



# The Laws of the Game Rugby Union

**As framed by the  
International Rugby Board**

***2008 Edition***

# CONTENTS

Page No.

## FOREWORD

iv

## DEFINITIONS

viii

## BEFORE THE MATCH

1

<b>Law 1</b>	The Ground	3
<b>Law 2</b>	The Ball	7
<b>Law 3</b>	Number of Players - The Team	9
<b>Law 4</b>	Players' Clothing	14
<b>Law 5</b>	Time	17
<b>Law 6</b>	Match Officials	20
	<b>6.A</b> Referee	20
	<b>6.B</b> Touch Judges	24
	<b>6.C</b> Additional Persons	28

## DURING THE MATCH

### Method of Playing the Match

29

<b>Law 7</b>	Mode of Play	30
<b>Law 8</b>	Advantage	31
<b>Law 9</b>	Method of Scoring	33
<b>Law 10</b>	Foul Play	36
<b>Law 11</b>	Offside and Onside in General Play	44
<b>Law 12</b>	Knock on or Throw forward	50



## CONTENTS

Page No.

	<b>In the Field of play</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Law 13</b>	Kick off and Restart Kicks	54
<b>Law 14</b>	Ball on the Ground - No Tackle	60
<b>Law 15</b>	Tackle: Ball carrier Brought to the Ground	62
<b>Law 16</b>	Ruck	70
<b>Law 17</b>	Maul	75
<b>Law 18</b>	Mark	80
	<b>Restarts</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>Law 19</b>	Touch and Lineout	84
<b>Law 20</b>	Scrum	101
<b>Law 21</b>	Penalty and Free Kicks	112
	<b>In-Goal</b>	<b>119</b>
<b>Law 22</b>	In-goal	120
	<b>UNDER 19 VARIATIONS</b>	<b>129</b>
	<b>SEVEN-A-SIDE VARIATIONS</b>	<b>133</b>
	<b>REFEREE SIGNALS</b>	<b>141</b>
	<b>REGULATION 12 EXTRACT</b>	<b>154</b>

## FOREWORD

The object of the game is that two teams of fifteen or seven players each, observing fair play according to the laws and sporting spirit, should by carrying, passing, kicking and grounding the ball, score as many points as possible, the team scoring the greater number of points being the winner of the match.

The laws of the game, including the standard set of variations for Under 19 rugby and Seven's rugby are complete and contain all that is necessary to enable the game to be played correctly and fairly.

*Rugby Union is a sport which involves physical contact. Any sport involving physical contact has inherent dangers. It is very important that players play the game in accordance with the laws of the game and be mindful of the safety of themselves and others. It is the responsibility of those who coach or teach the game to ensure that players are prepared in a manner which ensures compliance with the laws of the game and in accordance with safe practices.*

It is the duty of the referee to apply fairly all the laws of the game in every match except when an experimental law variation (ELV) has been authorised by the IRB Council.

It is the duty of the unions to ensure that the game at every level is conducted in accordance with disciplined and sporting behaviour. This principle cannot be upheld solely by the referee; its observance also rests on unions, affiliated bodies and clubs.



### ADMINISTRATION

#### **1 Proposals for changes in the laws of the game**

Proposals together with any amendments to them, will be circulated to Unions and will be dealt with in accordance with Bye-Law 9.10.

#### **2 Submission of proposals**

With each proposal unions shall set out:

- (a) the exact wording of the proposed alteration;
- (b) the object of the proposal; and
- (c) the reason for it.

#### **3 Rugby committee**

Pursuant to Bye-Law 9.13, the Council shall establish a committee responsible for the laws of the game

#### **4 The Functions of the committee responsible for laws of the game**

- (a) to consider and report on all proposals submitted by unions to the Council for alterations in the laws of the game
- (b) to recommend amendments to the wording of proposals and consequential alterations to give effect to its recommendations
- (c) the committee is not authorised to make recommendations which depart in principle, as distinct from detail, from specific proposals submitted by Unions; and
- (d) to investigate and report on such matters as the Council may, from time to time, direct. Where appropriate, reports may include recommendations for alterations to the laws of the game for consideration by unions.

#### **5 Designated members**

The Committee responsible for the laws of the game should each year appoint three members to be the designated members who will give interim rulings on law matters to be confirmed by Council.

## **6 Rulings from designated members**

(a) Rulings from the three designated members should only be sought in cases in which the union concerned was itself unable to give a ruling after full consideration of the point by their appropriate committee. Only cases of real doubt or difficulty related to incidents in actual play, and not to hypothetical cases, should be referred to the Council. In all such references for a ruling the unions should state its own opinion as to what the correct ruling ought to be, as this will be helpful to the three designated members.

(b) All decisions of the three designated members on applications for rulings are to be submitted to the Council for consideration as alterations to the laws.

The Chairman of the Rugby Committee shall indicate which rulings are to be submitted to the Council for consideration as alterations to the laws.

## **7 Law amendment process**

Following is the time line from April 2004 to RWC 2007. This takes into account the overlap between the previous biannual process, and the new four year cycle adopted by Council in April 2004. In future cycles the ELV will be implemented a year earlier in the process.

### **April 2004**

1. Amendments to law as proposed by unions addressed at Annual Meeting of Council by Rugby Committee.
2. Rugby Committee considers report from the Conference on the Playing of the Game (COTPOTG), and makes law amendment outline recommendations.

### **June 15 2004**

1. Law changes from April meeting of Council circulated to unions.
2. Proposed amendments from COTPOTG and any changes suggested by Council through the Rugby Committee from April meeting are circulated to all unions for final comments.

### **September 1 2004**

1. Unions reply to proposed law amendments circulated by IRB on June 15.





### **November 2004**

1. Law amendments accepted by Council.

### **January 1 2005**

1. Implementation of amended law.
2. Some proposed law amendments proceed to experimentation in designated competitions in specific unions.

### **September 2005**

1. Reports on laws experimentation by unions involved, specifically with regards to its effect on the Playing Charter and the Principles of Play, are reviewed by the Rugby Committee and tabled at Council.

### **November 2005**

1. Report from unions (by exception) on amended laws that were put into effect January 1 2005.
2. Council can ratify the amended laws, or not ratify them.

### **January 1 2006**

1. Implementation of ratified law into law.
2. Implementation of law changes emanating from the law experimentation, that have been confirmed by Council, become ELV in all unions.

### **November 2006**

1. Report from unions (by exception) on ELV that were put into effect January 1 2006.

### **January 1 2007**

1. Implementation of ELV as law.

The Experimental Law Variation (ELV) is highlighted by:

The November 2006 changes are highlighted by:

Law amendments can be downloaded from the IRB website at  
[www.irb.com/EN/Laws+and+Regulations/Laws/laws](http://www.irb.com/EN/Laws+and+Regulations/Laws/laws)

## DEFINITIONS

### A

**Actual time:** Elapsed time including time lost for any reason.

**Advantage:** Law 8 - Advantage.

**Attacking team:** The opponents of the defending team in whose half of the ground play is taking place.

### B

**Ball carrier:** A player carrying the ball.

**Beyond or behind or in front of a position:** Means with both feet, except where the context makes that inappropriate.

**Binding:** Grasping firmly another player's body between the shoulders and the hips with the whole arm in contact from hand to shoulder.

### C

**Captain:** The captain is a player nominated by the team. Only the captain is entitled to consult the referee during the match and is solely responsible for choosing options relating to the referee's decisions.

**Cavalry charge:** Law 10 - Foul Play.

**Conversion kick:** Law 9 - Method of Scoring.

**Converted:** A conversion kick that was successful.

### D

**Dangerous play:** Law 10 - Foul Play.

**Dead:** The ball is out of play. This happens when the ball has gone outside the playing area and remained there, or when the referee has blown the whistle to indicate a stoppage in play, or when a conversion kick has been taken.

**Dead ball line:** Law 1 - The Ground.

**Defending team:** The team in whose half of the ground play is taking place; their opponents are the Attacking Team.

**Drop kick:** The ball is dropped from the hand or hands to the ground and kicked as it rises from its first bounce.

**Drop out:** Law 13 - Kick-Off and Restart Kicks.

**Dropped goal:** Law 9 - Method of Scoring.





### F

**Field of play:** Law 1 - The Ground.

**Flanker:** Forward player who usually wears jersey No.6 or No.7.

**Flying wedge:** Law 10 - Foul Play.

**Foul play:** Law 10 - Foul Play.

**Free kick:** Law 21 - Penalty and Free Kicks. A kick awarded to the non-offending team after an infringement by its opponents. Unless a Law states otherwise, a free kick awarded because of an infringement is awarded at the place of infringement.

**Front row players:** Law 20 - Scrum. The forward players who are the loose-head prop, the hooker and the tight-head prop. These players usually wear jersey No. 1, 2 and 3 respectively.

### G

**Goal:** A player scores a goal by kicking the ball over an opponents' cross bar and between the goal posts from the field of play, by a place kick or drop-kick. A goal cannot be scored from a kick-off, drop-out or free kick.

**Goal-line:** Law 1 - The Ground.

**Grounding the ball:** Law 22 - In-Goal.

### H

**Half time:** The interval between the two halves of the game.

**Hindmost foot:** The foot of the hindmost player in a scrum, ruck or maul which is nearest that player's goal-line.

**Hooker:** Law 20 - Scrum. The middle front row player in a scrum who usually wears jersey No. 2.

### I

**In-field:** Away from touch and towards the middle of the field.

**In-goal:** Law 22 - In-Goal.

### K

**Kick:** A kick is made by hitting the ball with any part of the leg or foot, except the heel, from the toe to the knee but not including the knee; a kick must move the ball a visible distance out of the hand, or along the ground.

**Kick-off:** Law 13 - Kick-off and Restart Kicks.

**Knock-on:** Law 12 - Knock-on or Throw-forward.

## L

**Lifting:** Law 19 - Touch and Line-out .

**Line of touch:** Law 19 - Touch and Line-out. An imaginary line at right angles to the touch-line at the place where the ball is thrown in from touch.

**Line-out:** Law 19 - Touch and Line-out.

**Line through the mark or place:** unless stated otherwise, a line parallel to the touch-line.

**Long throw:** Law 19 - Touch and Line-out.

**Loose-head prop:** Law 20 - Scrum. The left front row player in a scrum who usually wears jersey No. 1

## M

**Match organiser:** the organisation responsible for the match which may be a union, a group of unions or an organisation affiliated to the International Rugby Board.

**Mark:** Law 18 - Mark.

**Maul:** Law 17 - Maul.

## N

**Near:** Law 14 - Ball on the Ground - No Tackle. Within one metre.

## O

**Obstruction:** Law 10 - Foul Play.

**Off-side in open play:** Law 11 - Off-side and On-side in General Play.

**Off-side Line:** An imaginary line across the ground, from one touch-line to the other, parallel to the goal-lines; the position of this line varies according to the Law.

**Off-side the 10-Metre Law:** Law 11 - Off-side and On-side in General Play.

**On-side:** Law 11 - Off-side and On-side in General Play.

**Open or Bleeding Wound:** Law 3 - Number of Players -The Team.

**Out of play:** This happens when the ball or the ball-carrier has gone into touch or touch-in-goal, or touched or crossed the dead ball line.

**Oversteps:** A player steps across a line with one or both feet; the line may be real (for example, goal-line) or imaginary (for example, off-side line).



### P

**Pass:** A player throws the ball to another player; if a player hands the ball to another player without throwing it, this is also a pass.

**Peeling off:** Law 19 - Touch and Line-Out.

**Penalty goal:** Law 9 - Method of Scoring.

**Penalty kick:** Law 21 - Penalty and Free Kicks - A kick awarded to the non-offending team after an infringement by its opponents. Unless a Law says otherwise, a penalty kick is awarded at the place of infringement.

**Penalty try:** Law 10 - Foul Play.

**Place kick:** The ball is kicked after it has been placed on the ground for that purpose.

**Placer:** A player who holds the ball on the ground for a team-mate to kick.

**Played:** The ball is played when it is touched by a player.

**Playing area:** Law 1 - The Ground.

**Playing enclosure:** Law 1 - The Ground.

**Playing time:** The time that has been played excluding time lost as defined in Law 5 Time.

**Possession:** This happens when a player is carrying the ball or a team has the ball in its control; for example, the ball in one half of a scrum or ruck is in that team's possession.

**Pre-gripping:** Law 19 - Touch and Line-out. Gripping a team-mate in the line-out prior to the ball being thrown in.

**Prop:** Law 20 - Scrum. A front row player to the left or right of the hooker in a scrum. These players usually wear jersey No's. 1 and 3.

**Punt:** The ball is dropped from the hand or hands and kicked before it touches the ground.

**Pushover try:** Law 22 - In-Goal.

### R

**Receiver:** Law 19 - Touch and Line-Out.

**Red Card:** A card, red in colour shown to a player who has been sent off for contravening Law 10 - Foul Play, Law 4.5(c).

**Referee:** Law 6 - Match Officials.

**Repeated infringements:** Law 10 - Foul Play.

**Replacements:** Law 3 - Number of Players - The Team.

**Ruck:** Law 16 - Ruck.

## S

**Scrum:** Law 20 - Scrum. This happens when players from each team come together in scrum formation so that play can be started by throwing the ball into the scrum.

**Scrum-half:** A player nominated to throw the ball into a scrum who usually wears jersey No. 9.

**Sin Bin:** The designated area in which a temporarily suspended player must remain for 10 minutes playing time.

**Substitutes:** Law 3 - Number of Players - The Team.

## T

**Tackle:** Law 15 - Tackle: Ball-Carrier Brought to the Ground.

**Team-mate:** Another player of the same team.

**Temporarily suspended:** Law 10 - Foul Play.

**The plan:** Law 1 - The Ground.

**The 22:** Law 1 - The Ground.

**Throw-forward:** Law 12 - Knock-On or Throw-Forward.

**Throw-in:** The act of the player who throws the ball into a scrum or a line-out.

**Tight-head prop:** Law 20 - Scrum. The right front row player in a scrum who usually wears jersey No. 3.

**Touch:** Law 19 - Touch and Line-Out.

**Touch down:** Law 22 - In-goal.

**Touch-line:** Law 1 - The Ground.

**Touch-in-goal line:** Law 1 - The Ground.

**Touch judge:** Law 6 - Match Officials.

**Try:** Law 9 - Method of Scoring.

## U

**Union:** The controlling body under whose jurisdiction the match is played; for an International match it means the International Rugby Board or a Committee of the Board.

## Y

**Yellow card:** A card, yellow in colour shown to a player who has been cautioned and temporarily suspended for 10 minutes playing time.



# Playing Charter

As framed by the  
International Rugby Board

*2008 Edition*

# Contents

Introduction	<b>2</b>
Principles of the Game	<b>4</b>
Principles of the Laws	<b>8</b>
Conclusion	<b>10</b>



# Introduction

A game which started out as a simple pastime has been transformed into a global network around which vast stadia have been built, an intricate administrative structure created and complex strategies devised. Rugby Union, in common with any activity which attracts the interest and enthusiasm of all kinds of people, has many sides and faces.

Apart from the playing of the game and its ancillary support, rugby embraces a number of social and emotional concepts such as courage, loyalty, sportsmanship, discipline and teamwork. What this Charter does is to give the game a checklist against which the mode of play and behaviour can be assessed. The objective is to ensure that rugby maintains its unique character both on and off the field.

The Charter covers the basic principles of rugby as they relate to playing and coaching, and to the creation and application of the laws. It is hoped that the Charter, which is an important complement to the laws of the game, will set the standards for all those who are involved in rugby, at whatever level.



COURAGE

CONTINUITY

CONTROL

TEAMWORK

POSSESSION

# Principles of the Game

## Conduct

The legend of William Webb Ellis, who is credited with first picking up the football and running with it, has doggedly survived the countless revisionist theories since that day at Rugby School in 1823. That the game should have its origins in an act of spirited defiance is somehow appropriate.

At first glance it is difficult to find the guiding principles behind a game which, to the casual observer, appears to be a mass of contradictions. It is perfectly acceptable, for example, to be seen to be exerting extreme physical pressure on an opponent in an attempt to gain possession of the ball, but not wilfully or maliciously to inflict injury.

These are the boundaries within which players and referees must operate and it is the capacity to make this fine distinction, combined with control and discipline, both individual and collective, upon which the code of conduct depends.

## Spirit

Rugby owes much of its appeal to the fact that it is played both to the letter and within the spirit of the laws. The responsibility for ensuring that this happens lies not with one individual – it involves coaches, captains, players and referees.



It is through discipline, control and mutual respect that the spirit of the game flourishes and, in the context of a game as physically challenging as rugby, these are the qualities which forge the fellowship and sense of fair play so essential to the game's ongoing success and survival.

Old fashioned traditions and virtues they may be, but they have stood the test of time and, at all levels at which the game is played, they remain as important to rugby's future as they have been throughout its long and distinguished past. The principles of rugby are the fundamental elements upon which the game is based and they enable participants to immediately identify the game's character and what makes it distinctive as a sport.

## Object

The Object of the Game is that two teams, each of fifteen players, observing fair play, according to the Laws and in a sporting spirit should, by carrying, passing, kicking and grounding the ball, score as many points as possible.

Rugby is played by men and women and by boys and girls world-wide. More than three million people aged from 6-60 regularly participate in the playing of the game

The wide variation of skills and physical requirements needed for the game mean that there is an opportunity for individuals of every shape, size and ability to participate at all levels.

## Contest and Continuity

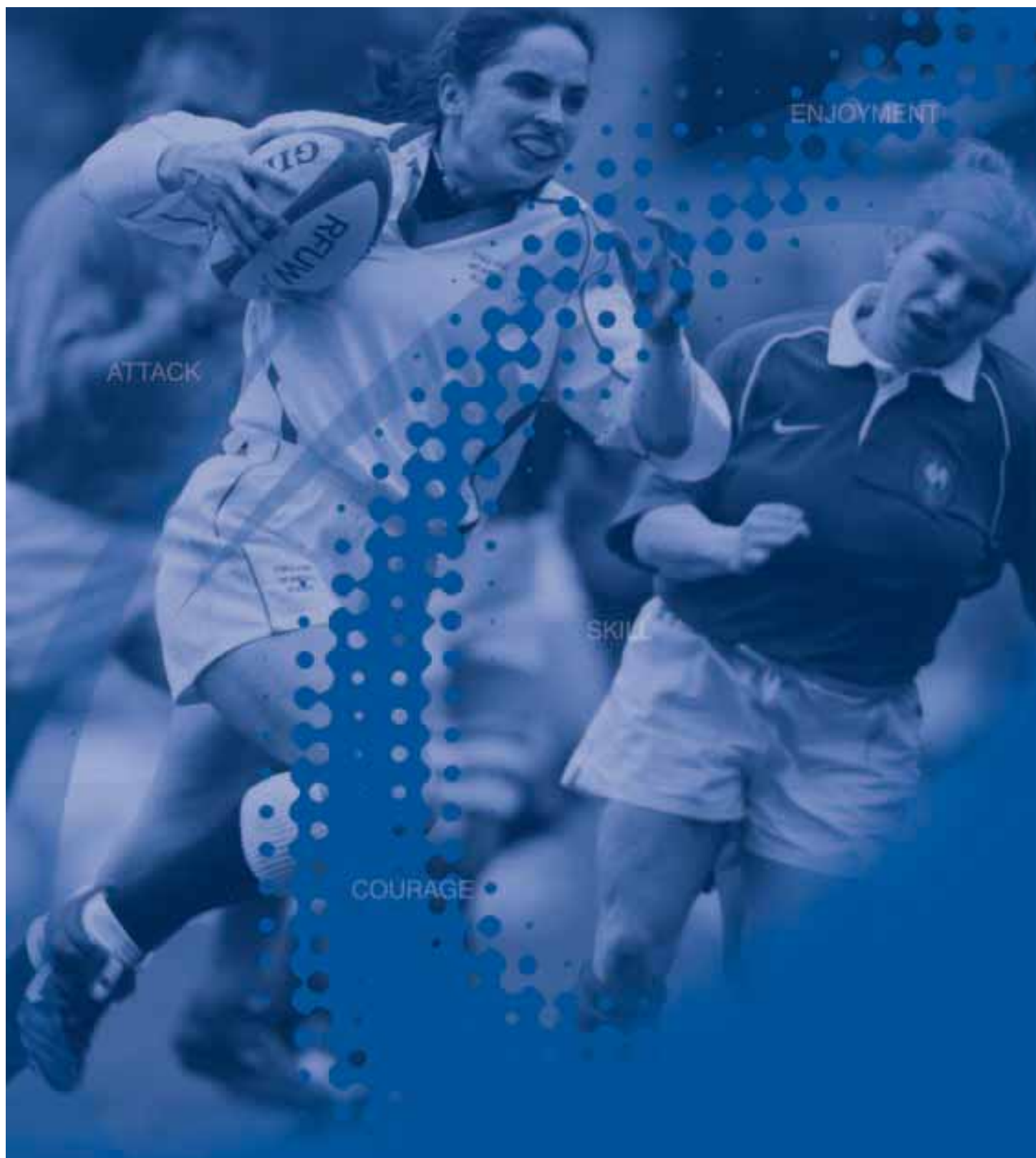
The contest for possession of the ball is one of rugby's key features. These contests occur throughout the game and in a number of different forms:

- in contact
- in general play
- when play is re-started at scrums, line-outs and kick offs.

The contests are balanced in such a way as to reward superior skill displayed in the preceding action. For example, a team forced to kick for touch because of its inability to maintain the play, is denied the throw-in to the line-out. Similarly, the team knocking the ball on or passing the ball forward is denied the throw-in at the subsequent scrum. The advantage then must always lie with the team throwing the ball in, although, here again, it is important that these areas of play can be fairly contested.

It is the aim of the team in possession to maintain continuity by denying the opposition the ball and, by skilful means, to advance and score points. Failure to do this will mean the surrendering of possession to the opposition either as a result of shortcomings on the part of the team in possession or because of the quality of the opposition defence. Contest and continuity, profit and loss.





As one team attempts to maintain continuity of possession, the opposing team strives to contest for possession. This provides the essential balance between continuity of play and continuity of possession. This balance of contestability and continuity applies to both set piece and general play.



