

The big debate

Is football better with a crowd?

Games are currently being played inside empty stadiums.

What you need to know

- Football matches are being played without crowds for now because of the coronavirus outbreak.
- Some football clubs have been putting up cardboard cut-outs instead. Others have been playing videos sent in by fans on big screens in the stadium.
- On TV, people can watch games with crowd noise, so it sounds as if the stadium is full. Or, they can watch without crowd noise and hear what the players and coaches are saying to each other during the match.
- It is not yet known when fans will be allowed back into stadiums.



Yes – The fans make the game what it is

Football without the fans is no fun. A goal doesn't feel as special if you can't hear the roar of a crowd celebrating it. In fact, a match without a crowd is like a film without a soundtrack. There's a reason why TV channels are still playing crowd noise, even though there's no crowd in the stadium. Besides, fans can play an important role in games by encouraging their team to play better. Some players won't play as well without a crowd to cheer them on. What's more, going to a football match is a fun day out, which brings everyone together. It's a chance to meet new people and make friends. Sending in a video clip or cardboard cut-out will never beat actually being in the stadium alongside thousands of other people.

No – Games are far more interesting now

Although fans create a good atmosphere, sometimes this can distract the players on the pitch and negatively affect their performance. Without crowds, they can focus more on the game and play at their best. No crowd noise also means that you can hear what the players and coaches are saying to each other during the game. This is better than hearing the noise of the crowd because you can learn more about the sport and how it's played. Fans don't need to be in the stadium to support their team; clubs have been able to fill their stadiums with banners, cardboard cut-outs, flags, pictures and videos all sent in from fans. Besides, not everyone can afford to go to games. This way, every fan can get involved on matchday.

YES Three reasons why football matches are better with a crowd

- 1 Football without the fans is nothing. It doesn't mean as much when a goal is scored if you can't hear the roar of a crowd.
- 2 Fans play an important role in the match and can motivate their team to play better.
- 3 Going to a football match brings people together. It's not the same watching from home, no matter what the club does.

NO Three reasons why football matches aren't better with a crowd

- 1 The teams can play better because they won't be distracted by the noise of the crowd.
- 2 It's interesting to hear what the players and coaches have to say to each other during the match.
- 3 Clubs have found creative new ways to fill their stadiums. This offers opportunities to fans who can't usually afford to go to games.

LAST WEEK'S POLL

Last week, we asked you if you thought robotic pets were better than real ones. Luckily for our furry, scaly and feathered friends, the vote went heavily in their favour.

