can be compared to soccer.



The Players

The two different sides in a court case are like the players in a soccer game. They can be called all kinds of different names, like litigant, defendant, prosecutor, plaintiff, and others. The different sides in a court case are like soccer teams because they try to win on behalf of their team, fans and players. They take turns being on offense and defense by calling witnesses and giving evidence to the judge and, sometimes, a jury.

The Stadium

The Courtroom is the stadium where the court case takes place.



The Referee

The judge is like a referee. Part of the judge's job is to keep time and move everything along on schedule. He or she also calls fouls if one of the teams does something that is against the rules.



The Scorekeepers

While there is no point system in court, the judge (or jury, depending on the kind of trial) reviews the evidence presented, adds up the most important moves, and declares a winner. In every case there are points that must be proven in order to win.



The Coaches

Lawyers are like coaches who guide the participants through the game. They decide what plays to call, and the overall game strategy. Lawyers do this by making a plan to present their client's case, and then calling witnesses and giving evidence to try to perform their best.



The Sportscasters

Court Reporters are like sportscasters. They are responsible for making sure everything that happens in the courtroom gets written down or recorded so people can go back and check what happened if they forget, if they weren't able to attend, or if a play in the game needs to be reviewed by the Commissioner of the League.



The Commissioner of the League

The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court is like the Commissioner. He or she has to make sure that all the games and stadiums and referees work smoothly. The Chief Justice and six other justices also decide very serious disputes or ones where one side feels like decisions made in a trial court is wrong.