# Principles of the Laws

The principles upon which the laws of the game are based are:

## **A Sport For All**

The laws provide players of different physiques, skills, genders and ages with the opportunity to participate at their levels of ability in a controlled, competitive and enjoyable environment. It is incumbent upon all who play rugby to have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Laws of the game.

## **Maintaining the Identity**

The laws ensure that rugby's distinctive features are maintained through scrums, line outs, mauls, rucks, kick offs and re-starts. Also the key features relating to contest and continuity - the backward pass, the offensive tackle.

## **Enjoyment and Entertainment**

The laws provide the framework for a game that is both enjoyable to play and entertaining to watch. If, on occasions, these objectives appear to be incompatible, enjoyment and entertainment are enhanced by enabling the players to give full rein to their skills. To achieve the correct balance, the laws are constantly under review.



## Application

There is an over-riding obligation on the players to observe the laws and to respect the principles of fair play.

The laws must be applied in such a way as to ensure that the game is played according to the principles of play. The referee and his touch judges can achieve this through fairness, consistency, sensitivity and, at the highest levels, management. In return, it is the responsibility of coaches, captains and players to respect the authority of the match officials.

# Conclusion

Rugby is valued as a sport for men and women, boys and girls. It builds teamwork, understanding, co-operation and respect for fellow athletes. Its cornerstones are, as they always have been: the pleasure of participating; the courage and skill which the game demands; the love of a team sport that enriches the lives of all involved; and the lifelong friendships forged through a shared interest in the game.

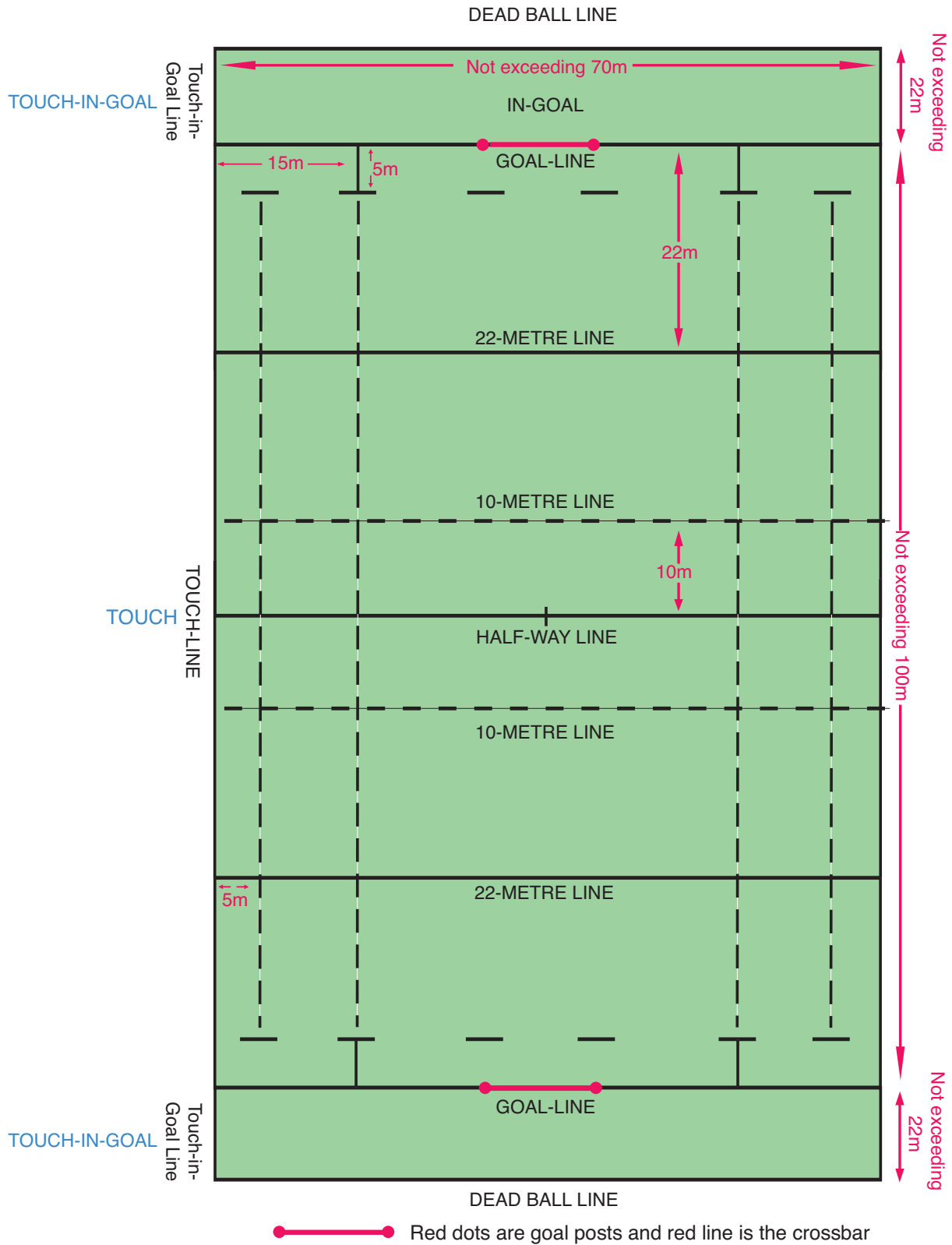
It is because of, not despite, rugby's intensely physical and athletic characteristics that such great camaraderie exists before and after matches. The long standing tradition of players from competing teams enjoying each others company away from the pitch and in a social context, remains at the very core of the game.

Rugby has fully embraced the professional era, but has retained the ethos and traditions of the recreational game. In an age in which many traditional sporting qualities are being diluted or even challenged, rugby is rightly proud of its ability to retain high standards of sportsmanship, ethical behaviour and fair play. It is hoped that this Charter will help reinforce those cherished values.

# Before the Match

- Law 1** The Ground
- Law 2** The Ball
- Law 3** Number of Players - The Team
- Law 4** Players' Clothing
- Law 5** Time
- Law 6** Match Officials





*The Plan*



## Law 1 The Ground

### DEFINITIONS

**The Ground** is the total area shown on the plan. The Ground includes:

**The Field of play** is the area (as shown on the plan) between the goal lines and the touchlines. These lines are not part of the field of play.

**The Playing Area** is the field of play and the in-goal areas (as shown on the plan). The touchlines, touch-in-goal lines and dead ball lines are not part of the playing area.

**The Playing Enclosure** is the playing area and a space around it, not less than 5 metres where practicable, which is known as the perimeter area.

**In-goal** is the area between the goal line and the dead ball line, and between the touch-in-goal lines. It includes the goal line but it does not include the dead ball line or the touch-in-goal lines.

**'The 22'** is the area between the goal line and the 22-metre line, including the 22-metre line but excluding the goal line.

**The Plan**, including all the words and figures on it, is part of the Laws.

### 1.1 SURFACE OF THE PLAYING ENCLOSURE

- (a) **Requirement.** The surface must be safe to play on at all times.
- (b) **Type of surface.** The surface should be grass but may also be sand, clay, snow or artificial grass. The game may be played on snow, provided the snow and underlying surface are safe to play on. It shall not be a permanently hard surface such as concrete or asphalt. In the case of artificial grass surfaces, they must conform to IRB Regulation 22.



## 1.2 REQUIRED DIMENSIONS FOR THE PLAYING ENCLOSURE

- (a) **Dimensions.** The field of play does not exceed 100 metres in length and 70 metres in width. Each in-goal does not exceed 22 metres in length and 70 metres in width.
- (b) The length and breadth of the playing area are to be as near as possible to the dimensions indicated. All the areas are rectangular.
- (c) The distance from the goal line to the dead ball line should be not less than 10 metres where practicable.

## 1.3 LINES ON THE PLAYING ENCLOSURE

### (a) Solid Lines

The dead ball lines and touch-in-goal lines, both of which are outside the in-goal areas;

The goal lines, which are within the in-goal areas but outside the field of play;

The 22-metre lines; which are parallel to the goal lines

The half-way line which is parallel to the goal lines; and

The touchlines which are outside the field of play.

### (b) Broken Lines

The 10-metre lines, which run from one touchline to the other, are 10 metres from each side of the half-way line and parallel to it; and

The 5-metre lines, which run from one 5-metre dash line to the other, are 5 metres from and parallel to the touchlines.

The 15-metre lines, which link the 5-metre dash lines, are 15 metres from and parallel to the touchlines.

## (c) **Dash Lines**

**(i)** Six dash lines, each being 1 metre long, 5 metres from and parallel to each goal line positioned 5 metres and 15 metres from each touchline and in front of each goal post.

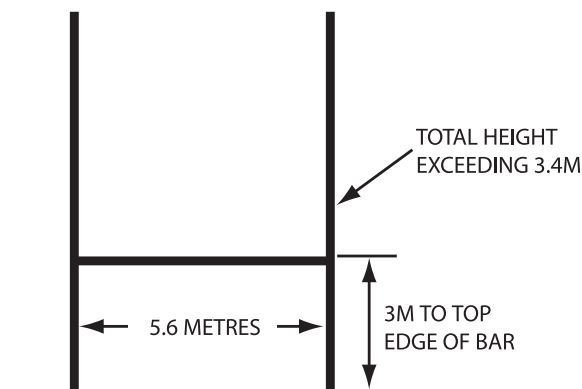
**(ii)** Two dash lines, 5 metres long, 15 metres from each of the touchlines, which start at the goal line and end at the 5-metre dash line.

**(iii)** One dash line of 0.5 metre long intersects the center of the half-way line.

All the lines must be suitably marked out according to the Plan.

## **1.4 DIMENSIONS FOR GOAL POSTS AND CROSSBAR**

- (a) The distance between the two goal posts is 5.6 metres.
- (b) The crossbar is placed between the two goal posts so that its top edge is 3.0 metres from the ground.
- (c) The minimum height of the goal posts is 3.4 metres.
- (d) When padding is attached to the goal posts the distance from the goal line to the external edge of the padding must not exceed 300mm.



***GOAL POSTS***

**1.5 FLAG POSTS**

- (a) There are 14 flag posts with flags, each with a minimum height of 1.2 metres above the ground.
- (b) Flag posts must be positioned at the intersection of touch-in-goal lines and the goal lines and at the intersection of the touch-in-goal lines and the dead ball lines. These eight flag posts are outside the in-goal area and do not form part of the playing area.
- (c) Flag posts must be positioned in line with the 22-metre lines and the half-way line, 2 metres outside the touchlines and within the playing enclosure.

**1.6 OBJECTIONS TO THE GROUND**

- (a) If either team has objections about the ground or the way it is marked out they must tell the referee before the match starts.
- (b) The referee will attempt to resolve the issues but must not start a match if any part of the ground is considered to be dangerous.

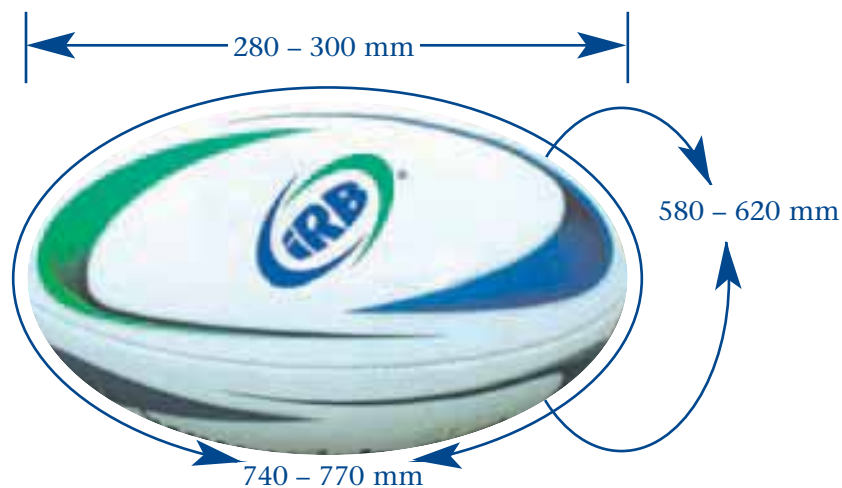
## **Law 2** The Ball

### **2.1 SHAPE**

The ball must be oval and made of four panels.

### **2.2 DIMENSIONS**

Length in line	280 - 300 millimetres
Circumference (end to end)	740 - 770 millimetres
Circumference (in width)	580 - 620 millimetres



### **2.3 MATERIALS**

Leather or suitable synthetic material. It may be treated to make it water resistant and easier to grip.

### **2.4 WEIGHT**

410 - 460 grams

### **2.5 AIR PRESSURE AT THE START OF PLAY**

65.71-68.75 kilopascals, or 0.67-0.70 kilograms per square centimetre, or 9.5-10.0 lbs per square inch.



## **2.6 SPARE BALLS**

Spare balls may be available during a match, but a team must not gain or attempt to gain an unfair advantage by using them or changing them.

## **2.7 SMALLER BALLS**

Balls of different sizes may be used for matches between young players.



# Law 3 Number of Players - The Team

### DEFINITIONS

**A Team.** A team consists of fifteen players who start the match plus any authorised replacements and/or substitutes.

**Replacement.** A player who replaces an injured team mate.

**Substitute.** A player who replaces a team mate for tactical reasons.

**3.1 MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PLAYERS ON THE PLAYING AREA**  
**Maximum:** each team must have no more than fifteen players on the playing area.

**3.2 TEAM WITH MORE THAN THE PERMITTED NUMBER OF PLAYERS**  
**Objection:** at any time before or during a match a team may make an objection to the referee about the number of players in their opponents' team. As soon as the referee knows that a team has too many players, the referee must order the captain of that team to reduce the number appropriately. The score at the time of the objection remains unaltered.  
**Penalty:** Penalty at the place where the game would restart.

**3.3 WHEN THERE ARE FEWER THAN FIFTEEN PLAYERS**  
A Union may authorise matches to be played with fewer than fifteen players in each team. When that happens, all the Laws of the Game apply except that each team must have at least five players in the scrum at all times.  
**Exception:** matches between teams of seven-a-side are an exception. These matches are covered by the seven-a-side variations to the Laws of the Game.

**3.4 PLAYERS NOMINATED AS SUBSTITUTES**  
For international matches a Union may nominate up to seven replacements/substitutes. For other matches, the Union with jurisdiction over the match decides how many replacements/substitutes may be nominated.  
A team can substitute up to two front row players and up to five other players. Substitutions may only be made when the ball is dead and with the permission of the referee.



### 3.5 SUITABLY TRAINED AND EXPERIENCED PLAYERS IN THE FRONT ROW

- (a) The table below indicates the numbers of suitably trained and experienced players for the front row when nominating different numbers of players.

Number of Players	Number of Suitably Trained and Experienced Players
15 or less	3 players who can play in the front row
16, 17 or 18	4 players who can play in the front row
19, 20, 21 or 22	5 players who can play in the front row

- (b) Each player in the front row and any potential replacement(s) must be suitably trained and experienced.
- (c) When 19, 20, 21 or 22 players are nominated in a team there must be five players who can play in the front row to ensure that on the first occasion that a replacement hooker is required and, on the first occasion that a replacement prop forward is required, the team can continue to play safely with contested scrums.
- (d) The replacement of a front row forward must come from suitably trained and experienced players who started the match or from the nominated replacements.

### 3.6 SENT OFF FOR FOUL PLAY

A player sent off for foul play must not be replaced or substituted. For an exception to this Law, refer to Law 3.13.

### 3.7 PERMANENT REPLACEMENT

A player may be replaced if injured. If the player is permanently replaced, that player must not return and play in that match. The replacement of the injured player must be made when the ball is dead and with the permission of the referee.

**3.8 THE DECISION FOR PERMANENT REPLACEMENT**

- (a) When a national representative team is playing in a match, a player may be replaced only when, in the opinion of a doctor, the player is so injured that it would be unwise for that player to continue playing in that match.
- (b) In other matches, where a Union has given explicit permission, an injured player may be replaced on the advice of a medically trained person. If none is present, that player may be replaced if the referee agrees.

**3.9 THE REFEREE'S POWER TO STOP AN INJURED PLAYER FROM CONTINUING**

If the referee decides – with or without the advice of a doctor or other medically qualified person – that a player is so injured that the player should stop playing, the referee may order that player to leave the playing area. The referee may also order an injured player to leave the field in order to be medically examined.

**3.10 TEMPORARY REPLACEMENT**

- (a) When a player leaves the field to have bleeding controlled and/or have an open wound covered, that player may be temporarily replaced. If the player who has been temporarily replaced does not return to the field of play within 15 minutes (actual time) of leaving the playing area, the replacement becomes permanent and the replaced player must not return to the field of play.
- (b) If the temporary replacement is injured, that player may also be replaced.
- (c) If the temporary replacement is sent off for foul play, the replaced player may not return to the field of play.
- (d) If a temporary replacement is cautioned and temporarily suspended, the replaced player may not return to the field of play until after the period of suspension.

### 3.11 PLAYER WISHING TO REJOIN THE MATCH

- (a) A player who has an open or bleeding wound must leave the playing area. The player must not return until the bleeding is controlled and the wound has been covered.
- (b) A player who leaves a match because of injury or any other reason must not rejoin the match until the referee permits the player to return. The referee must not let a player rejoin a match until the ball is dead.
- (c) If the player rejoins the match without the referee's permission, and the referee believes the player did so to help that player's team or obstruct the opposing team, the referee penalises the player for misconduct.

**Penalty:** A penalty kick is awarded at the place where play would restart.

### 3.12 SUBSTITUTED PLAYERS REJOINING THE MATCH

If a player is substituted, that player must not return and play in that match even to replace an injured player.

**Exception 1:** a substituted player may replace a player with a bleeding or open wound.

**Exception 2:** a substituted player may replace a front row player when injured, temporarily suspended or sent off.



### **3.13 FRONT ROW FORWARD SENT OFF OR TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED OR INJURED**

- (a) If after a front row player has been sent off or during the time a front row player is temporarily suspended, and there are no further front row players available from the nominated team, then uncontested scrums will be ordered. It is not the responsibility of the referee to determine the suitability of trained front row replacements nor their availability, as this is a team responsibility.
- (b) After a front row player is sent off or during the time a front row player is temporarily suspended the referee, upon awarding the next scrum, will ask that player's captain whether or not the team has another player on the field of play who is suitably trained to play in the front row. If not, the captain chooses any player from that team who then must leave the field of play and be replaced by a suitably trained front row player from the team's replacements. The captain may do this immediately prior to the next scrum or after another player has been tried in the front row.
- (c) When a period of temporary suspension ends and a front row player returns to the field of play, the replacement front row player leaves the field of play and the nominated player who left the field of play for the period of the suspension may resume playing in the match.
- (d) Furthermore, if, because of sending off or injury, a team cannot provide enough suitably trained front row players, the match continues with uncontested scrums.
- (e) An uncontested scrum is the same as a normal scrum, except that the teams do not compete for the ball, the team throwing in the ball must win it, and neither team is allowed to push.

## Law 4 Players' Clothing

### DEFINITIONS

**Players' clothing** is anything players wear.

A player wears a jersey, shorts and underwear, socks and boots.

Detailed information relating to the permitted specifications for clothing and studs may be found in IRB Specifications (Regulation 12).

### 4.1 ADDITIONAL ITEMS OF CLOTHING

- (a) A player may wear supports made of elasticated or compressible materials which must be washable.
- (b) A player may wear shin guards which conform with IRB Specifications (Regulation 12).
- (c) A player may wear ankle supports worn under socks, not extending higher than one third of the length of the shin and, if rigid, from material other than metal.
- (d) A player may wear mitts (fingerless gloves) which must conform to IRB Specifications (Regulation 12).
- (e) A player may wear shoulder pads which must bear the IRB Approval Mark (Regulation 12).
- (f) A player may wear a mouth guard or dental protector.
- (g) A player may wear headgear which must bear the IRB Approval Mark (Regulation 12).
- (h) A player may wear bandages and/or dressings to cover or protect any injury.
- (i) A player may wear thin tape or other similar material as support and/or to prevent injury.



### **4.2 SPECIAL ADDITIONAL ITEMS FOR WOMEN**

Besides the previous items, women may wear chest pads which must bear the IRB Approval Mark (Regulation 12).

### **4.3 STUDS**

- (a) Studs of players' boots must conform with the IRB Specifications (Regulation 12).
- (b) Moulded rubber multi-studded soles are acceptable provided they have no sharp edges or ridges.

### **4.4 BANNED ITEMS OF CLOTHING**

- (a) A player must not wear any item that is contaminated by blood.
- (b) A player must not wear any item that is sharp or abrasive.
- (c) A player must not wear any items containing buckles, clips, rings, hinges, zippers, screws, bolts or rigid material or projection not otherwise permitted under this Law.
- (d) A player must not wear jewellery such as rings or earrings.
- (e) A player must not wear gloves.
- (f) A player must not wear shorts with padding sewn into them.
- (g) A player must not wear any other item which does not conform with the IRB Specifications for such clothing (Regulation 12).
- (h) A player must not wear any item that is normally permitted by Law, but, in the referee's opinion that is liable to cause injury to a player.
- (i) A player must not wear a single stud at the toe of the boot.
- (j) A player must not wear communication devices within that player's clothing or attached to the body.
- (k) A player must not wear any additional item of clothing that does not conform to IRB Regulation 12.



### 4.5 INSPECTION OF PLAYERS' CLOTHING

- (a) The referee or the touch judges appointed by or under the authority of the match organiser must inspect the players' clothing and studs for conformity to this Law.
- (b) The referee has power to decide at any time, before or during the match, that part of a player's clothing is dangerous or illegal. If the referee decides that clothing is dangerous or illegal the referee must order the player to remove it. The player must not take part in the match until the items of clothing are removed.
- (c) If, at an inspection before the match, the referee or a touch judge tells a player that an item banned under this Law is being worn, and the player is subsequently found to be wearing that item on the playing area, that player is sent off for misconduct.

**Penalty:** A penalty kick is awarded at the place where play is restarted.

### 4.6 WEARING OTHER CLOTHING

The referee must not allow any player to leave the playing area to change items of clothing, unless these are bloodstained.

## Law 5 Time

### 5.1 DURATION OF A MATCH

A match lasts no longer than eighty minutes plus time lost, extra time and any special conditions. A match is divided into two halves each of not more than forty minutes playing time.

