

The History of FIFA World Cup™ Match Balls

In the early 1920s Adi Dassler was innovating and producing the best football products of his time. Today, the company he founded still is. Well over 80 years of adidas experience and passion for sports have resulted in meeting and exceeding the needs of millions of football players around the globe. An unequalled dedication to football and extremely close working relationships with some of the best athletes and teams of all time made it possible for adidas to become an integral part of football history and the world's leading football brand!

adidas started developing high-performance match balls in 1963, when most balls were heavy, brown and painful to kick. When FIFA first commissioned adidas to provide the Official Match Ball for the 1970 FIFA World Cup™ in Mexico, the company had already become the world's leading football brand.

adidas Telstar

1970 FIFA World Cup Mexico™

Like all other balls in its time, the adidas Telstar was completely made of leather; however, unlike any other ball it featured 32 hand-stitched panels (12 black pentagons and 20 white hexagons), creating the roundest sphere of its time.

The revolutionary design of Telstar wrote football history: it was the first white football ever to be decorated with black pentagons. Mexico 1970 was the first live televised FIFA World Cup™ and the revolutionary design of Telstar - the name derives from "Star of Television" - made the ball far more visible on black and white television. Until this day, the adidas Telstar remains the archetype of all generic footballs.

adidas Telstar and adidas Chile**1974 FIFA World Cup Germany™**

Two adidas match balls were used for Germany '74. Telstar made a repeat appearance with new black branding replacing the previously gold branding. And, building on the success of the adidas Telstar, adidas introduced a new all-white version named adidas Chile (after an all-white ball used at Chile 62). The materials and techniques used in the Telstar and Chile were identical to those used four years earlier.

adidas Tango**1978 FIFA World Cup Argentina™**

In 1978 football design experienced another revolution with the introduction of the adidas Tango. Once again adidas had created what would become a 'football design classic'. Twenty panels with 'triads' created an optical impression of 12 identical circles. For the following five FIFA World Cup™ tournaments the Match Ball design was to be based on this design. Tango featured improved weather resistance qualities, and took its inspiration from the deep passion, emotion and elegance of Argentina.

adidas Tango España**1982 FIFA World Cup Spain™**

The initial Tango design from 1978 was only altered slightly in 1982. However, the Tango España did feature a major technological innovation. The Tango España, still made of leather, featured revolutionary waterproof sealed seams. This dramatically reduced the ball's water absorption, thus minimizing weight increase during a game under wet conditions.

adidas Azteca**1986 FIFA World Cup Mexico™**

The Match Ball for the 1986 FIFA World Cup™ revolutionized footballs and football production techniques.

The adidas Azteca was the first ever synthetic FIFA World Cup™ Match Ball. The use of synthetic material increased its durability and further minimized water absorption. With its never-before-achieved performance on hard ground, at high altitude, and in wet conditions, Azteca represented a massive leap forward for the game.

Its elegantly and elaborately decorated design was inspired by the hosting nation's native Aztec architecture and murals.

adidas Etrusco Unico**1990 FIFA World Cup Italy™**

The adidas Etrusco Unico evolved the use of synthetic materials further, creating the first ever Match Ball containing an internal layer of black polyurethane foam, making Etrusco Unico fully water-resistant, more lively and faster than ever. The name and intricate design took their inspiration from Italy's magnificent, ancient history and the contributions and fine art of the Etruscans. Three Etruscan lion heads decorate each of the 20 Tango triads.

adidas Questra**1994 FIFA World Cup USA™**

In 1994 adidas introduced the first Match Ball featuring a high-tech, ultra-high-energy-return layer of white polyethylene foam. This PE layer made Questra softer to the touch (more controllable) and much faster off the foot for more speed. Inspired by space technology, high velocity rockets and America's "quest for the stars", Questra set new performance standards.

adidas Tricolore**1998 FIFA World Cup France™**

adidas Tricolore was the first ever multi-colored Match Ball. France's flag and national colors (the Tricolore) and the "cockerel" the traditional symbol of the French nation and Football Federation, inspired the ball's name and design.

Moreover, the adidas Tricolore featured an advanced "syntactic foam" layer - a tight regular matrix, composed of gas-filled, individually closed and highly durable micro balloons. The syntactic foam further improved the ball's durability, energy return and made it more responsive.

adidas Fevernova™**2002 FIFA World Cup Korea / Japan™**

The adidas Fevernova™ was the first World Cup Match Ball since 1978 to break with the traditional Tango design introduced in 1978. The colorful and revolutionary look and color usage was entirely based on Asian culture. The Fevernova™ featured a refined syntactic foam layer to give the ball superior performance characteristics and a three-layer, knitted chassis, allowing for a more precise and predictable flight path every time.

adidas Match Ball**2006 FIFA World Cup Germany™**

The 10th adidas FIFA World Cup™ Match Ball will present another revolutionary innovation in terms of design and performance for the world's biggest sporting event.

The new adidas Match Ball will be officially presented on December 9th, 2005, during the 2006 FIFA World Cup™ final draw in Leipzig, Germany. From December 10th, 2005 onwards, the new adidas Match Ball will be available at retail around the world.