### 5.2 HALF TIME

After half time the teams change ends. There is an interval of not more than 10 minutes. The length of the interval is decided by the match organiser, the Union or the recognised body which has jurisdiction over the game. During the interval the teams, the referee and the touch judges may leave the playing enclosure.

### 5.3 TIME KEEPING

The referee keeps the time but may delegate the duty to either or both the touch judges and/or the official time-keeper, in which case the referee signals to them any stoppage of time or time lost. In matches without an official time-keeper, if the referee is in doubt as to the correct time the referee consults either or both the touch judges and may consult others but only if the touch judges cannot help.

### 5.4 TIME LOST

Time lost may be due to the following:

- (a) **Injury.** The referee may stop play for not more than one minute so that an injured player can be treated, or for any other permitted delay.

The referee may allow play to continue while a medically trained person treats an injured player in the playing area or the player may go to the touchline for treatment.

If a player is seriously injured and needs to be removed from the field of play, the referee has the discretion to allow the necessary time to have the injured player removed from the field-of-play.

- (b) **Replacing players' clothing.** When the ball is dead, the referee allows time for a player to replace or repair a badly torn jersey, shorts or boots. Time is allowed for a player to re-tie a boot-lace.
- (c) **Replacement and substitution of players.** Time is allowed when a player is replaced or substituted.
- (d) **Reporting of foul play by a touch judge.** Time is allowed when a touch judge reports foul play.

## 5.5 MAKING UP FOR TIME LOST

Any playing time lost is made up in the same half of the match.

## 5.6 PLAYING EXTRA TIME

A match may last more than eighty minutes if the Match Organiser has authorised the playing of extra time in a drawn match in a knock-out competition.

## 5.7 OTHER TIME REGULATIONS

- (a) In international matches, play always lasts eighty minutes plus lost time.
- (b) In non-international matches a Union may decide the length of a match.
- (c) If the Union does not decide, the teams agree on the length of a match. If they cannot agree, the referee decides.
- (d) The referee has the power to end the match at any time, if the referee believes that play should not continue because it would be dangerous.
- (e) If time expires and the ball is not dead, or an awarded scrum or lineout has not been completed the referee allows play to continue until the next time that the ball becomes dead. If time expires and a mark, free kick or penalty kick is then awarded, the referee allows play to continue.



## Law 5 Time

- (f) If time expires after a try has been scored the referee allows time for the conversion kick to be taken.
- (g) When weather conditions are exceptionally hot and/or humid, the referee, at his discretion, will be permitted to allow one water break in each half. This water break should be no longer than one minute. Time lost should be added on at the end of each half. The water break should normally be taken after a score or when the ball is out of play near the half way line.

## Law 6 Match Officials

### DEFINITIONS

Every match is under the control of **Match Officials** who consist of the Referee and two Touch Judges. **Additional persons**, as authorised by the match organisers may include the referee and/or reserve touch judge, an official to assist the Referee in making decisions by using technological devices, the time keeper, the Match Doctor, the team doctors, the non-playing members of the teams and the ball persons.

#### 6.A. REFEREE *BEFORE THE MATCH*

##### 6.A.1 APPOINTING THE REFEREE

The referee is appointed by the match organiser. If no referee has been appointed the two teams may agree upon a referee. If they cannot agree, the home team appoints a referee.

##### 6.A.2 REPLACING THE REFEREE

If the referee is unable to complete the match, the referee's replacement is appointed according to the instructions of the match organiser. If the match organiser has given no instructions, the referee appoints the replacement. If the referee cannot do so, the home team appoints a replacement.

##### 6.A.3 DUTIES OF THE REFEREE BEFORE THE MATCH

- (a) **Toss.** The referee organises the toss. One of the captains tosses a coin and the other captain calls to see who wins the toss. The winner of the toss decides whether to kick off or to choose an end. If the winner of the toss decides to choose an end, the opponents must kick off and vice versa.



### *DURING THE MATCH*

#### **6.A.4 THE DUTIES OF THE REFEREE IN THE PLAYING ENCLOSURE**

- (a) The referee is the sole judge of fact and of Law during a match. The referee must apply fairly all the Laws of the Game in every match.
- (b) The referee keeps the time.
- (c) The referee keeps the score.
- (d) The referee gives permission to the players to leave the playing area.
- (e) The referee gives permission to the replacements or substitutes to enter the playing area.
- (f) The referee gives permission to the team doctors or medically trained persons or their assistants to enter the playing area, as and when permitted by the Law.
- (g) The referee gives permission to each of the coaches to enter the playing area at half time to attend their teams during the interval.

#### **6.A.5 PLAYERS DISPUTING A REFEREE'S DECISION**

All players must respect the authority of the referee. They must not dispute the referee's decisions. They must stop playing at once when the referee blows the whistle except at a kick off.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick at the place of infringement or where play would next commence.



### **6.A.6 REFEREE ALTERING A DECISION**

The referee may alter a decision when a touch judge has raised the flag to signal touch or an act of foul play.

### **6.A.7 REFEREE CONSULTING WITH OTHERS**

- (a) The referee may consult with touch judges in regard to matters relating to their duties, the Law relating to foul play, or timekeeping.
- (b) A match organiser may appoint an official who uses technological devices. If the referee is unsure when making a decision in in-goal involving a try being scored or a touch down, that official may be consulted.
- (c) The official may be consulted if the referee is unsure when making a decision in in-goal with regard to the scoring of a try or a touch down when foul play in in-goal may have been involved.
- (d) The official may be consulted in relation to the success or otherwise of kicks at goal.
- (e) The official may be consulted if the referee or touch judge is unsure if a player was or was not in touch when attempting to ground the ball to score a try.
- (f) The official may be consulted if the referee or touch judges are unsure when making a decision relating to touch-in-goal and the ball being made dead if a score may have occurred.
- (g) A match organiser may appoint a timekeeper who will signify the end of each half.
- (h) The referee must not consult with any other persons.

### **6.A.8 THE REFEREE'S WHISTLE**

- (a) The referee must carry a whistle and blow the whistle to indicate the beginning and end of each half of the match.
- (b) The referee has power to stop play at any time.
- (c) The referee must blow the whistle to indicate a score, or a touch down.



- (d) The referee must blow the whistle to stop play because of an infringement or for an offence of foul play. When the referee cautions or sends off the offender, the referee must whistle a second time when the penalty kick or penalty try is awarded.
- (e) The referee must blow the whistle when the ball has gone out of play, or when it has become unplayable, or when a penalty is awarded.
- (f) The referee must blow the whistle when the ball or the ball carrier touches the referee and either team gains an advantage from this.
- (g) The referee must blow the whistle when it would be dangerous to let play continue. This includes when a scrum collapses, or when a front row player is lifted into the air or is forced upwards out of a scrum, or when it is probable that a player has been seriously injured.
- (h) The referee may blow the whistle to stop play for any other reason according to the Laws.

### **6.A.9 THE REFEREE AND INJURY**

- (a) If a player is injured and continuation of play would be dangerous, the referee must blow the whistle immediately.
- (b) If the referee stops play because a player has been injured, and there has been no infringement and the ball has not been made dead, play restarts with a scrum. The team last in possession throws in the ball. If neither team was in possession, the attacking team throws in the ball.
- (c) The referee must blow the whistle if continuation of play would be dangerous for any reason.

### **6.A.10 THE BALL TOUCHING THE REFEREE**

- (a) If the ball or the ball carrier touches the referee and neither team gains an advantage, play continues.
- (b) If either team gains an advantage in the field of play, the referee orders a scrum and the team that last played the ball has the throw in.



- (c) If either team gains an advantage in in-goal, if the ball is in possession of an attacking player the referee awards a try where the contact took place.
- (d) If either team gains an advantage in in-goal, if the ball is in possession of a defending player, the referee awards a touch down where the contact took place.

#### **6.A.11 THE BALL IN IN-GOAL TOUCHED BY NON-PLAYER**

The referee judges what would have happened next and awards a try or a touch down at the place where the ball was touched.

### ***AFTER THE MATCH***

#### **6.A.12 SCORE**

The referee communicates the score to the teams and to the match organiser.

#### **6.A.13 PLAYER SENT-OFF**

If a player is sent off the referee gives the match organiser a written report on the foul play infringement as soon as possible.

### **6.B. TOUCH JUDGES *BEFORE THE MATCH***

#### **6.B.1 APPOINTING TOUCH JUDGES**

There are two touch judges for every match. Unless they have been appointed by or under the authority of the match organiser, each team provides a touch judge.

#### **6.B.2 REPLACING A TOUCH JUDGE**

The match organiser may nominate a person to act as a replacement for the referee or the touch judges. This person is called the reserve touch judge and stands in the perimeter area.

### 6.B.3 CONTROL OF TOUCH JUDGES

The referee has control over both touch judges. The referee may tell them what their duties are, and may overrule their decisions. If a touch judge is unsatisfactory the referee may ask that the touch judge be replaced. If the referee believes a touch judge is guilty of misconduct, the referee has power to send the touch judge off and make a report to the match organiser.

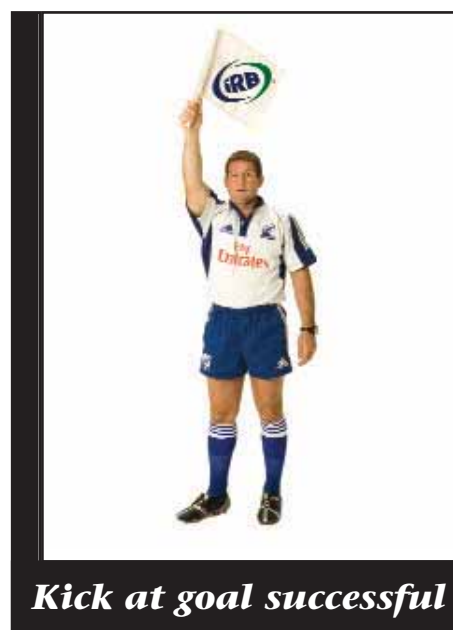
#### *DURING THE MATCH*

### 6.B.4 WHERE THE TOUCH JUDGES SHOULD BE

- (a) There is one touch judge on each side of the ground. The touch judge remains in touch except when judging a kick at goal. When judging a kick at goal the touch judges stand in in-goal behind the goal posts.
- (b) A touch judge may enter the playing area when reporting an offence of dangerous play or misconduct to the referee. The touch judge may do this only at the next stoppage in play.

### 6.B.5 TOUCH JUDGE SIGNALS

- (a) Each touch judge carries a flag or something similar with which to signal decisions.
- (b) **Signalling result of kick at goal.** When a conversion kick or a penalty kick at goal is being taken, the touch judges must help the referee by signalling the result of the kick. One touch judge stands at or behind each goal post. If the ball goes over the cross-bar and between the posts, the touch judge raises the flag to indicate a goal.



- (c) **Signalling touch.** When the ball or the ball carrier has gone into touch, the touch judge must hold up the flag. The touch judge must stand at the place of the throw in and point to the team entitled to throw in. The touch judge must also signal when the ball or the ball carrier has gone into touch-in-goal.



- (d) **When to lower the flag.** When the ball is thrown in, the touch judge must lower the flag, with the following exceptions:

**Exception 1:** When the player throwing in puts any part of either foot in the field of play, the touch judge keeps the flag up.

**Exception 2:** When the team not entitled to throw in has done so, the touch judge keeps the flag up.

**Exception 3:** When, at a quick throw in, the ball that went into touch is replaced by another ball, or after it went into touch or it has been touched by anyone except the player who takes the throw in, the touch judge keeps the flag up.

- (e) It is for the referee, and not the touch judge, to decide whether or not the ball was thrown in from the correct place.

- (f) **Signalling foul play.** A touch judge signals that foul play or misconduct has been seen by holding the flag horizontally and pointing infield at right angles to the touchline.



### 6.B.6 AFTER SIGNALLING FOUL PLAY

A match organiser may give authority to the touch judge to signal for foul play. If a touch judge signals foul play, the touch judge must stay in touch and continue to carry out all the other duties until the next stoppage in play. The touch judge may then enter the playing area to report the offence to the referee. The referee may then take whatever action is needed. Any penalty awarded will be in accordance with Law 10 – Foul Play.

### *AFTER THE MATCH*

### 6.B.7 PLAYER SENT-OFF

If a player has been sent-off following a touch judge's signal, the touch judge submits a written report about the incident to the referee as soon as possible after the match and provides it to the match organiser.



## **6.C. ADDITIONAL PERSONS**

### **6.C.1 RESERVE TOUCH JUDGE**

When a reserve touch judge is appointed, the referee's authority regarding replacements and substitutions may be delegated to the reserve touch judge.

### **6.C.2 THOSE WHO MAY ENTER THE PLAYING AREA**

The match doctor and the non-playing members of the team may enter the playing area as authorised by the referee.

### **6.C.3 LIMITS TO ENTERING THE PLAYING AREA**

In the case of injury, these persons may enter the playing area while play continues, provided they have permission from the referee. Otherwise, they enter only when the ball is dead.

# During the Match



## Method of Playing the Match

**Law 7** Mode of Play

**Law 8** Advantage

**Law 9** Method of Scoring

**Law 10** Foul Play

**Law 11** Offside and Onside in General Play

**Law 12** Knock on or Throw forward



## Law 7 Mode of Play

### **PLAYING A MATCH**

A match is started by a kick off.

After the kick off, any player who is onside may take the ball and run with it.

Any player may throw it or kick it.

Any player may give the ball to another player.

Any player may tackle, hold or push an opponent holding the ball.

Any player may fall on the ball.

Any player may take part in a scrum, ruck, maul or lineout.

Any player may ground the ball in in-goal.

Whatever a player does must be in accordance with the laws of the game.

## LAW 8 ADVANTAGE

### DEFINITIONS

The Law of advantage takes precedence over most other Laws and its purpose is to make play more continuous with fewer stoppages for infringements. Players are encouraged to play to the whistle despite infringements by their opponents. When the result of an infringement by one team is that their opposing team may gain an advantage, the referee does not whistle immediately for the infringement.

#### 8.1 ADVANTAGE IN PRACTICE

- (a) The referee is sole judge of whether or not a team has gained an advantage. The referee has wide discretion when making decisions.
- (b) Advantage can be either territorial or tactical.
- (c) Territorial advantage means a gain in ground.
- (d) Tactical advantage means freedom for the non-offending team to play the ball as they wish.

#### 8.2 WHEN ADVANTAGE DOES NOT ARISE

The advantage must be clear and real. A mere opportunity to gain advantage is not enough. If the non-offending team does not gain an advantage, the referee blows the whistle and brings play back to the place of infringement.

#### 8.3 WHEN THE ADVANTAGE LAW IS NOT APPLIED

- (a) **Referee contact.** Advantage must not be applied when the ball, or a player carrying it, touches the referee.
- (b) **Ball out of tunnel.** Advantage must not be applied when the ball comes out of either end of the tunnel at a scrum without having been played.
- (c) **Wheeled scrum.** Advantage must not be applied when the scrum is wheeled through more than 90 degrees (so that the middle line has passed beyond a position parallel to the touchline).

- (d) **Collapsed scrum.** Advantage must not be applied when a scrum collapses. The referee must blow the whistle immediately.
- (e) **Player lifted in the air.** Advantage must not be applied when a player in a scrum is lifted in the air or forced upwards out of the scrum. The referee must blow the whistle immediately.

#### **8.4 IMMEDIATE WHISTLE WHEN NO ADVANTAGE**

The referee blows the whistle immediately once the referee decides an advantage cannot be gained by the non-offending team.

#### **8.5 MORE THAN ONE INFRINGEMENT**

- (a) If there is more than one infringement by the same team the referee applies the advantage law.
- (b) If advantage is being played following an infringement by one team and then the other team commit an infringement, the referee blows the whistle and applies the sanctions associated with the first infringement.



# Law 9 Method of Scoring

## 9.A. SCORING POINTS

### 9.A.1 POINTS VALUES

**Try.** When an attacking player is first to ground the ball in the opponents' in-goal, a try is scored.

**Penalty Try.** If a player would probably have scored a try but for foul play by an opponent, a penalty try is awarded between the goal posts.

**Conversion Goal.** When a player scores a try it gives the player's team the right to attempt to score a goal by taking a kick at goal; this also applies to a penalty try. This kick is a conversion kick: a conversion kick can be a place kick or a drop kick.

**Penalty Goal.** A player scores a penalty goal by kicking a goal from a penalty kick.

**Dropped Goal.** A player scores a dropped goal by kicking a goal from a drop kick in general play. The team awarded a free kick cannot score a dropped goal until the ball next becomes dead, or until an opponent has played or touched it, or has tackled the ball carrier. This restriction applies also to a scrum taken instead of a free kick.

### VALUE

**5 points**

**5 points**

**2 points**

**3 points**

**3 points**



### 9.A.2. KICK AT GOAL - SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

- (a) If after the ball is kicked, it touches the ground or any team mate of the kicker, a goal cannot be scored.
- (b) If the ball has crossed the cross bar a goal is scored, even if the wind blows it back into the field of play.
- (c) If an opponent commits an offence as the kick at goal is being taken, but nevertheless the kick is successful, advantage is played and the score stands.
- (d) Any player who touches the ball in an attempt to prevent a penalty goal being scored is illegally touching the ball.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

### 9.B CONVERSION KICK

#### DEFINITIONS

When a player scores a try, it gives the player's team the right to try to score a goal by taking a kick at goal; this also applies to a penalty try. This kick is a conversion kick. A conversion kick can be a place kick or a drop kick.

#### 9.B.1 TAKING A CONVERSION KICK

- (a) The kicker must use the ball that was in play unless it is defective.
- (b) The kick is taken on a line through the place where the try was scored.
- (c) A placer is a team mate who holds the ball for the kicker to kick.
- (d) The kicker may place the ball directly on the ground or on sand, sawdust or a kicking tee approved by the Union.
- (e) The kicker must take the kick within one minute from the time the kicker has indicated an intention to kick. The intention to kick is signalled by the arrival of the kicking tee or sand, or the player makes a mark on the ground. The player must complete the kick within the minute even if the ball rolls over and has to be placed again.

**Penalty:** The kick is disallowed if the kicker does not take the kick within the time allowed.



### 9.B.2 THE KICKER'S TEAM

- (a) All the kicker's team, except the placer, must be behind the ball when it is kicked.
- (b) Neither the kicker nor a placer must do anything to mislead their opponents into charging too soon.
- (c) If the ball falls over before the kicker begins the approach to kick, the referee permits the kicker to replace it without excessive delay. While the ball is replaced, the opponents must stay behind their goal line.

If the ball falls over after the kicker begins the approach to kick, the kicker may then kick or attempt a dropped goal.

If the ball falls over and rolls away from the line through the place where the try was scored, and the kicker then kicks the ball over the cross bar, a goal is scored.

If the ball falls over and rolls into touch after the kicker begins the approach to kick, the kick is disallowed.

**Penalty:** (a)-(c) If the kicker's team infringes, the kick is disallowed.

### 9.B.3 THE OPPOSING TEAM

- (a) All players of the opposing team must retire to their goal line and must not overstep that line until the kicker begins the approach to kick or starts to kick. When the kicker does this, they may charge or jump to prevent a goal but must not be physically supported by other players in these actions.
- (b) When the ball falls over after the kicker began the approach to kick, the opponents may continue to charge.
- (c) A defending team must not shout during a kick at goal.

**Penalty:** (a)-(c) If the opposing team infringes but the kick is successful, the goal stands.

If the kick is unsuccessful, the kicker may take another kick and the opposing team is not allowed to charge.

When another kick is allowed, the kicker may repeat all the preparations. The kicker may change the type of kick.

## Law 10 Foul Play

### DEFINITIONS

**Foul play** is anything a person does within the playing enclosure that is against the letter and spirit of the Laws of the Game. It includes obstruction, unfair play, repeated infringements, dangerous play and misconduct which is prejudicial to the game.

#### 10.1 OBSTRUCTION

- (a) **Charging or pushing.** When a player and an opponent are running for the ball, either player must not charge or push the other except shoulder-to-shoulder.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (b) **Running in front of a ball carrier.** A player must not intentionally move or stand in front of a team mate carrying the ball thereby preventing opponents from tackling the current ball carrier or the opportunity to tackle potential ball carriers when they gain possession.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (c) **Blocking the tackler.** A player must not intentionally move or stand in a position that prevents an opponent from tackling a ball carrier.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (d) **Blocking the ball.** A player must not intentionally move or stand in a position that prevents an opponent from playing the ball.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (e) **Ball carrier running into team mate at a set-piece.** A player carrying the ball after it has left a scrum, ruck, maul or lineout must not run into team mates in front of the player.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (f) **Flanker obstructing opposing scrum half.** A flanker in a scrum must not prevent an opposing scrum half from advancing around the scrum.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick



### 10.2 UNFAIR PLAY

- (a) **Intentionally Offending.** A player must not intentionally infringe any law of the game, or play unfairly. The player who intentionally offends must be either admonished, or cautioned that a send off will result if the offence or a similar offence is committed, or sent off. After a caution a player is temporarily suspended for a period of ten minutes playing time. After a caution, the the player commits the same or similar offence, the player must be sent off.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

A penalty try must be awarded if the offence prevents a try that would probably otherwise have been scored. A player who prevents a try being scored through foul play must either be cautioned and temporarily suspended or sent off.

- (b) **Time-wasting.** A player must not intentionally waste time.

**Penalty:** Free Kick

- (c) **Throwing into touch.** A player must not intentionally knock, place, push or throw the ball with his arm or hand into touch, touch-in-goal, or over the dead ball line.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the 15-metre line if the offence is between the 15-metre line and the touchline, or, at the place of infringement if the offence occurred elsewhere in the field of play, or, 5 metres from the goal line and at least 15 metres from the touchline if the infringement occurred in in-goal.

A penalty try must be awarded if the offence prevents a try that would probably otherwise have been scored.

### 10.3 REPEATED INFRINGEMENTS

- (a) **Repeatedly offending.** A player must not repeatedly infringe any law. Repeated infringement is a matter of fact. The question of whether or not the player intended to infringe is irrelevant.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

A player penalised for repeated infringements must be cautioned and temporarily suspended. If that player then commits a further cautionable offence, or the same offence, the player must be sent off.

- (b) **Repeated infringements by the team.** When different players of the same team repeatedly commit the same offence, the referee must decide whether or not this amounts to repeated infringement. If it does, the referee gives a general warning to the team and if they then repeat the offence, the referee cautions and temporarily suspends the guilty player(s) for a period of 10 minutes playing time. If a player of that same team then repeats the offence the referee sends off the guilty player(s).

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

A penalty try must be awarded if the offence prevents a try that would probably otherwise have been scored.

- (c) **Repeated infringements: standard applied by referee.** When the referee decides how many offences constitute repeated infringement, the referee must always apply a strict standard in representative and senior matches. When a player offends three times the referee must caution that player.

The referee may relax this standard in junior or minor matches, where infringements may be the result of poor knowledge of the laws or lack of skill.

## 10.4 DANGEROUS PLAY AND MISCONDUCT

- (a) **Punching or striking.** A player must not strike an opponent with the fist or arm, including the elbow, shoulder, head or knee(s).

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

- (b) **Stamping or trampling.** A player must not stamp or trample on an opponent.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

- (c) **Kicking.** A player must not kick an opponent

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

- (d) **Tripping.** A player must not trip an opponent with the leg or foot.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick



## Law 10 Foul Play

- (e) **Dangerous tackling.** A player must not tackle an opponent early, late or dangerously.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

A player must not tackle (or try to tackle) an opponent above the line of the shoulders. A tackle around the opponent's neck or head is dangerous play.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

A 'stiff-arm tackle' is dangerous play. A player makes a stiff-arm tackle when using a stiff-arm to strike an opponent.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

Playing a player without the ball is dangerous play.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

A player must not tackle an opponent whose feet are off the ground.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

Advantage may be played, but if the offence prevents a probable try, a penalty try must be awarded.

- (f) **Playing an opponent without the ball.** Except in a scrum, ruck or maul, a player must not hold, or push, or charge into, or obstruct an opponent not carrying the ball.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

- (g) **Dangerous charging.** A player must not charge or knock down an opponent carrying the ball without trying to grasp that player.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

- (h) **Tackling the jumper in the air.** A player must not tackle nor tap, push or pull the foot or feet of an opponent jumping for the ball in a lineout or in open play.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

- (i) **Dangerous play in a scrum, ruck or maul.** The front row of a scrum must not rush against its opponents.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

Front row players must not intentionally lift opponents off their feet or force them upwards out of the scrum.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick



Players must not charge into a ruck or maul without binding onto a player in the ruck or maul.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

Players must not intentionally collapse a scrum, ruck or maul.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

- (j) **Retaliation.** A player must not retaliate. Even if an opponent is infringing the laws, a player must not do anything that is dangerous to the opponent.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

- (k) **Acts contrary to good sportsmanship.** A player must not do anything that is against the spirit of good sportsmanship in the playing enclosure.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

- (l) **Misconduct while the ball is out of play.** A player, must not, while the ball is out of play, commit any misconduct, or obstruct or in any way interfere with an opponent.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

The penalty is the same as for sections 10.4 (a)-(k) except that the penalty kick is awarded at the place where play would restart. If that place is on the touchline or within 15 metres of it, the mark for the penalty kick is on the 15-metre line, in line with that place.

If play would restart at a 5-metre scrum, the mark for the penalty kick is at that place of the scrum.

If play would restart with a drop out, the non-offending team may choose to take the penalty kick anywhere on the 22-metre line.

If a penalty kick is awarded but the offending team is guilty of further misconduct before the kick is taken, the referee cautions or orders off the guilty player and advances the mark for the penalty kick 10 metres. This covers both the original offence and the misconduct.

If a penalty kick is awarded to a team but a player of that team is guilty of further misconduct before the kick is taken, the referee will caution or send-off the guilty player, declare the kick disallowed, and award a penalty kick to the opposing team.

If an offence is committed outside the playing area while the ball is still in play, and if that offence is not covered by any other part of this law, the penalty kick is awarded on the 15-metre line, in line with where the offence happened.

For an offence reported by a touch judge a penalty kick may be awarded where the offence happened, or advantage may be played.

- (m) **Late-charging the kicker.** A player must not intentionally charge or obstruct an opponent who has just kicked the ball.  
**Penalty:** The non-offending team may choose to take the penalty kick either at the place of infringement, where the ball lands, or where it was next played.

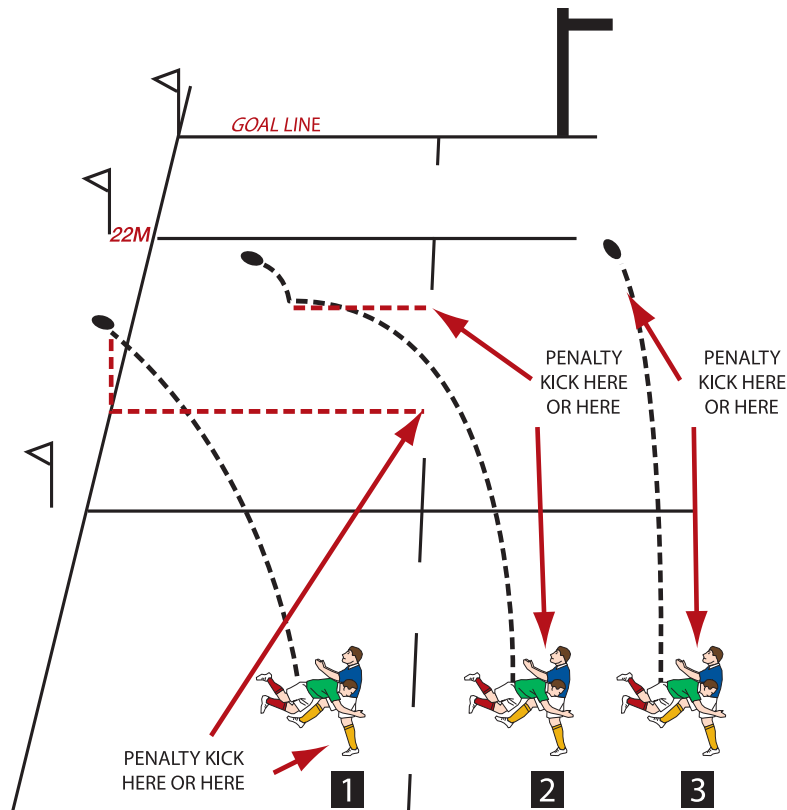
**Place of infringement.** If the infringement takes place in the kicker's in-goal, the penalty kick is taken 5 metres from the goal line in line with the place of infringement but at least 15 metres from the touchline.

The non-offending team may also choose to take the penalty kick where the ball lands or is next played and at least 15 metres from the touchline.

**Where the ball lands.** If the ball lands in touch, the mark for the optional penalty kick is on the 15-metre line, in line with where it went into touch. If the ball lands within 15 metres of the touchline, the mark is on the 15-metre line opposite where it landed.

If the ball lands in the in-goal, in touch-in-goal, or on or over the dead ball line, the mark for the optional penalty kick is 5 metres from the goal line, in line with the place where the ball crossed the goal line and at least 15 metres from the touchline.

If the ball hits a goal post or crossbar, the optional penalty kick is awarded where the ball lands on the ground.



### *LATE CHARGING THE KICKER*

- (n) **Flying Wedge and Cavalry Charge.** A team must not use the 'Flying Wedge' or the 'Cavalry Charge'.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick at the place of the original infringement.

**'Flying Wedge'** The type of attack known as a 'Flying Wedge' usually happens near the goal line, when the attacking team is awarded a penalty kick or free kick.

The kicker tap-kicks the ball and starts the attack, either by driving towards the goal line or by passing to a team mate who drives forward. Immediately, team mates bind on each side of the ball carrier in a wedge formation. Often one or more of these team mates is in front of the ball carrier. A 'Flying Wedge' is illegal.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick at the place of the original infringement.

**‘Cavalry Charge’.** The type of attack known as a ‘Cavalry Charge’ usually happens near the goal line, when the attacking team is awarded a penalty kick or free kick. Attacking players form a line across the field some distance behind the kicker.

These attacking players are usually a metre or two apart. At a signal from the kicker they charge forward. When they get near, the kicker tap-kicks the ball and passes it to one of them.

Until the ball is kicked, the defending team must stay at least 10 metres from the mark or behind their goal line, if that is nearer. A ‘Cavalry Charge’ is illegal.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick at the place of the original infringement.

### 10.5 SANCTIONS

- (a) Any player who infringes any part of the Foul Play law must be admonished, or cautioned and temporarily suspended, or sent-off.
- (b) A player who has been cautioned and temporarily suspended who then commits a second cautionable offence within the Foul Play law must be sent-off.

### 10.6 YELLOW AND RED CARDS

- (a) When a player has been cautioned and temporarily suspended in an International match the referee will show that player a yellow card.
- (b) When a player has been sent off in an International match, the referee will show that player a red card.
- (c) For other matches the Match Organiser or Union having jurisdiction over the match may decide upon the use of yellow and red cards.

### 10.7 PLAYER SENT OFF

A player who is sent-off takes no further part in the match.

## Law 11 Offside and Onside in General Play

### DEFINITIONS

At the start of a game all players are onside. As the match progresses players may find themselves in an offside position. Such players are then liable to be penalized until they become onside again.

In general play a player is offside if the player is in front of a team mate who is carrying the ball, or in front of a team mate who last played the ball.

Offside means that a player is temporarily out of the game. Such players are liable to be penalized if they take part in the game.

In general play, a player can be put onside either by an action of a team mate or by an action of an opponent. However, the offside player cannot be put onside if the offside player interferes with play; or moves forward, towards the ball, or fails to move 10 metres away from the place where the ball lands.

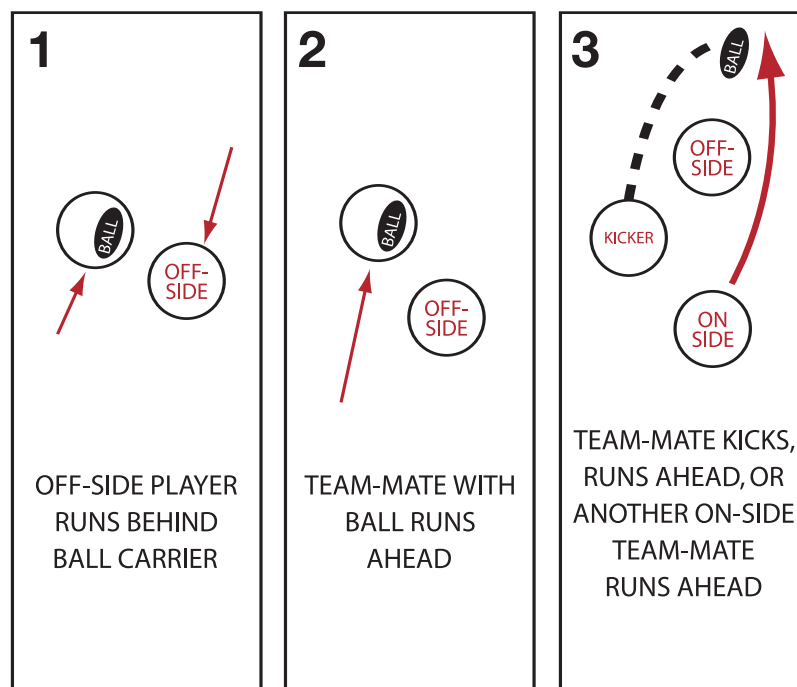
### 11.1 OFFSIDE IN GENERAL PLAY

- (a) A player who is in an offside position is liable to penalty only if the player does one of three things:
  - Interferes with play or,
  - Moves forward, towards the ball or  
Fails to comply with the 10-Metre law (law 11.4).
  - A player who is in an offside position is not automatically penalised.
  - A player who receives an unintentional throw forward is not offside.
  - A player can be offside in the in-goal.
- (b) **Offside and interfering with play.** A player who is offside must not take part in the game. This means the player must not play the ball or obstruct an opponent.
- (c) **Offside and moving forward.** When a team mate of an offside player has kicked ahead, the offside player must not move towards opponents who are waiting to play the ball, or move towards the place where the ball lands, until the player has been put onside.

### 11.2 BEING PUT ONSIDE BY THE ACTION OF A TEAM MATE

In general play, there are four ways by which an offside player can be put onside by actions of that player or of team mates;

- (a) **Action by the player.** When the offside player runs behind the team mate who last kicked, touched or carried the ball, the player is put onside.
- (b) **Action by the ball carrier.** When a team mate carrying the ball runs in front of the offside player, that player is put onside.
- (c) **Action by the kicker or other onside player.** When the kicker, or team mate who was level with or behind the kicker when (or after) the ball was kicked, runs in front of the offside player, the player is put onside.
- (d) **When running forward,** the team mate may be in touch or in touch-in-goal, but that team mate must return to the playing area to put the other player onside.

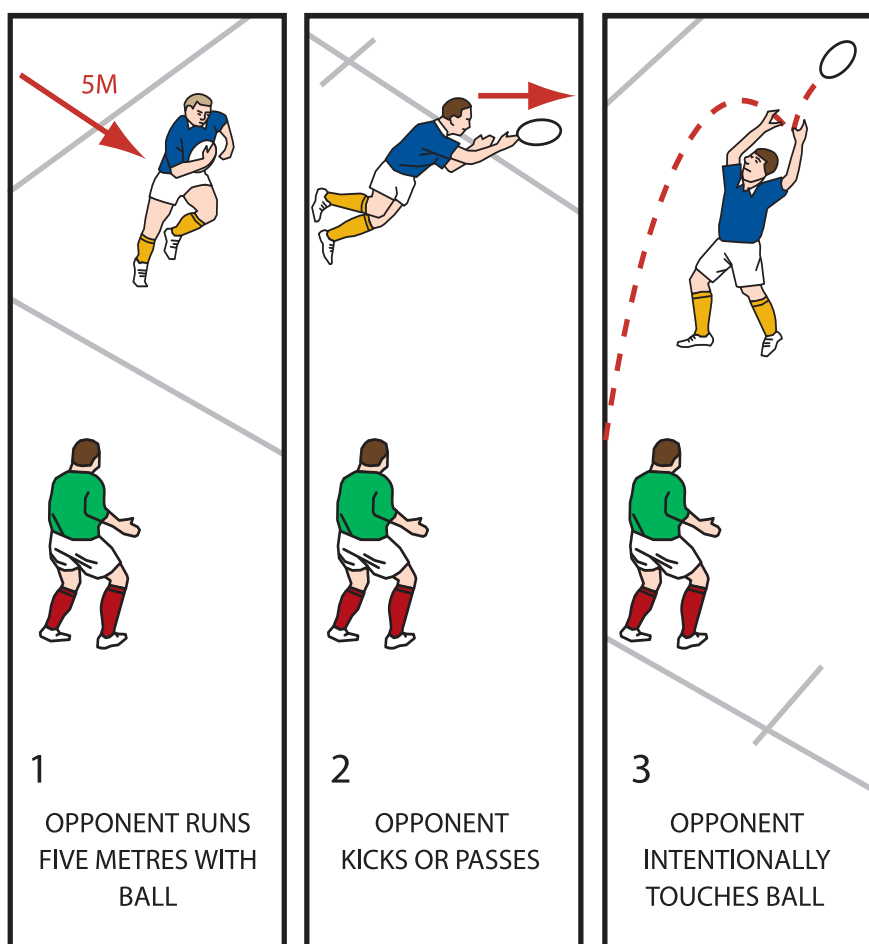


### *PLAYER MADE ONSIDE BY TEAM MATE*

## 11.3 BEING PUT ONSIDE BY OPPONENTS

In general play, there are three ways by which an offside player can be put onside by an action of the opposing team. These three ways do not apply to a player who is offside under the 10-Metre law.

- (a) **Runs 5 metres with ball.** When an opponent carrying the ball runs 5 metres, the offside player is put onside.
- (b) **Kicks or passes.** When an opponent kicks or passes the ball, the offside player is put onside.
- (c) **Intentionally touches ball.** When an opponent intentionally touches the ball but does not catch it, the offside player is put onside.



***PLAYER PUT ONSIDE BY OPPONENTS***





### 11.4 OFFSIDE UNDER THE 10-METRE LAW

- (a) When a team mate of an offside player has kicked ahead, the offside player is considered to be taking part in the game if the player is in front of an imaginary line across the field which is 10 metres from the opponent waiting to play the ball, or from where the ball lands or may land. The offside player must immediately move behind the imaginary 10-metre line. While moving away, the player must not obstruct an opponent.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

- (b) While moving away, the offside player cannot be put onside by any action of the opposing team. However, before the player has moved the full 10 metres, the player can be put onside by any onside team mate who runs in front of the player.

- (c) When a player who is offside under the 10-Metre law charges an opponent waiting to catch the ball, the referee blows the whistle at once and the offside player is penalised. Delay may prove dangerous to the opponent.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

- (d) When a player who is offside under the 10-Metre law plays the ball which has been misfielded by an opponent, the offside player is penalised.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

- (e) The 10-Metre law is not altered by the fact that the ball has hit a goal post or a crossbar. What matters is where the ball lands. An offside player must not be in front of the imaginary 10-metre line across the field.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

- (f) The 10-Metre law does not apply when a player kicks the ball, and an opponent charges down the kick, and a team mate of the kicker who was in front of the imaginary 10-metre line across the field then plays the ball. The opponent was not 'waiting to play the ball' and the team mate is onside.

**Penalty:** When a player is penalised for being offside in general play, the opposing team chooses either a penalty kick at the place of infringement or a scrum at the place where the offending team last played the ball. If it was last played in that team's in-goal, the scrum is formed 5 metres from the goal line in line with where it was played.

- (g) If more than one player is offside and moving forward after a team mate has kicked ahead, the place of infringement is the position of the offside player closest to an opponent waiting for the ball, or closest to where the ball lands.

### **11.5 BEING PUT ONSIDE UNDER THE 10-METRE LAW**

- (a) The offside player must retire behind the imaginary 10-metre line across the field, otherwise the player is liable to be penalised.
- (b) While retiring, the player can be put onside before moving behind the imaginary 10-metre line by any of the three actions of the player's team listed above in 11.2. However, the player cannot be put onside by any action of the opposing team.

### **11.6 ACCIDENTAL OFFSIDE**

- (a) When an offside player cannot avoid being touched by the ball or by a team mate carrying it, the player is accidentally offside. If the player's team gains no advantage from this, play continues. If the player's team gains an advantage, a scrum is formed with the opposing team throwing in the ball.
- (b) When a player hands the ball to a team mate in front of the first player, the receiver is offside. Unless the receiver is considered to be intentionally offside (in which case a penalty kick is awarded), the receiver is accidentally offside and a scrum is formed with the opposing team throwing in the ball.

### **11.7 OFFSIDE AFTER A KNOCK ON**

When a player knocks-on and an offside team mate next plays the ball, the offside player is liable to penalty if playing the ball prevented an opponent from gaining an advantage.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick



### 11.8 **PUTTING ONSIDE A PLAYER RETIRING DURING A RUCK, MAUL, SCRUM OR LINEOUT**

When a ruck, maul, scrum or lineout forms, a player who is offside and is retiring as required by law remains offside even when the opposing team wins possession and the ruck, maul, scrum or lineout has ended. The player is put onside by retiring behind the applicable offside line. No other action of the offside player and no action of that player's team mates can put the offside player onside.

If the player remains offside the player can be put onside only by the action of the opposing team. There are two such actions:

**Opponent runs 5 meters with ball.** When an opponent carrying the ball has run 5 meters, the offside player is put onside. An offside player is not put onside when an opponent passes the ball. Even if the opponents pass the ball several times, their action does not put the offside player onside.

**Opponent kicks.** When an opponent kicks the ball, the offside player is put onside.

### 11.9 **LOITERING**

A player who remains in an offside position is loitering. A loiterer who prevents the opposing team from playing the ball as they wish is taking part in the game, and is penalised. The referee makes sure that the loiterer does not benefit from being put onside by the opposing team's action.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

## Law 12 Knock on or Throw forward

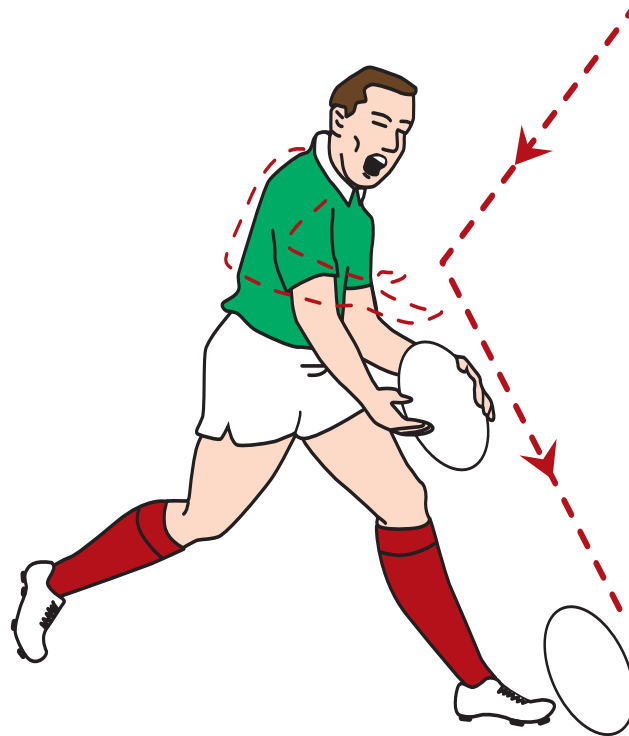
### DEFINITION KNOCK ON

A knock on occurs when a player loses possession of the ball and it goes forward, or when a player hits the ball forward with the hand or arm, or when the ball hits the hand or arm and goes forward, and the ball touches the ground or another player before the original player can catch it.

'Forward' means towards the opposing team's dead ball line.

### EXCEPTION

**Charge down.** If a player charges down the ball as an opponent kicks it, or immediately after the kick, it is not a knock on even though the ball may travel forward.



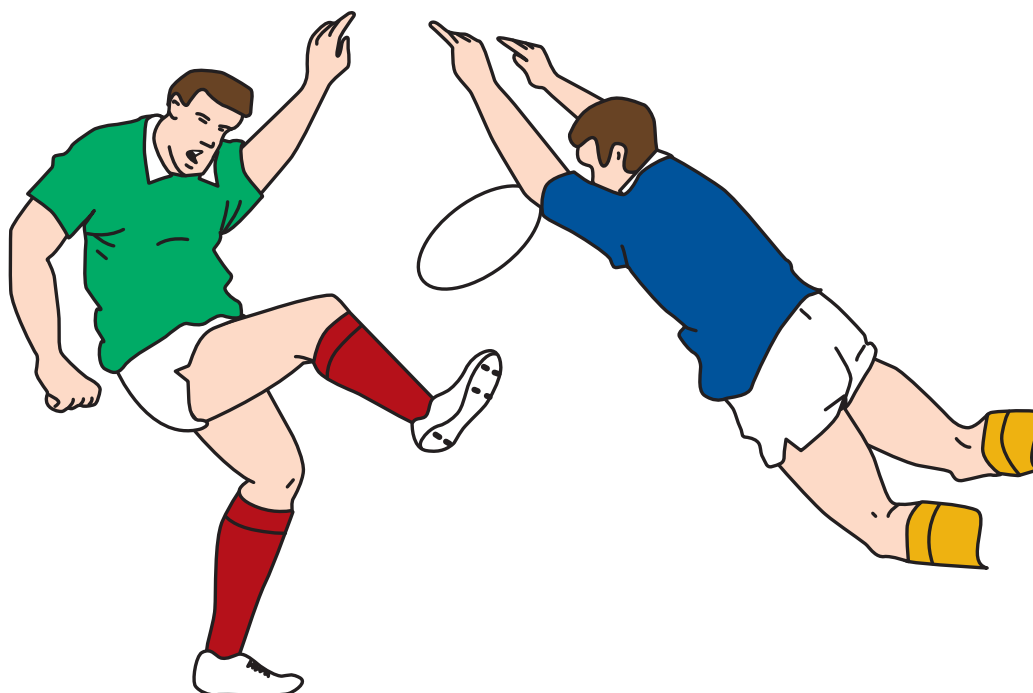
***KNOCK ON***

### DEFINITION THROW FORWARD

A throw forward occurs when a player throws or passes the ball forward. 'Forward' means towards the opposing team's dead ball line.

### EXCEPTION

**Bounce forward.** If the ball is not thrown forward but it hits a player or the ground and bounces forward, this is not a throw forward.



*CHARGE DOWN*

## 12.1 THE OUTCOME OF A KNOCK ON OR THROW FORWARD

- (a) **Unintentional knock on or throw forward.** A scrum is awarded at the place of infringement.
- (b) **Unintentional knock on or throw forward at a lineout.** A scrum is awarded 15 metres from the touchline.
- (c) **Knock on or throw forward into the in-goal.** If an attacking player knocks-on or throws-forward in the field of play and the ball goes into the opponents' in-goal and it is made dead there, a scrum is awarded where the knock on or throw forward happened.
- (d) **Knock on or throw forward inside the in-goal.** If a player of either team knocks-on or throws-forward inside the in-goal, a 5-metre scrum is awarded in line with the place of infringement not closer than 5 metres from the touchline.
- (e) **Intentional knock or throw forward.** A player must not intentionally knock the ball forward with hand or arm, nor throw forward.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick. A penalty try must be awarded if the offence prevents a try that would probably otherwise have been scored.



# During the Match



## In the Field of Play

**Law 13** Kick off and Restart Kicks

**Law 14** Ball on the Ground: No Tackle

**Law 15** Tackle: Ball carrier Brought to Ground

**Law 16** Ruck

**Law 17** Maul

**Law 18** Mark



## Law 13 KickOff and Restart Kicks

### DEFINITION

The kickoff occurs at the start of the match and the restart of the match after half time. Restart kicks occur after a score or a touch down.

#### 13.1 WHERE AND HOW THE KICKOFF IS TAKEN

- (a) A team kicks off with a drop kick which must be taken at or behind the centre of the half-way line.
- (b) If the ball is kicked off by the wrong type of kick, or from the incorrect place, the opposing team has two choices:

To have the ball kicked off again, or

To have a scrum at the centre of the half-way line and they throw in the ball.

#### 13.2 WHO TAKES THE KICKOFF AND RESTART KICK

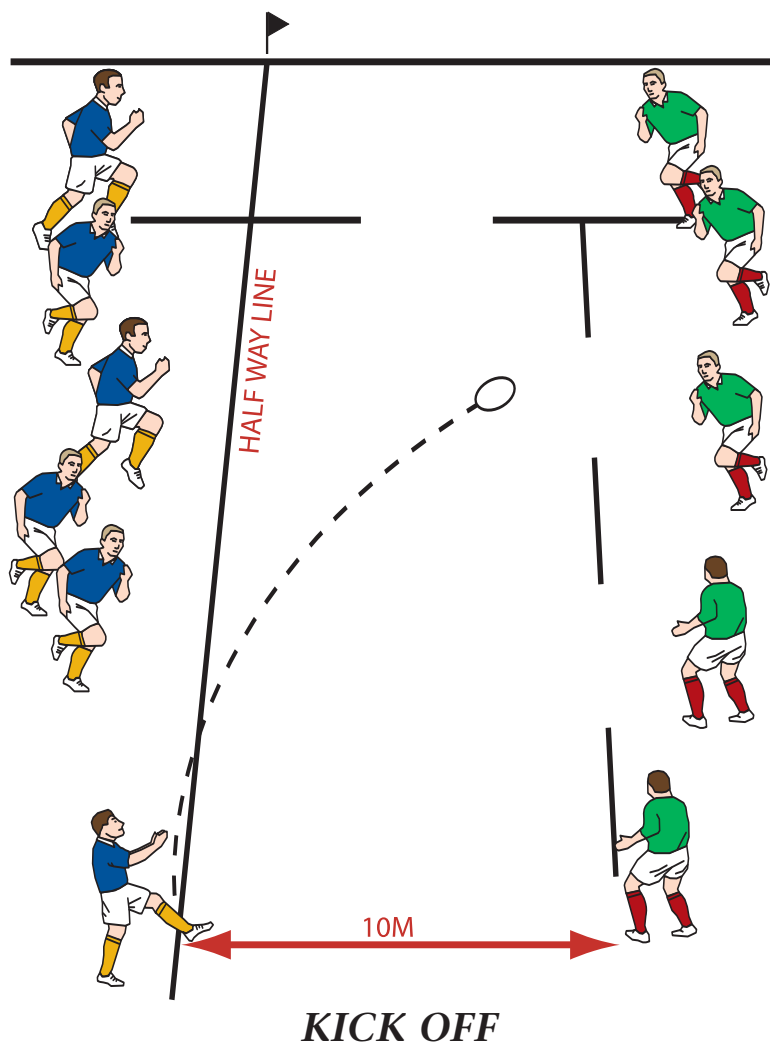
- (a) At the start of the game, the team whose captain elected to take the kick after winning the toss will kickoff, or the opposing team if the winning captain elected to choose an end.
- (b) After the half time interval, the opponents of the team who kicked off at the start of the game kick off.
- (c) After a score the opponents of the team who scored restart play.

#### 13.3 POSITION OF THE KICKER'S TEAM AT A KICK OFF

All the kicker's team must be behind the ball when it is kicked. If they are not, a scrum is formed at the centre. Their opponents throw in the ball.

### 13.4 POSITION OF THE OPPOSING TEAM AT A KICK OFF

All the opposing team must stand on or behind the 10-metre line. If they are in front of that line or if they charge before the ball is kicked, it is kicked off again.



### 13.5 KICK OFF OF 10 METRES

If the ball reaches the opponents' 10-metre line or reaches the 10-metre line and is blown back, play continues.

### 13.6 KICK OFF OF UNDER 10 METRES BUT PLAYED BY AN OPPONENT

If the ball does not reach the opponent's 10-metre line but is first played by an opponent, play continues.

### **13.7 KICK OFF OF UNDER 10 METRES AND NOT PLAYED BY AN OPPONENT**

If the ball does not reach the opponent's 10-metre line the opposing team has two choices:

To have the ball kicked off again, or  
To have a scrum at the centre. They throw in the ball.

### **13.8 BALL GOES DIRECTLY INTO TOUCH**

The ball must land in the field of play. If it is kicked directly into touch the opposing team has three choices:

To have the ball kicked off again, or  
To have a scrum at the centre and they have the throw in, or  
To accept the kick.

If they accept the kick, the lineout is on the half-way line. If the ball is blown behind the half-way line and goes directly into touch, the lineout is at the place where it went into touch.

### **13.9 BALL GOES INTO THE IN-GOAL**

- (a) If the ball is kicked into the in-goal without having touched or been touched by a player, the opposing team has three choices:

To ground the ball, or  
To make it dead, or  
To play on.

- (b) If the opposing team grounds the ball, or if they make it dead, or if the ball becomes dead by going into touch-in-goal or on or over the dead ball line, they have two choices:

To have a scrum formed at the centre, and they throw in the ball,  
or  
To have the other team kick off again.

- (c) If they opt to ground the ball or make it dead, they must do so without delay. Any other action with the ball by a defending player means the player has elected to play on.



### 13.10 DROP OUT

#### DEFINITION

A drop out is used to restart play after an attacking player has put or taken the ball into the in-goal, without infringement, and a defending player has made the ball dead there or it has gone into touch-in-goal or on or over the dead ball line.

A drop out is a drop kick taken by the defending team. The drop out may be taken anywhere on or behind the 22-metre line.

### 13.11 DELAY IN DROP OUT

The drop out must be taken without delay.

**Penalty:** Free Kick on the 22-metre line.

### 13.12 DROP OUT INCORRECTLY TAKEN

If the ball is kicked with the wrong type of kick, or from the wrong place, the opposing team has two choices:

To have another drop out, or

To have a scrum at the centre of the 22-metre line and they throw in the ball.

### 13.13 DROP OUT MUST CROSS THE LINE

- (a) If the ball does not cross the 22-metre line, the opposing team has two choices:

To have another drop out, or

To have a scrum at the centre of the 22-metre line.

They throw in the ball.

- (b) If the ball crosses the 22-metre line but is blown back, play continues.

- (c) If the ball does not cross the 22-metre line, advantage may apply. An opponent who plays the ball can score a try.

### **13.14 DROP OUT GOES DIRECTLY INTO TOUCH**

The ball must land in the field of play. If it is kicked directly into touch, the opposing team has three choices:

To have another drop out, or

To have a scrum at the centre of the 22-metre line, and they throw in the ball, or

To accept the kick. If they accept the kick, the throw in is on the 22-metre line.

### **13.15 DROP OUT GOES INTO THE OPPONENTS IN-GOAL**

- (a) If the ball is kicked into the opponent's in-goal without having touched or been touched by a player, the opposing team has three choices:

To ground the ball, or

To make it dead, or

To play on.

- (b) If the opposing team grounds the ball, or makes it dead, or if the ball becomes dead by going into touch-in-goal or on or over the dead ball line, they have two choices:

To have a scrum formed at the centre of the 22-metre line from where the kick was taken and they throw in the ball, or

To have the other team drop out again.

- (c) If they opt to ground the ball or make it dead, they must do so without delay. Any other action with the ball by a defending player means the player has elected to play on.

### **13.16 THE KICKER'S TEAM**

- (a) All the kicker's team must be behind the ball when it is kicked. If not, a scrum is formed at the centre of the 22-metre line. The opposing team throws in the ball.

- (b) However, if the kick is taken so quickly that players of the kicker's team who are retiring are still in front of the ball, they will not be penalised. They must not stop retiring until they have been made onside by an action of a team mate. They must not take part in the game until they have been made onside in this way.

**Penalty:** Scrum at the centre of the 22-metre line. The opposing team throws in the ball.

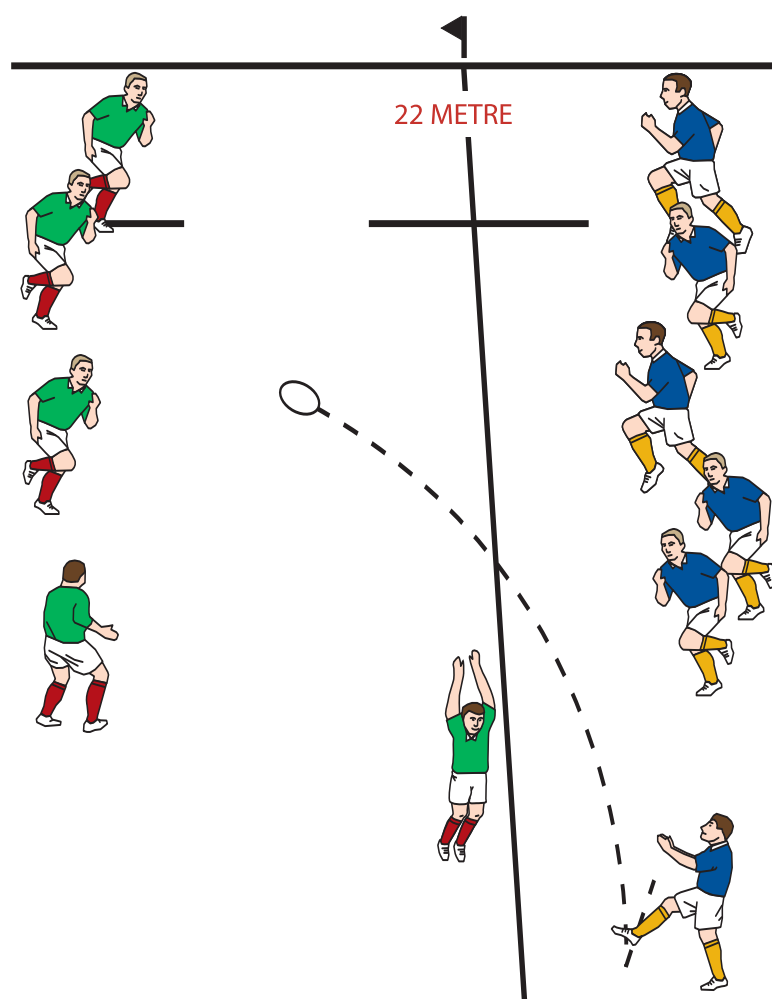
## 13.17 THE OPPOSING TEAM

- (a) The opposing team must not charge over the 22-metre line before the ball is kicked.

**Penalty:** Free Kick at the place of infringement.

- (b) If an opponent is on the wrong side of the 22-metre line and delays or obstructs the drop out, the player is guilty of misconduct.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the 22-metre line



*DROP OUT*

## Law 14 Ball on the Ground - No Tackle

### DEFINITION

This situation occurs when the ball is available on the ground and a player goes to ground to gather the ball, except immediately after a scrum or a ruck.

It also occurs when a player is on the ground in possession of the ball and has not been tackled.

The game is to be played by players who are on their feet. A player must not make the ball unplayable by falling down. Unplayable means that the ball is not immediately available to either team so that play may continue.

A player who makes the ball unplayable, or who obstructs the opposing team by falling down, is negating the purpose and spirit of the game and must be penalised.

A player who is not tackled, but who goes to ground while holding the ball, or a player who goes to ground and gathers the ball, must act immediately.

### 14.1 PLAYER ON THE GROUND

The player must immediately do one of three things:

Get up with the ball, or  
Pass the ball, or  
Release the ball.

A player who passes or releases the ball must also get up or move away from it at once. Advantage is played only if it happens immediately.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick





### 14.2 WHAT THE PLAYER MUST NOT DO

- (a) **Lying on or around the ball.** A player must not lie on, over, or near the ball to prevent opponents getting possession of it.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (b) **Falling over the player on the ground with the ball.** A player must not intentionally fall on or over a player with the ball who is lying on the ground.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (c) **Falling over players lying on the ground near the ball.** A player must not intentionally fall on or over players lying on the ground with the ball between them or near them.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

## Law 15 Tackle: Ball carrier Brought to the Ground

### DEFINITION

A tackle occurs when the ball carrier is held by one or more opponents and is brought to ground.

A ball carrier who is not held is not a tackled player and a tackle has not taken place.

Opposition players who hold the ball carrier and bring that player to ground, and who also go to ground, are known as tacklers.

Opposition players who hold the ball carrier and do not go to ground are not tacklers.



***Tackle***



### 15.1 WHERE CAN A TACKLE TAKE PLACE

A tackle can only take place in the field of play.

### 15.2 WHEN A TACKLE CANNOT TAKE PLACE

When the ball carrier is held by one opponent and a team mate binds on to that ball carrier, a maul has been formed and a tackle cannot take place.

### 15.3 BROUGHT TO THE GROUND DEFINED

- (a) If the ball carrier has one knee or both knees on the ground, that player has been 'brought to ground'.
- (b) If the ball carrier is sitting on the ground, or on top of another player on the ground the ball carrier has been 'brought to ground'.

### 15.4 THE TACKLER

- (a) When a player tackles an opponent and they both go to ground, the tackler must immediately release the tackled player.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (b) The tackler must immediately get up or move away from the tackled player and from the ball at once.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (c) The tackler must get up before playing the ball.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

### 15.5 THE TACKLED PLAYER

- (a) A tackled player must not lie on, over, or near the ball to prevent opponents from gaining possession of it, and must try to make the ball available immediately so that play can continue.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (b) A tackled player must immediately pass the ball or release it. That player must also get up or move away from it at once.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (c) A tackled player may release the ball by putting it on the ground in any direction, provided this is done immediately.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

- (d) A tackled player may release the ball by pushing it along the ground in any direction except forward, provided this is done immediately.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick



- (e) If opposition players who are on their feet attempt to play the ball, the tackled player must release the ball.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (f) If a tackled player's momentum carries the player into the in-goal, the player can score a try or make a touch down.
- (g) If players are tackled near the goal line, these players may immediately reach out and ground the ball on or over the goal line to score a try or make a touch down.



### 15.6 OTHER PLAYERS

- (a) After a tackle, all other players must be on their feet when they play the ball. Players are on their feet if no other part of their body is supported by the ground or players on the ground.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick





✓ *After a tackle all of the players must be on their feet when they play the ball.*



✗ *Player off his feet and playing the ball at the tackle.*



✗ *Player off his feet and playing the ball at the tackle.*



## Law 15 Tackle: Ball carrier Brought to the Ground

- (b) After a tackle any players on their feet may attempt to gain possession by taking the ball from the ball carriers possession.
- (c) At a tackle or near to a tackle, other players who play the ball must do so from behind the ball and from directly behind the tackled player or the tackler closest to those players' goal line.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (d) Any player who gains possession of the ball at the tackle must play the ball immediately by moving away or passing or kicking the ball.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (e) Any player who first gains possession of the ball must not go to the ground at the tackle or near to it unless tackled by an opposition player.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (f) Any player who first gains possession of the ball at the tackle or near to it may be tackled by an opposition player providing that player does so from behind the ball and from directly behind the tackled player or the tackler closest to that player's goal line.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (g) After a tackle, any player lying on the ground must not prevent an opponent from getting possession of the ball.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (h) After a tackle, any player on the ground must not tackle an opponent or try to tackle an opponent  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (i) When a tackled player reaches out to ground the ball on or over the goal line to score a try, an opponent may pull the ball from the players possession, but must not kick the ball.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

**Exception:** Ball goes into the in-goal. After a tackle near the goal line, if the ball has been released and has gone into the in-goal any player, including a player on the ground, may ground the ball.



## 15.7 FORBIDDEN PRACTICES

- (a) No player may prevent the tackled player from passing the ball.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (b) No player may prevent the tackled player from releasing the ball and getting up or moving away from it.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (c) No player may fall on or over the tackled player.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick



- (d) No player may fall on or over the players lying on the ground after a tackle with the ball between or near to them.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (e) Players on their feet must not charge or obstruct an opponent who is not near the ball.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (f) Danger may arise if a tackled player fails to release the ball or move away from it immediately, or if that player is prevented from so doing. If either of these happens the referee awards a penalty kick immediately.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick



### **15.8 DOUBT ABOUT FAILURE TO COMPLY**

If the ball becomes unplayable at a tackle and there is doubt about which player did not conform to Law, the referee orders a scrum immediately with the throw in by the team that was moving forward prior to the stoppage or, if no team was moving forward, by the attacking team.

## Law 16 Ruck

### DEFINITIONS

**A ruck** is a phase of play where one or more players from each team, who are on their feet, in physical contact, close around the ball on the ground. Open play has ended.

**Rucking.** Players are rucking when they are in a ruck and using their feet to try to win or keep possession of the ball, without being guilty of foul play.

### 16.1 FORMING A RUCK

- (a) **Where can a ruck take place.** A ruck can take place only in the field of play.
- (b) **How can a ruck form.** Players are on their feet. At least one player must be in physical contact with an opponent. The ball is on the ground.



**Ruck**



**Ruck**



### 16.2 JOINING A RUCK

- (a) All players forming, joining or taking part in a ruck must have their heads and shoulders no lower than their hips.

**Penalty:** Free Kick

- (b) A player joining a ruck must bind onto the ruck with at least one arm around the body of a team mate, using the whole arm.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

- (c) Placing a hand on another player in the ruck does not constitute binding.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

- (d) All players forming, joining or taking part in a ruck must be on their feet.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

### 16.3 RUCKING

- (a) Players in a ruck must endeavour to stay on their feet.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

- (b) A player must not intentionally fall or kneel in a ruck. This is dangerous play.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

- (c) A player must not intentionally collapse a ruck. This is dangerous play.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

- (d) A player must not jump on top of a ruck.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

- (e) Players must have their heads and shoulders no lower than their hips.

**Penalty:** Free Kick

- (f) A player rucking for the ball must not ruck players on the ground. A player rucking for the ball tries to step over players on the ground and must not intentionally step on them. A player rucking must do so near the ball.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick for dangerous play

## 16.4 OTHER RUCK OFFENCES

- (a) Players must not return the ball into a ruck.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick
- (b) Players must not handle the ball in a ruck.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (c) Players must not pick up the ball in a ruck with their legs.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (d) Players on the ground in or near the ruck must try to move away from the ball. These players must not interfere with the ball in the ruck or as it comes out of the ruck.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (e) A player must not fall on or over a ball as it is coming out of a ruck.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (f) A player must not take any action to make the opposing team think that the ball is out of the ruck while it is still in the ruck.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick

## 16.5 OFFSIDE AT THE RUCK

- (a) **The offside line.** There are two offside lines parallel to the goal lines, one for each team. Each offside line runs through the hindmost foot of the hindmost player in the ruck. If the hindmost foot of the hindmost player is on or behind the goal line, the offside line for the defending team is the goal line.
- (b) Players must either join a ruck, or retire behind the offside line immediately. If a player loiters at the side of a ruck, the player is offside.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

- (c) **Players joining or rejoining the ruck.** All players joining a ruck must do so from behind the foot of the hindmost team mate in the ruck. A player may join alongside this hindmost player. If the player joins the ruck from the opponents' side, or in front of the hindmost team mate, the player is offside.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the offending team's offside line

- (d) **Players not joining the ruck.** If a player is in front of the offside line and does not join the ruck, the player must retire behind the offside line at once. If a player who is behind the offside line oversteps it and does not join the ruck the player is offside.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the offending team's offside line



**X** *At a ruck or maul, the offside line runs through the hindmost foot of the player of the same team. The player in the gold and green jersey on the right-hand-side is offside.*

## **16.6 SUCCESSFUL END TO A RUCK**

A ruck ends successfully when the ball leaves the ruck, or when the ball is on or over the goal line.

## **16.7 UNSUCCESSFUL END TO A RUCK**

- (a) A ruck ends unsuccessfully when the ball becomes unplayable and a scrum is ordered.

The team that was moving forward immediately before the ball became unplayable in the ruck throws in the ball.

If neither team was moving forward, or if the referee cannot decide which team was moving forward before the ball became unplayable in the ruck, the team that was moving forward before the ruck began throws in the ball.

If neither team was moving forward, then the attacking team throws in the ball.

- (b) Before the referee blows the whistle for a scrum, the referee allows a reasonable amount of time for the ball to emerge, especially if either team is moving forward. If the ruck stops moving, or if the referee decides that the ball will probably not emerge within a reasonable time, the referee must order a scrum.



# Law 17 Maul

### DEFINITION

A maul occurs when a player carrying the ball is held by one or more opponents, and one or more of the ball carrier's team mates bind on the ball carrier. A maul therefore consists of at least three players, all on their feet; the ball carrier and one player from each team. All the players involved must be caught in or bound to the maul and must be on their feet and moving towards a goal line. Open play has ended.

### 17.1 FORMING A MAUL

- (a) **Where can a maul take place.** A maul can only take place in the field of play.



***Maul***



***Maul not formed***



## 17.2 JOINING A MAUL

- (a) Players joining a maul must have their heads and shoulders no lower than their hips.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick
- (b) A player must be caught in or bound to the maul and not just alongside it.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (c) Placing a hand on another player in the maul does not constitute binding.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (d) **Keeping players on their feet.** Players in a maul must endeavour to stay on their feet. The ball carrier in a maul may go to ground providing the ball is available immediately and play continues.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (e) A player must not intentionally collapse a maul. This is dangerous play.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (f) A player must not jump on top of a maul.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick



### 17.3 OTHER MAUL OFFENCES

- (a) A player must not try to drag an opponent out of a maul.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (b) A player must not take any action to make the opposing team think that the ball is out of the maul while it is still in the maul.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick

### 17.4 OFFSIDE AT THE MAUL

- (a) **The offside line.** There are two offside lines parallel to the goal lines, one for each team. Each offside line runs through the hindmost foot of the hindmost player in the maul. If the hindmost foot of the hindmost player is on or behind the goal line, the offside line for the defending team is the goal line.
- (b) A player must either join a maul, or retire behind the offside line immediately. If a player loiters at the side of a maul, the player is offside.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the offending team's offside line
- (c) **Players joining the maul.** Players joining a maul must do so from behind the foot of the hindmost team mate in the maul. The player may join alongside this player. If the player joins the maul from the opponents' side, or in front of the hindmost team mate, the player is offside.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the offending team's offside line
- (d) **Players not joining the maul.** All players in front of the offside line and who do not join the maul, must retire behind the offside line at once. A player who does not do so, is offside. If any player who is behind the offside line oversteps it and does not join the maul, the player is offside.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the offending team's offside line
- (e) **Players leaving or rejoining the maul.** Players who leave a maul must immediately retire behind the offside line, otherwise, they are offside. If the player rejoins the maul in front of the hindmost team mate in the maul, they are offside. The player may rejoin the maul alongside the hindmost team mate.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the offending team's offside line

## 17.5 SUCCESSFUL END TO A MAUL

A maul ends successfully when the ball or a player with the ball leaves the maul. A maul ends successfully when the ball is on the ground, or is on or over the goal line.

## 17.6 UNSUCCESSFUL END TO A MAUL

- (a) A maul ends unsuccessfully if it remains stationary or has stopped moving forward for longer than 5 seconds and a scrum is ordered.
- (b) A maul ends unsuccessfully if the ball becomes unplayable or collapses (not as a result of foul play) and a scrum is ordered.
- (c) **Scrum following maul.** The ball is thrown in by the team not in possession when the maul began. If the referee cannot decide which team had possession, the team moving forward before the maul stopped throws in the ball. If neither team was moving forward, the attacking team throws in the ball.
- (d) When a maul remains stationary or has stopped moving forward for more than 5 seconds, but the ball is being moved and the referee can see it, a reasonable time is allowed for the ball to emerge. If it does not emerge within a reasonable time, a scrum is ordered.
- (e) When a maul has stopped moving forward it may start moving forward again providing it does so within 5 seconds. If the maul stops moving forward a second time and if the ball is being moved and the referee can see it, a reasonable time is allowed for the ball to emerge. If it does not emerge within a reasonable time, a scrum is ordered.
- (f) When the ball in a maul becomes unplayable, the referee does not allow prolonged wrestling for it. A scrum is ordered.
- (g) If the ball carrier in a maul goes to ground, including being on one or both knees or sitting, the referee orders a scrum unless the ball is immediately available.

- (h) **Scrum after a maul when catcher is held.** If a player catches the ball direct from an opponent's kick, except from a kick off or a drop out, and the player is immediately held by an opponent, a maul may form. Then if the maul remains stationary, stops moving forward for longer than 5 seconds, or if the ball becomes unplayable, and a scrum is ordered, the team of the ball catcher throws in the ball.

'Direct from an opponent's kick' means the ball did not touch another player or the ground before the player caught it.

If a maul moves into the player's in-goal, where the ball is touched down or becomes unplayable, a 5-metre scrum is formed. The attacking team throws in the ball.

## Law 18 Mark

### DEFINITION

To make a mark, a player must be on or behind that player's 22-metre line. A player with one foot on the 22-metre line or behind it is considered to be 'in the 22'. The player must make a clean catch direct from an opponent's kick and at the same time shout "Mark". A mark cannot be made from a kick off, or a restart kick except for a drop out.

A kick is awarded for a mark. The place for the kick is the place of the mark.

A player may make a mark even though the ball touched a goal post or crossbar before being caught.

A player from the defending team may make a mark in in-goal.



**18.1 AFTER A MARK**

The referee immediately blows the whistle and awards a kick to the player who made the mark.

**18.2 KICK AWARDED**

The kick is awarded at the place of the mark.

**18.3 KICK - WHERE**

The kick is taken at or behind the mark on a line through the mark.

**18.4 WHO KICKS**

The kick is taken by the player who made the mark. If that player cannot take the kick within one minute, a scrum is formed at the place of the mark with the ball thrown in by the player's team. If the mark is in the in-goal, the scrum is 5 metres from the goal line, on a line through the mark.

**18.5 HOW THE KICK IS TAKEN**

The provisions of Law 21 - Free Kicks - apply to a kick awarded after a mark.

**18.6 SCRUM ALTERNATIVE**

- (a) The team of the player who made the mark may choose to take a scrum.
- (b) **Where is the scrum.** If the mark is in the field of play, the scrum is at the place of the mark, but at least 5 metres from the touchline. If the mark is in-goal, the scrum is 5 metres from the goal line on a line through the mark, and at least 5 metres from the touchline.
- (c) **Who throws in.** The team of the player who made the mark throws the ball in.



## 18.7 PENALTY KICK AWARDED

- (a) An opponent, whether onside or offside, must not charge a player who has made a mark after the referee has blown the whistle.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (b) **Where the penalty kick is taken.** If the infringing player is onside, the penalty kick is taken at the place of the infringement. If the infringing player is offside, the penalty kick is taken at the place of the offside line (Law 11 offside and onside in General Play.)
- (c) **The penalty kick.** Any player from the non-offending team may take the penalty kick.

# During the Match



## Restarts

**Law 19** Touch and Lineout

**Law 20** Scrum

**Law 21** Penalty and Free Kicks

## Law 19 Touch and Lineout

### DEFINITIONS

'Kicked directly into touch' means that the ball was kicked into touch without landing on the playing area, and without touching a player or the referee.

'The 22' is the area between the goal line and the 22-metre line, including the 22-metre line *but excluding the goal line*.

The line of touch is an imaginary line in the field of play at right angles to the touchline through the place where the ball is thrown in.

The ball is in touch when it is not being carried by a player and it touches the touchline or anything or anyone on or beyond the touchline.

The ball is in touch when a player is carrying it and the ball carrier (or the ball) touches the touchline or the ground beyond the touchline. The place where the ball carrier (or the ball) touched or crossed the touchline is where it went into touch.

The ball is in touch if a player catches the ball and that player has a foot on the touchline or the ground beyond the touchline.

If a player has one foot in the field of play and one foot in touch and holds the ball, the ball is in touch.

If the ball crosses the touchline or touch-in-goal line, and is caught by a player who has both feet in the playing area, the ball is not in touch or touch-in-goal. Such a player may knock the ball into the playing area.

If a player jumps and catches the ball, both feet must land in the playing area otherwise the ball is in touch or touch-in-goal.

A player in touch may kick or knock the ball, but not hold it, provided it has not crossed the plane of the touchline. The plane of the touchline is the vertical space rising immediately above the touchline.



### 19.1 THROW IN

#### NO GAIN IN GROUND

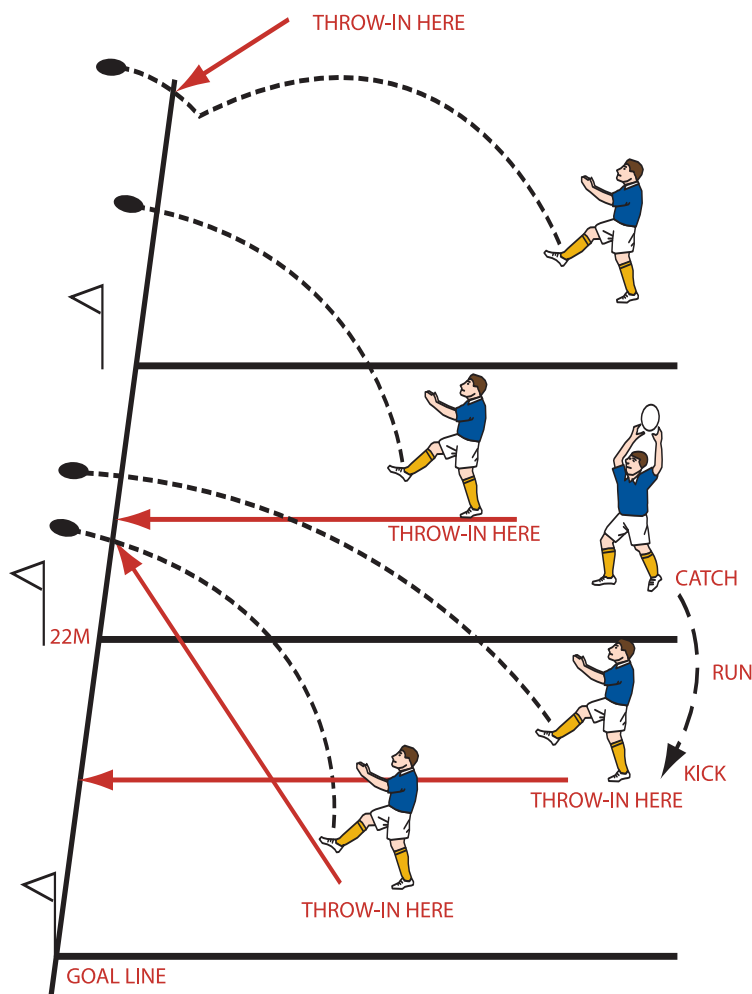
- (a) **Outside a team's 22, a team member kicks directly into touch.** Except for a penalty kick, when a player anywhere in the field of play who is outside the 22 kicks directly into touch, there is no gain in ground. The throw in is taken either at the place opposite where the player kicked the ball, or at the place where it went into touch, whichever is nearer that player's goal line.
- (b) **Player takes ball into that team's 22.** When a defending player gets the ball outside the 22, takes or puts it inside the 22, and then kicks directly into touch, there is no gain in ground.

#### GAIN IN GROUND

- (c) **Player inside that team's 22.** When a defending player gets the ball inside the 22, or that player's in-goal and kicks into touch, the throw in is where the ball went into touch.
- (d) **Kicks indirectly into touch.** When a player anywhere in the playing area kicks indirectly into touch so that the ball bounces in the field of play the throw in is taken where the ball went into touch.

When a player anywhere in the playing area kicks the ball so that it touches or is touched by an opposition player and then goes indirectly into touch so that the ball bounces in the field of play the throw in is taken where the ball went into touch.

When a player anywhere in the playing area kicks the ball so that it touches or is touched by an opposition player and then goes directly into touch the throw in is taken in line with where the opposition player touched the ball or where the ball crossed the touchline if that is nearer the opposition player's goal line.



## TOUCH & THROW IN

### PENALTY KICK

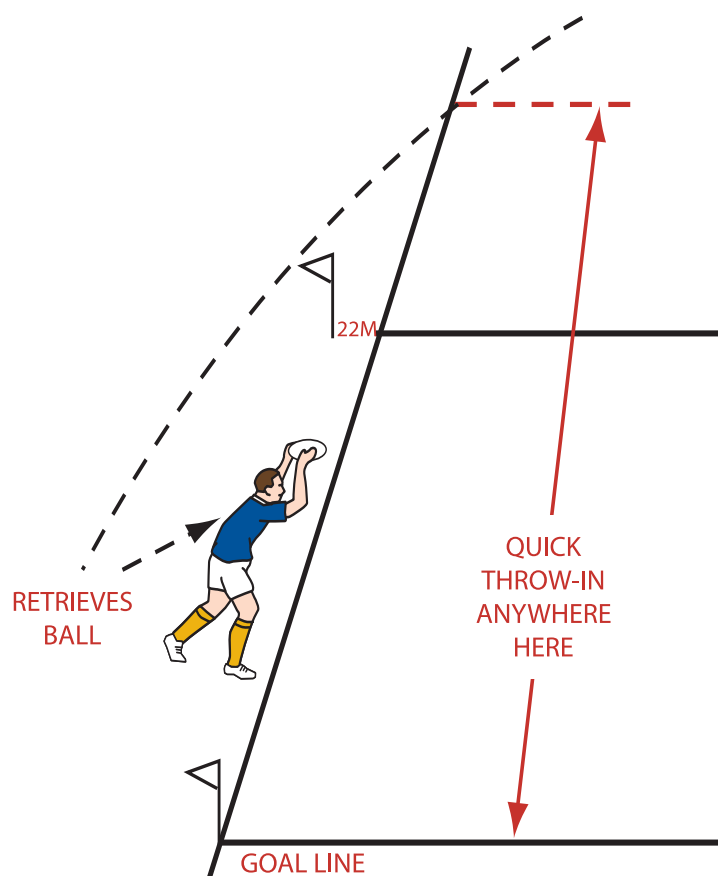
- (e) **Penalty kick.** When a player kicks to touch from a penalty kick anywhere in the playing area, the throw in is taken where the ball went into touch.

### FREE KICK

- (f) **Outside the kicker's 22, no gain in ground.** When a free kick awarded outside the 22 goes directly into touch, the throw in is in line with where the ball was kicked, or where it went into touch, whichever is nearer the kicker's goal line.
- (g) **Inside the kicker's 22 or in-goal, gain in ground.** When a free kick is awarded in the 22 or in-goal and the kick goes directly into touch, the throw in is where the ball went into touch.

## 19.2 QUICK THROW IN

- (a) A player may take a quick throw in without waiting for a lineout to form.
- (b) For a quick throw in, the player may be anywhere outside the field of play between the place where the ball went into touch and the player's goal line.
- (c) A player must not take a quick throw in after the lineout has formed. If the player does, the quick throw in is disallowed. The same team throws in at the lineout.



### QUICK THROW IN

- (d) For a quick throw in, the player must use the ball that went into touch. If, after it went to touch and was made dead, another ball is used, or if another person has touched the ball apart from the player throwing it in, then the quick throw in is disallowed. The same team throws in at the lineout.



- (e) At a quick throw in, if the player does not throw the ball in straight so that it travels at least 5 metres along the line of touch before it touches the ground or a player, or if the player steps into the field of play when the ball is thrown, then the quick throw in is disallowed. The opposing team chooses to throw in at either a lineout where the quick throw in was attempted, or a scrum on the 15-metre line at that place. If they too throw in the ball incorrectly at the lineout, a scrum is formed on the 15-metre line. The team that first threw in the ball throws in the ball at the scrum.
- (f) At a quick throw in, a player may come to the line of touch and leave without being penalised.
- (g) At a quick throw in, a player must not prevent the ball being thrown in 5 metres.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick on 15-metre line
- (h) If a player carrying the ball is forced into touch, that player must release the ball to an opposition player so that there can be a quick throw in.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on 15-metre line

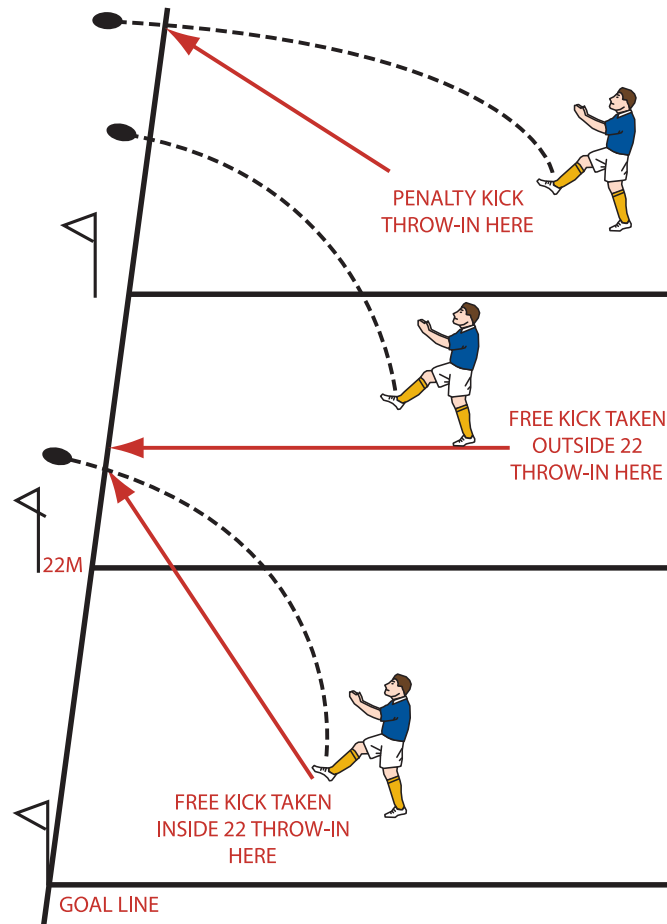
### 19.3 OTHER THROW INS

On all other occasions, the throw in is taken where the ball went into touch.

### 19.4 WHO THROWS IN

The throw in is taken by an opponent of the player who last held or touched the ball before it went into touch. When there is doubt, the attacking team takes the throw in.



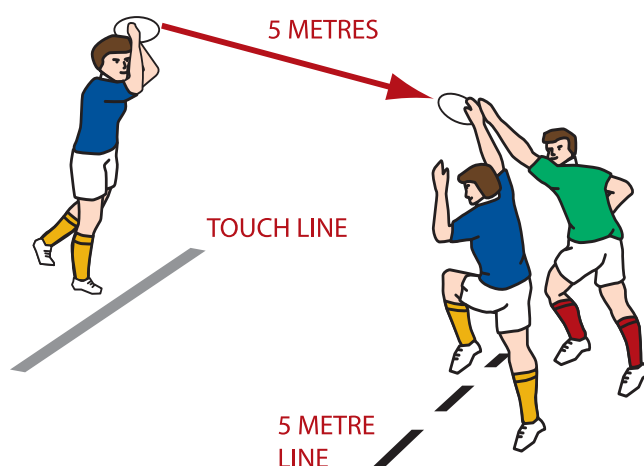


## TOUCH & THROW IN

**Exception:** When a team takes a penalty kick, and the ball is kicked into touch, the throw in is taken by a player of the team that took the penalty kick. This applies whether the ball was kicked directly or indirectly into touch.

### 19.5 HOW THE THROW IN IS TAKEN

The player taking the throw in must stand at the correct place. The player must not step into the field of play when the ball is thrown. The ball must be thrown straight, so that it travels at least 5 metres along the line of touch before it first touches the ground or touches or is touched by a player.



MUST THROW THE BALL SO THAT IT TRAVELS AT LEAST FIVE METRES BEFORE IT FIRST TOUCHES THE GROUND OR TOUCHES OR IS TOUCHED BY A PLAYER

## HOW THE THROW IN TAKES PLACE

### 19.6 INCORRECT THROW IN

- (a) If the throw in at a lineout is incorrect, the opposing team has the choice of throwing in at a lineout or a scrum on the 15-metre line. If they choose the throw in to the lineout and it is again incorrect, a scrum is formed. The team that took the first throw in throws in the ball.
- (b) The throw in at the lineout must be taken without delay and without pretending to throw.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick on the 15-metre line
- (c) A player must not intentionally or repeatedly throw the ball in not straight.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the 15-metre line

## LINEOUT

### DEFINITIONS

The purpose of the lineout is to restart play, quickly, safely and fairly, after the ball has gone into touch, with a throw in between two lines of players.

**Lineout players.** Lineout players are the players who form the two lines that make a lineout.

**Receiver.** The receiver is the player in position to catch the ball when lineout players pass or knock the ball back from the lineout. Any player may be the receiver but each team may have only one receiver at a lineout.

**Players taking part in the lineout known as participating players.** Players taking part in the lineout are the player who throws in and an immediate opponent, the two players waiting to receive the ball from the lineout and the lineout players.

**All other players.** All other players who are not taking part in the lineout must be at least 10 metres behind the line of touch, on or behind their goal line if that is nearer, until the lineout ends.

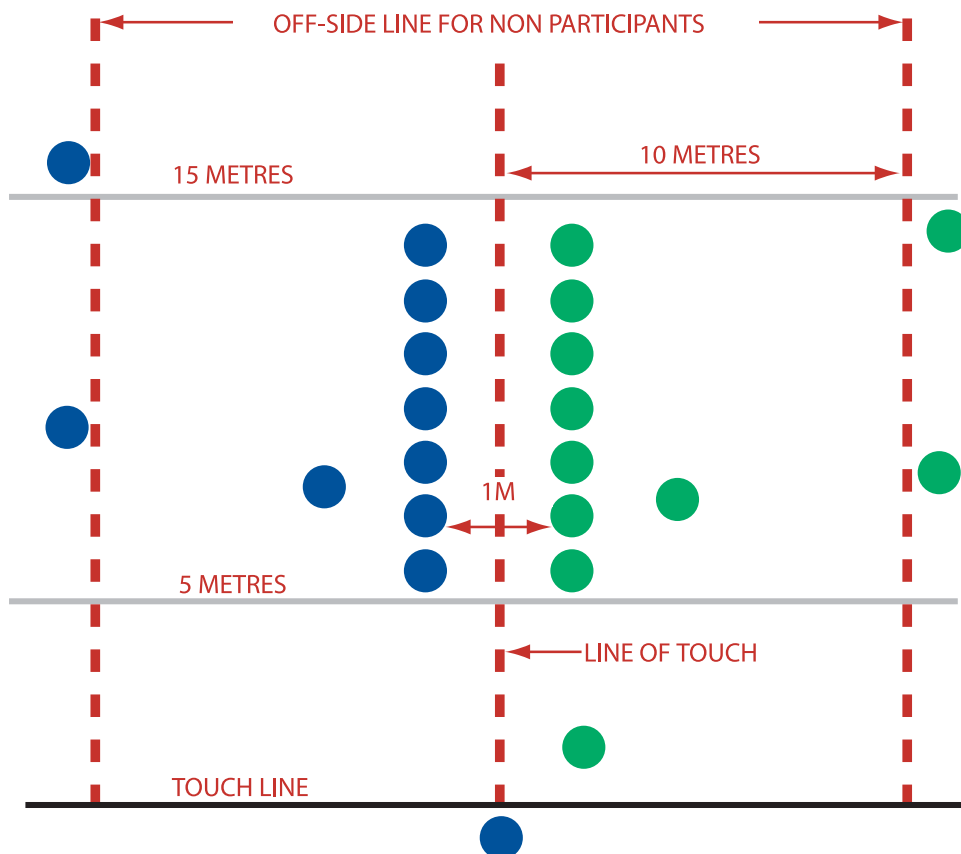
**15-metre line.** The 15-metre line is 15 metres infield and parallel with the touchline.

**Scrum after lineout.** Any scrum ordered because of an infringement or stoppage at the lineout is on the 15-metre line on the line of touch.

### 19.7 FORMING A LINEOUT

- (a) **Minimum.** At least two players from each team must form a lineout.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick on the 15-metre line
- (b) **Maximum.** The team throwing in the ball decides the maximum number of players in the lineout.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick on the 15-metre line
- (c) The opposing team may have fewer lineout players but they must not have more.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick on the 15-metre line

- (d) When the ball is in touch, every player who approaches the line of touch is presumed to do so to form a lineout. Players who approach the line of touch must do so without delay. Players of either team must not leave the lineout once they have taken up a position in the lineout until the lineout has ended.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick on the 15-metre line
- (e) If the team throwing in the ball put fewer than the usual number of players in the lineout, their opponents must be given a reasonable time to move enough players out of the lineout to satisfy this Law.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick on the 15-metre line
- (f) These players must leave the lineout without delay. They must move to the offside line, 10 metres behind the line of touch. If the lineout ends before they reach this line, they may rejoin play.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick on the 15-metre line
- (g) **Failure to form a lineout.** A team must not voluntarily fail to form a lineout.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick on the 15-metre line
- (h) **Where the lineout players must stand.** The front of the lineout is not less than 5 metres from the touchline. The back of the lineout is not more than 15 metres from the touchline. All lineout players must stand between these two points.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick on the 15-metre line
- (i) **Two single straight lines.** The lineout players of both teams form two single parallel lines each at right angles to the touchline.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick on the 15-metre line
- (j) Opposing players forming a lineout must keep a clear space between their inside shoulders. This space is determined when players are in an upright stance.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick on the 15-metre line
- (k) **Metre gap.** Each line of players must be half a metre on their side of the line of touch.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick on the 15-metre line
- (l) The line of touch must not be within 5 metres of the goal line.



## THE LINEOUT

- (m) After the lineout has formed, but before the ball has been thrown in, a player must not hold, push, charge into, or obstruct an opponent.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the 15-metre line

### 19.8 BEGINNING AND ENDING A LINEOUT

- (a) **Lineout begins.** The lineout begins when the ball leaves the hands of the player throwing it in.
- (b) **Lineout ends.** The lineout ends when the ball or a player carrying it leaves the lineout.

This includes the following:

When the ball is thrown, knocked or kicked out of the lineout, the lineout ends.

When the ball or a player carrying the ball moves into the area between the 5-metre line and the touchline, the lineout ends.

When a lineout player hands the ball to a player who is peeling off, the lineout ends.

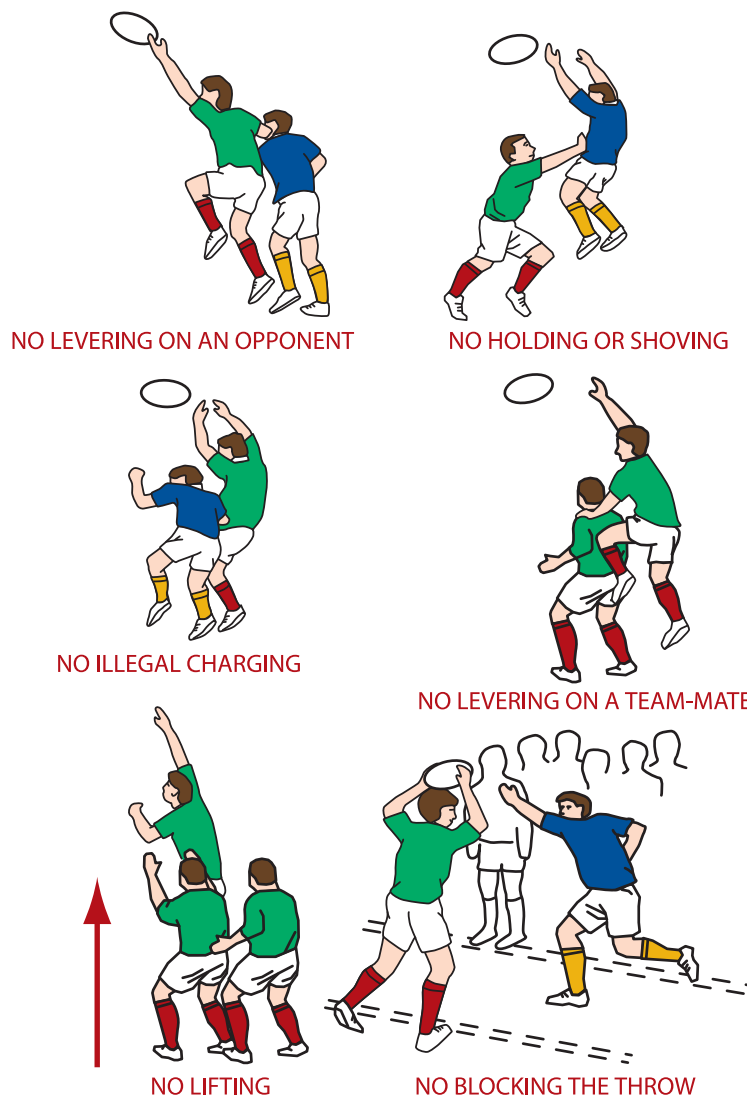
When the ball is thrown beyond the 15-metre line, or when a player takes or puts it beyond that line, the lineout ends.

When a ruck or maul develops in a lineout, and all the feet of all the players in the ruck or maul move beyond the line of touch, the lineout ends.

When the ball becomes unplayable in a lineout, the lineout ends. Play restarts with a scrum.

### 19.9 OPTIONS AVAILABLE IN A LINEOUT

- (a) **Offside.** A lineout player must not be offside. The offside line runs through the line of touch until the ball is thrown in. After the ball has touched a player or the ground, the offside line is a line through the ball.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the 15-metre line
- (b) Players jumping for the ball may take a step in any direction providing they do not step across the line of touch.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the 15-metre line
- (c) **Levering on an opponent.** A lineout player must not use an opponent as a support when jumping.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the 15-metre line
- (d) **Holding or shoving.** A lineout player must not hold, push, charge, obstruct or grasp an opponent not holding the ball except when a ruck or maul is taking place.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the 15-metre line
- (e) **Illegal charging.** A lineout player must not charge an opponent except in an attempt to tackle the opponent or to play the ball.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the 15-metre line
- (f) **Levering on a team mate.** A jumping lineout player must not use a team mate as a support to jump.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick on the 15-metre line



- (g) **Lifting.** A lineout player must not lift a team mate.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick on the 15-metre line
- (h) **Support before jumping.** A player must not support a team mate before the team mate has jumped.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick on the 15-metre line
- (i) **Jumping or supporting before the ball is thrown.** A player must not jump for the ball or support any player before the ball has left the hands of the player throwing it in.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick on the 15-metre line
- (j) **Pre-grip below the waist.** A player must not pre-grip any team mate below the waist.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick on the 15-metre line



- (k) **Support of a player.** A player must not support a jumping team mate below the shorts from behind or below the thighs from the front.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the 15 metre line
- (l) **Lowering a Player.** Players who support a jumping team mate must lower that player to the ground as soon as the ball has been won by a player of either team.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick on the 15-metre line
- (m) **Blocking the throw in.** A lineout player must not stand less than 5 metres from the touchline. A lineout player must not prevent the ball being thrown in 5 metres.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick on the 15-metre line
- (n) When the ball has been thrown beyond a player in the lineout, that player may move to the space between the touchline and the 5-metre line. If the player moves into that space the player must not move towards that player's goal line before the lineout ends, except in a peeling off movement.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick on the 15-metre line
- (o) **Catching or deflecting.** When jumping for the ball, a player must use either both hands or the inside arm to try to catch or deflect the ball. The jumper must not use the outside arm alone to try to catch or deflect the ball.  
If the jumper has both hands above the head either hand may be used to play the ball.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick on the 15-metre line

## 19.10 OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO PLAYERS NOT IN THE LINEOUT

In general, a player not taking part in a lineout must stay at least 10 metres behind the line of touch, or on or behind that player's goal line if that is nearer, until the lineout ends.

There are two exceptions to this:

**Exception 1:** Long throw in. If the player who is throwing in throws the ball beyond the 15-metre line, a player of the same team may run forward to take the ball. If that player does so, an opponent may also run forward.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the offending team's offside line, opposite the place of infringement but not less than 15 metres from the touchline.



## Law 19 Touch and Lineout

**Exception 2:** The receiver may run into the gap and perform any of the actions available to any other player in the lineout. The receiver is liable to penalty for offences in the lineout as would be other players in the lineout.

### 19.11 PEELING OFF

#### DEFINITIONS

A lineout player 'peels off' when leaving the lineout to catch the ball knocked or passed back by a team mate.

- (a) **When:** A player must not peel off until the ball has left the hands of the player throwing it in.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick on the 15-metre line, in line with the line of touch.
- (b) A player who peels off, must stay within the area from that players' line of touch to 10 metres from the line of touch, and must keep moving until the lineout has ended.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick on the 15-metre line, in line with the line of touch.
- (c) Players may change their positions in the lineout before the ball is thrown in.

### 19.12 OFFSIDE AT THE LINEOUT

- (a) When a lineout forms, there are two separate offside lines, parallel to the goal lines, for the teams.
- (b) **Participating players.** One offside line applies to the players taking part in the lineout (usually some or all of the forwards, plus the scrum half and the player throwing in). Until the ball is thrown in, and has touched a player or the ground, this offside line is the line of touch. After that, the offside line is a line through the ball.
- (c) **Players not taking part.** The other offside line applies to the players not taking part in the lineout (usually the backs). For them, the offside line is 10 metres behind the line of touch or their goal line, if that is nearer.  
The lineout offside Law is different in the case of a long throw in, or in the case of a ruck or maul in the lineout.

### 19.13 OFFSIDE WHEN TAKING PART IN THE LINEOUT

- (a) **Before the ball has touched a player or the ground.** A player must not overstep the line of touch. A player is offside, if, before the ball has touched a player or the ground, that player oversteps the line of touch, unless doing so while jumping for the ball. The player must jump from that player's side of the line of touch.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the 15-metre line

- (b) If a player jumps and crosses the line of touch but fails to catch the ball, that player is not penalised provided that player gets back onside without delay.

- (c) **After the ball has touched a player or the ground.** A player not carrying the ball is offside if, after the ball has touched a player or the ground, that player steps in front of the ball, unless tackling (or trying to tackle) an opponent. Any attempt to tackle must start from that player's side of the ball.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the 15-metre line

- (d) The referee must penalise any player who, intentionally or not, moves into an offside position without trying to win possession or tackle an opponent.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the 15-metre line

- (e) No player of either team participating in the lineout may leave the lineout until it has ended.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the 15-metre line

### 19.14 PLAYER THROWING-IN

There are four options available to the player throwing in (and the thrower's immediate opponent):

- (a) The thrower may stay within 5 metres of the touchline.
- (b) The thrower may retire to the offside line 10 metres behind the line of touch.
- (c) The thrower may join the lineout as soon as the ball has been thrown in.
- (d) The thrower may move into the receiver position if that position is empty.

If the thrower goes anywhere else, the thrower is offside.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the 15-metre line



### 19.15 OFFSIDE WHEN NOT TAKING PART IN THE LINEOUT

- (a) **Before the lineout has ended.** The offside line is 10 metres behind the line of touch, or the player's goal line, whichever is nearer.

A player who is not taking part in the lineout is offside if that player oversteps the offside line before the lineout has ended.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the offending team's offside line opposite the place of infringement, at least 15 metres from the touchline.

- (b) **Players not yet onside when the ball is thrown in.** A player may throw in the ball even if a team mate has not yet reached the offside line. However, if this player is not trying to reach an onside position without delay, this player is offside.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the offending team's offside line opposite the place of infringement, at least 15 metres from the touchline

**Exception:** Long throw in. There is an exception to the Law of offside at the lineout. It applies if the ball is thrown beyond the 15-metre line. As soon as the ball leaves the hands of the player throwing in, any players of the thrower's team may run for the ball.

This means that a player taking part in the lineout may run infield beyond the 15-metre line, and a player not taking part in the lineout may run forward across the offside line.

If this happens, an opponent may also run infield or run forward. However, if a player runs infield or runs forward to take a long throw in, and the ball is not thrown beyond the 15-metre line, this player is offside and must be penalised.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

For players taking part in the lineout: penalty kick is on the 15-metre line.

For players not taking part in the lineout: penalty kick is on the offending team's offside line at the place of infringement, at least 15 metres from the touchline.

## 19.16 OFFSIDE AT RUCKS OR MAULS IN THE LINEOUT

- (a) When a ruck or a maul develops in a lineout the offside line for a player taking part in the lineout no longer runs through the ball. The offside line is now the hindmost foot of that player's team in the ruck or maul.
- (b) However, for players not taking part in the lineout, the offside line is still 10 metres behind the line of touch. For these players, the lineout does not end when a ruck or maul develops.
- (c) It ends when the ruck or maul leaves the line of touch. For this to happen, all the feet of all the players in the ruck or maul must have left the line of touch.
- (d) A player taking part in the lineout must either join the ruck or maul, or retire to the offside line and stay at that line, Otherwise that player is offside.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the 15-metre line

- (e) The rest of the Law of ruck or maul applies. A player must not join the ruck or maul from the opponents' side.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

Players must not join it in front of the offside line. If they do, they are offside.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the 15-metre line

- (f) **Players not taking part in the lineout.** When a ruck or maul develops in a lineout, the lineout has not ended until all the feet of all the players in the ruck or maul have moved beyond the line of touch.

Until then, the offside line for players not taking part in the lineout is still 10 metres behind the line of touch, or the goal line if that is nearer. A player who oversteps this offside line is offside.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the offside line at least 15 metres from the touchline

## Law 20 Scrum

### DEFINITIONS

The purpose of the scrum is to restart play quickly, safely and fairly, after a minor infringement or a stoppage.

A scrum is formed in the field of play when eight players from each team, bound together in three rows for each team, close up with their opponents so that the heads of the front rows are interlocked. This creates a tunnel into which a scrum half throws in the ball so that front row players can compete for possession by hooking the ball with either of their feet.

The middle line of a scrum must not be within 5 metres of the goal line. A scrum cannot take place within 5 metres of a touchline.

The tunnel is the space between the two front rows.

The player of either team who throws the ball into the scrum is the scrum half.

The middle line is an imaginary line on the ground in the tunnel beneath the line where the shoulders of the two front rows meet.

The middle player in each front row is the hooker.

The players on either side of the hooker are the props. The left side props are the loose head props. The right side props are the tight head props.

The two players in the second row who push on the props and the hooker are the locks.

The outside players who bind onto the second or third row are the flankers.

The player in the third row who usually pushes on both locks is the No.8. Alternatively, the No. 8 may push on a lock and a flanker.

### 20.1 FORMING A SCRUM

- (a) Where the scrum takes place. The place for a scrum is where the infringement or stoppage happened, or as near to it as is practicable in the field of play, unless otherwise stated in Law.
- (b) If this is less than 5 metres from a touchline, the place for the scrum is 5 metres from that touchline. A scrum can take place only in the field of play. The middle line of a scrum must not be within 5 metres of the goal line when it is formed.

- (c) If there is an infringement or stoppage in in-goal, the place for the scrum is 5 metres from the goal line.
- (d) The scrum is formed in line with the place of the infringement or stoppage.
- (e) **No delay.** A team must not intentionally delay forming a scrum.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick
- (f) **Number of players: eight.** A scrum must have eight players from each team. All eight players must stay bound to the scrum until it ends. Each front row must have three players in it, no more and no less. Two locks must form the second row.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

**Exception :** When a team is reduced to fewer than fifteen for any reason, then the number of players of each team in the scrum may be similarly reduced. Where a permitted reduction is made by one team, there is no requirement for the other team to make a similar reduction. However, a team must not have fewer than five players in the scrum.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

- (g) **Front rows coming together.** First, the referee marks with a foot the place where the scrum is to be formed. Before the two front rows come together they must be standing not more than an arm's length apart. The ball is in the scrum half's hands, ready to be thrown in. The front rows must crouch so that when they meet, each player's head and shoulders are no lower than the hips. The front rows must interlock so that no player's head is next to the head of a team mate.

**Penalty:** Free Kick

- (h) The referee will call "crouch" then "touch". The front rows crouch and using their outside arm each prop touches the point of the opposing prop's outside shoulder. The props then withdraw their arms. The referee will then call "pause". Following a pause the referee will then call "engage". The front rows may then engage. The "engage" call is not a command but an indication that the front rows may come together when ready.

**Penalty:** Free Kick

- (i) A crouched position is the extension of the normal stance by bending the knees sufficiently to move into the engagement without a charge.



- (j) **Charging.** A front row must not form at a distance from its opponents and rush against them. This is dangerous play.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (k) **Stationary and parallel.** Until the ball leaves the scrum half's hands, the scrum must be stationary and the middle line must be parallel to the goal lines. A team must not shove the scrum away from the mark before the ball is thrown in.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick

## 20.2 FRONT-ROW PLAYERS' POSITIONS

- (a) **All players in a position to shove.** When a scrum has formed, the body and feet of each front row player must be in a normal position to make a forward shove.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick
- (b) This means that the front row players must have both feet on the ground, with their weight firmly on at least one foot. Players must not cross their feet, although the foot of one player may cross a team mate's foot. Each player's shoulders must be no lower than the hips.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick
- (c) **Hooker in a position to hook.** Until the ball is thrown in, the hooker must be in a position to hook the ball. The hookers must have both feet on the ground, with their weight firmly on at least one foot. A hooker's foremost foot must not be in front of the foremost foot of that team's props.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick

## 20.3 BINDING IN THE SCRUM

### DEFINITION

When a player binds on a team mate that player must use the whole arm from hand to shoulder to grasp the team mate's body at or below the level of the armpit. Placing only a hand on another player is not satisfactory binding.

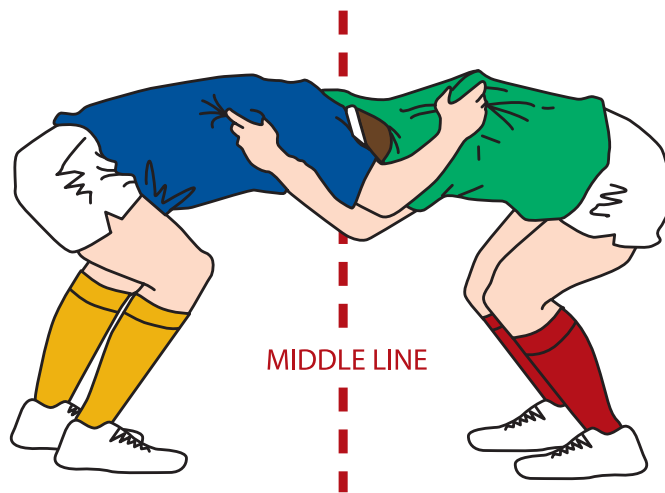
- (a) **Binding by all front row players.** All front row players must bind firmly and continuously from the start to the finish of the scrum.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

- (b) **Binding by hookers.** The hooker may bind either over or under the arms of the props. The props must not support the hooker so that the hooker has no weight on either foot.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

- (c) **Binding by loose head props.** A loose head prop must bind on the opposing tight head prop by placing the left arm inside the right arm of the tight head and gripping the tight head prop's jersey on the back or side. The loose head prop must not grip the chest, arm, sleeve or collar of the opposition tight head prop. The loose head prop must not exert any downward pressure.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick



### ***BINDING BY PROPS***

- (d) **Binding by tight head props.** A tight head prop must bind on the opposing loose head prop by placing the right arm outside the left upper arm of the opposing loose head prop. The tight head prop must grip the loose head prop's jersey with the right hand only on the back or side. The tight head prop must not grip the chest, arm, sleeve or collar of the opposition loose head prop. The tight head prop must not exert any downward pressure.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

- (e) Both the loose head and tight head props may alter their bind providing they do so in accordance with this Law.

- (f) **Binding by all other players.** All players in a scrum, other than front-row players, must bind on a lock's body with at least one arm. The locks must bind with the props in front of them. No player other than a prop may hold an opponent.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick



- (g) **Flanker obstructing opposing scrum half.** A flanker may bind onto the scrum at any angle, provided the flanker is properly bound. The flanker must not widen that angle and so obstruct the opposing scrum half moving forward.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (h) **Scrum collapse.** If a scrum collapses, the referee must blow the whistle immediately so that players stop pushing.
- (i) **Player forced upwards.** If a player in a scrum is lifted in the air, or is forced upwards out of the scrum, the referee must blow the whistle immediately so that players stop pushing.

### 20.4 THE TEAM THROWING THE BALL INTO THE SCRUM

- (a) After an infringement, the team that did not cause the infringement throws in the ball.
- (b) **Scrum after ruck.** Refer to Law 16.7.
- (c) **Scrum after maul.** Refer to Law 17.6.
- (d) **Scrum after any other stoppage.** After any other stoppage or irregularity not covered by Law, the team that was moving forward before the stoppage throws in the ball. If neither team was moving forward, the attacking team throws in the ball.
- (e) When a scrum remains stationary and the ball does not emerge immediately a further scrum is ordered at the place of the stoppage. The ball is thrown in by the team not in possession at the time of the stoppage.
- (f) When a scrum becomes stationary and does not start moving immediately, the ball must emerge immediately. If it does not a further scrum will be ordered. The ball is thrown in by the team not in possession at the time of the stoppage.
- (g) If a scrum collapses or lifts up into the air without penalty a further scrum will be ordered and the team who originally threw in the ball will throw the ball in again.

If a scrum has to be reformed for any other reason not covered in this Law the team who originally threw in the ball will throw the ball in again.

## 20.5 THROWING THE BALL INTO THE SCRUM

- (a) **No Delay.** As soon as the front rows have come together, the scrum half must throw in the ball without delay. The scrum half must throw in the ball when told to do so by the referee. The scrum half must throw in the ball from the side of the scrum first chosen.

**Penalty:** Free Kick

## 20.6 HOW THE SCRUM HALF THROWS IN THE BALL

- (a) The scrum half must stand one metre from the mark on the middle line so that player's head does not touch the scrum or go beyond the nearest front row player.

**Penalty:** Free Kick

- (b) The scrum half must hold the ball with both hands, with its major axis parallel to the ground and to the touchline over the middle line between the front rows, mid-way between knee and ankle.

**Penalty:** Free Kick

- (c) The scrum half must throw in the ball at a quick speed. The ball must be released from the scrum half's hands from outside the tunnel.

**Penalty:** Free Kick

- (d) The scrum half must throw in the ball straight along the middle line, so that it first touches the ground immediately beyond the width of the nearer prop's shoulders.

**Penalty:** Free Kick

- (e) The scrum half must throw in the ball with a single forward movement. This means that there must be no backward movement with the ball. The scrum half must not pretend to throw the ball.

**Penalty:** Free Kick



## 20.7 WHEN THE SCRUM BEGINS

- (a) Play in the scrum begins when the ball leaves the hands of the scrum half.
- (b) If the scrum half throws in the ball and it comes out at either end of the tunnel, the ball must be thrown in again unless a free kick or penalty has been awarded.
- (c) If the ball is not played by a front row player, and it goes straight through the tunnel and comes out behind the foot of a far prop without being touched, the scrum half must throw it in again.
- (d) If the ball is played by a front row player and comes out of the tunnel, advantage may apply.

## 20.8 FRONT-ROW PLAYERS

- (a) **Striking before the throw in ('foot up').** All front row players must place their feet to leave a clear tunnel. Until the ball has left the scrum half's hands, they must not raise or advance a foot. They must not do anything to stop the ball being thrown in to the scrum correctly or touching the ground at the correct place.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick
- (b) **Striking after the throw in.** Once the ball touches the ground in the tunnel, any front row player may use either foot to try to win possession of the ball.

- (c) **Kicking-out.** A front row player must not intentionally kick the ball out of the tunnel in the direction from which it was thrown in.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick
- (d) If the ball is kicked out unintentionally, the same team must throw it in again.
- (e) If the ball is repeatedly kicked out, the referee must treat this as intentional and penalise the offender.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (f) **Swinging.** A front row player must not strike for the ball with both feet. No player may intentionally raise both feet from the ground, either when the ball is being thrown in or afterwards.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (g) **Twisting, dipping or collapsing.** Front row players must not twist or lower their bodies, or pull opponents, or do anything that is likely to collapse the scrum, either when the ball is being thrown in or afterwards.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (h) Referees must penalise strictly any intentional collapsing of the scrum. This is dangerous play.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (i) **Lifting or forcing an opponent up.** A front row player must not lift an opponent in the air, or force an opponent upwards out of the scrum, either when the ball is being thrown in or afterwards. This is dangerous play.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

## 20.9 SCRUM - GENERAL RESTRICTIONS

- (a) **All players: Collapsing.** A player must not intentionally collapse a scrum. A player must not intentionally fall or kneel in a scrum. This is dangerous play.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (b) **All players: Handling in the scrum.** Players must not handle the ball in the scrum or pick it up with their legs.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

- (c) **All players: Other restrictions on winning the ball.** Players must not try to win the ball in the scrum by using any part of their body except their foot or lower leg.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick
- (d) **All players: When the ball comes out, leave it out.** When the ball has left the scrum, a player must not bring it back in to the scrum.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick
- (e) **All players: No falling on the ball.** A player must not fall on or over the ball as it is coming out of the scrum.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (f) **Locks and flankers: Staying out of the tunnel.** A player who is not a front row player must not play the ball in the tunnel.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick
- (g) **Scrum half: Kicking in the scrum.** A scrum half must not kick the ball while it is in the scrum.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (h) **Scrum half: Dummying.** A scrum half must not take any action to make the opponents think that the ball is out of the scrum while it is still in the scrum.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick
- (i) **Scrum half: Holding opposing flanker.** A scrum half must not grasp an opposing flanker in order to gain leverage, or for any other reason.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

## 20.10 ENDING THE SCRUM

- (a) **The ball comes out.** When the ball comes out of the scrum in any direction except the tunnel, the scrum ends.
- (b) **Scrum in the in-goal.** A scrum cannot take place in the in-goal. When the ball in a scrum is on or over the goal line, the scrum ends and an attacker or a defender may legally ground the ball for a try or a touch down.
- (c) **Hindmost player unbinds.** The hindmost player in a scrum is the player whose feet are nearest the team's own goal line. If the hindmost player unbinds from the scrum with the ball at that player's feet and picks up the ball, the scrum ends.



## 20.11 SCRUM WHEELED

- (a) If a scrum is wheeled through more than 90 degrees, so that the middle line has passed beyond a position parallel to the touchline, the referee must stop play and order another scrum.

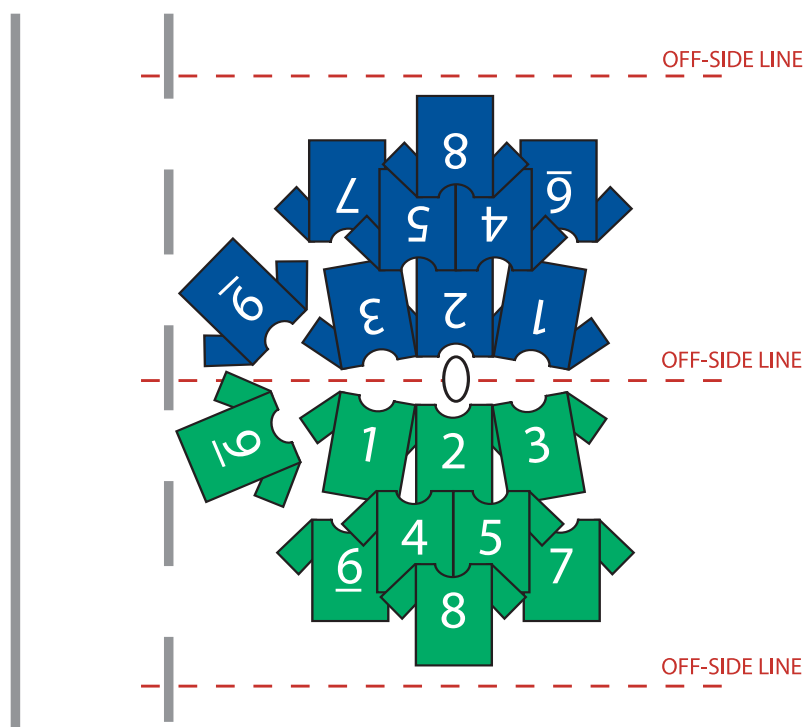
### EXPERIMENTAL LAW VARIATION

- (b) This new scrum is formed at the place where the previous scrum ended. The ball is thrown in by the team not in possession at the time of the stoppage. If neither team win possession, it is thrown in by the team that previously threw it in.

## 20.12 OFFSIDE AT THE SCRUM

- (a) When the scrum is set, the scrum half not throwing the ball into the scrum must take up a position either at the same side of the scrum as the scrum half throwing in the ball or behind the offside line defined for other players.
- (b) **Offside for scrum-halves.** When a team has won the ball in a scrum, the scrum half of that team is offside if both feet are in front of the ball while it is still in the scrum. If the scrum half has only one foot in front of the ball, the scrum half is not offside.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick



**SCRUM OFFSIDE**



- (c) When a team has won the ball in a scrum, the scrum half of the opposing team is offside if that scrum half steps in front of the ball with either foot while the ball is still in the scrum.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (d) The scrum half whose team does not win possession of the ball must not move to the opposite side of the scrum and overstep the offside line running through the hindmost foot of that player's team in the scrum.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (e) The scrum half whose team does not win possession of the ball must not move away from the scrum and then remain in front of the offside line running through the hindmost foot of that player's team in the scrum.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (f) Any player may be scrum half, but a team can have only one scrum half at each scrum.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the offside line
- (g) **Offside for players not in the scrum.** Players who are not in the scrum, and who are not the team's scrum half, are offside if they remain in front of their offside line or overstep the offside line.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the offside line
- (h) **Loitering.** When a scrum is forming, players not taking part in it must retire to their offside line without delay. If they do not, they are loitering. Loiterers must be penalised.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the offside line

## Law 21 Penalty and Free Kicks

### DEFINITION

Penalty kicks and free kicks are awarded to the non-offending team for infringements by their opponents.

#### 21.1 WHERE PENALTY AND FREE KICKS ARE AWARDED

Unless a Law states otherwise, the mark for a penalty or free kick is at the place of infringement.

#### 21.2 WHERE PENALTY AND FREE KICKS ARE TAKEN

- (a) The kicker must take the penalty or free kick at the mark or anywhere behind it on a line through the mark. If the place for a penalty or free kick is within 5 metres of the opponents' goal line, the mark for the kick is 5 metres from the goal line, opposite the place of infringement.
- (b) When a penalty or free kick is awarded for an infringement in in-goal, the mark for the kick is in the field of play, 5 metres from the goal line, in line with the place of infringement.

**Penalty:** Any infringement by the kicker's team results in a scrum at the mark. The opposing team throws in the ball.

#### 21.3 HOW THE PENALTY AND FREE KICKS ARE TAKEN

- (a) Any player may take a penalty or free kick awarded for an infringement with any type of kick: punt, drop kick or place kick. The ball may be kicked with any part of the lower leg from knee to the foot, excluding the knee and the heel.
- (b) Bouncing the ball on the knee is not taking a kick.
- (c) The kicker must use the ball that was in play unless the referee decides it was defective.

**Penalty:** Any infringement by the kicker's team results in a scrum at the mark. The opposing team throws in the ball.

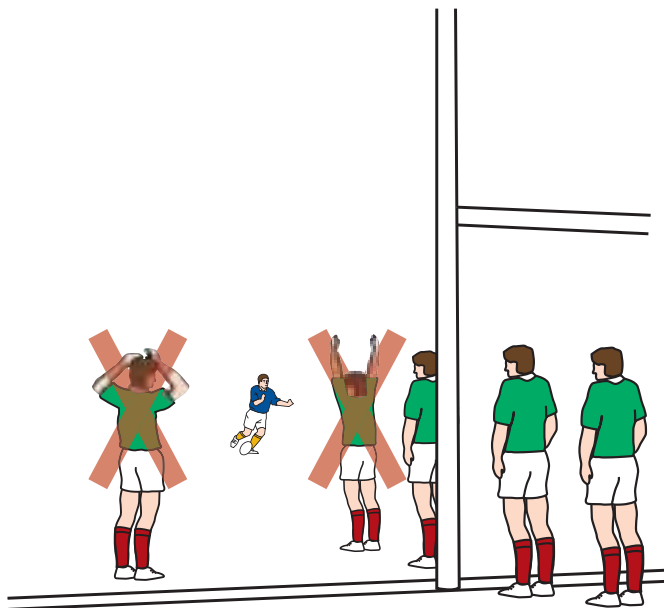
### 21.4 PENALTY AND FREE KICK OPTIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

- (a) **Scrum alternative.** A team awarded a penalty or free kick may choose a scrum instead. They throw in the ball.
- (b) **No delay.** If a kicker indicates to the referee the intention to kick a penalty kick at goal, the kick must be taken within one minute from the time the player indicates the intention to kick at goal. The intention to kick is signalled by the arrival of the kicking tee or sand, or when the player makes a mark on the ground. The player must complete the kick within one minute even if the ball rolls over and has to be placed again. If the one minute is exceeded, the kick is disallowed, a scrum is ordered at the place of the mark and the opponents throw in the ball. For any other type of kick, the kick must be taken without undue delay.
- (c) **A clear kick.** The kicker must kick the ball a visible distance. If the kicker is holding it, it must clearly leave the hands. If it is on the ground, it must clearly leave the mark.
- (d) **Place kicking for touch.** The kicker may punt or drop kick for touch but must not place kick for touch.
- (e) **Kicker's freedom of action.** The kicker is free to kick the ball in any direction and may play the ball again.
- (f) **Kick taken in the in-goal.** When a penalty or free kick is taken in the team's in-goal and a defending player by foul play prevents an opponent from scoring a try, a penalty try is awarded.
- (g) **Out of play in the in-goal.** If a penalty or free kick is taken in in-goal and the ball goes into touch-in-goal, or on or over the dead ball line, or a defending player makes the ball dead before it has crossed the goal line, a 5-metre scrum is awarded. The attacking team throws in the ball.
- (h) **Behind the ball.** All the kicker's team at a penalty or free kick must be behind the ball until it has been kicked, except the placer for a place kick.

- (i) **Kick taken quickly.** If the penalty or free kick is taken so quickly that players of the kicker's team are still in front of the ball, they are not penalised for being offside. However, they must retire immediately. They must not stop retiring until they are onside. They must not take part in the game until they are onside. This applies to all players of that team, whether they are inside or outside the playing area.
- (j) In this situation, players become onside when they run behind the team mate who took the penalty or free kick, or when a team mate carrying the ball runs in front of them, or when a team mate who was behind the ball when it was kicked runs in front of them.
- (k) An offside player cannot be put onside by any action of an opponent.  
**Penalty:** Unless otherwise stated in Law any infringement by the kicker's team results in a scrum at the mark. The opposing team throw in the ball.

### 21.5 SCORING A GOAL FROM A PENALTY KICK

- (a) A penalty goal can be scored from a penalty kick.
- (b) If the kicker indicates to the referee the intention to kick at goal, the kicker must kick at goal. Once the kicker has made the intention clear, there can be no change of the intention. The referee may enquire of the kicker as to the intention.
- (c) If the kicker indicates to the referee the intent to kick at goal, the opposing team must stand still with their hands by their sides from the time the kicker starts to approach to kick until the ball is kicked.



### ***PENALTY KICK AT GOAL***

- (d) If the kicker has not indicated an intention to kick at goal but takes a drop kick and scores a goal, the goal stands.
- (e) If the opposing team infringes while the kick is being taken but the kick at goal is successful, the goal stands. A further penalty is not awarded for the infringement.
- (f) The kicker may place the ball directly on the ground or on sand, sawdust or a kicking tee approved by the Union.

## **21.6 SCORING FROM A FREE KICK**

- (a) A goal cannot be scored from a free kick.
- (b) The team awarded a free kick cannot score a dropped goal until after the ball next becomes dead, or until after an opponent has played or touched it, or has tackled the ball carrier. This restriction applies also to a scrum taken instead of a free kick.

## 21.7 WHAT THE OPPOSING TEAM MUST DO AT A PENALTY KICK

- (a) **Must run from the mark.** The opposing team must immediately run towards their own goal line until they are at least 10 metres away from the mark for the penalty kick, or until they have reached their goal line if that is nearer the mark.
- (b) **Must keep running.** Even if the penalty kick is taken and the kicker's team is playing the ball, opposing players must keep running until they have retired the necessary distance. They must not take part in the game until they have done so.
- (c) **Kick taken quickly.** If the penalty kick is taken so quickly that opponents have no opportunity to retire, they will not be penalised for this. However, they must continue to retire as described in 21.7(b) above or until a team mate who was 10 metres from the mark has run in front of them, before they take part in the game.
- (d) **Interference.** The opposing team must not do anything to delay the penalty kick or obstruct the kicker. They must not intentionally take, throw or kick the ball out of reach of the kicker or the kicker's team mates.

**Penalty:** Any infringement by the opposing team results in a second penalty kick, 10 metres in front of the mark for the first kick. This mark must not be within 5 metres of the goal line. Any player may take the kick. The kicker may change the type of kick and may choose to kick at goal. If the referee awards a second penalty kick, the second penalty kick is not taken before the referee has made the mark indicating the place of the penalty.

## 21.8 WHAT OPTIONS THE OPPOSING TEAM HAVE AT A FREE KICK

- (a) **Must run from the mark.** The opposing team must immediately run towards their own goal line until they are at least 10 metres away from the mark for the free kick, or until they have reached their goal line if that is nearer the mark. If the free kick is in a defending teams in-goal area, the opposing team must immediately run towards their own goal line until they are at least 10 metres away from the mark and not nearer than 5 metres from the goal line.



- (b) **Must keep running.** Even if the free kick is taken and the kicker's team is playing the ball, opposing players must keep running until they have retired the necessary distance. They must not take part in the game until they have done so.
- (c) **Kick taken quickly.** If the free kick is taken so quickly that opponents have no opportunity to retire, they will not be penalised for this. However, they must continue to retire as described in 21.8(b) above or until a team mate who was 10 metres from the mark has run in front of them, before they take part in the game.
- (d) **Interference.** The opposing team must not do anything to delay the free kick or obstruct the kicker. They must not intentionally take, throw or kick the ball out of reach of the kicker or the kicker's team mates.
- (e) **Charging the free kick.** Once they have retired the necessary distance, players of the opposing team may charge and try to prevent the kick being taken. They may charge the free kick as soon as the kicker starts to approach to kick.
- (f) **Preventing the free kick.** If the opposing team charge and prevent the free kick being taken, the kick is disallowed. Play restarts with a scrum at the mark. The opposing team throw in the ball.
- (g) **Free kick taken in the in-goal.** If a free kick has been awarded in the in-goal or if it has been awarded in the field of play and the player retires to in-goal to take it, and the opponents charge and prevent the kick from being taken, a 5-metre scrum is ordered. The attacking team throw in the ball. If a free kick is taken in the in-goal, an opponent who legitimately plays it there can score a try.
- (h) **Charged down.** If opponents charge down a free kick in the playing area, play continues.  
**Penalty:** Any infringement by the opposing team results in a second free kick, awarded 10 metres in front of the mark for the first kick. This mark must not be within 5 metres of the goal line. Any player may take the kick. If the referee awards a second free kick, the second free kick is not taken before the referee has made the mark indicating the place of the free kick.

## **21.9 CONTRIVED INFRINGEMENTS AT THE PENALTY KICK**

If the referee believes that the kicker's team has contrived an infringement by their opponents, the referee does not award a further penalty but allows play to continue.

## **21.10 CONTRIVED INFRINGEMENTS AT THE FREE KICK**

- (a) The kicker must not pretend to kick. As soon as the kicker makes a move to kick, the opponents may charge.
- (b) If the referee believes that the kicker's team has contrived an infringement by their opponents, the referee does not award a further free kick but allows play to continue.

# During the Match

**In-Goal**

**Law 22** In-Goal



## Law 22 In-Goal

### DEFINITIONS

In-goal is part of the ground as defined in Law 1 where the ball may be grounded by players from either team.

When attacking players are first to ground the ball in the opponents' in-goal, the attacking players score a try.

When defending players are first to ground the ball in in-goal, the defending players make a touch down.

A defending player who has one foot on the goal line or in the in-goal who receives the ball is considered to have both feet in in-goal.

### 22.1 GROUNDING THE BALL

There are two ways a player can ground the ball:

- (a) **Player touches the ground with the ball.** A player grounds the ball by holding the ball and touching the ground with it, in in-goal. 'Holding' means holding in the hand or hands, or in the arm or arms. No downward pressure is required.
- (b) **Player presses down on the ball.** A player grounds the ball when it is on the ground in the in-goal and the player presses down on it with a hand or hands, arm or arms, or the front of the player's body from waist to neck inclusive.



*Grounding the ball*



## 22.2 PICKING UP THE BALL

Picking up the ball from the ground is not grounding it. A player may pick up the ball in the in-goal and ground it elsewhere in the in-goal.

## 22.3 BALL GROUNDED BY AN ATTACKING PLAYER

**Try.** When an attacking player who is onside is first to ground the ball in the opponents' in-goal, the player scores a try. This applies whether an attacking or a defending player is responsible for the ball being in the in-goal.

## 22.4 OTHER WAYS TO SCORE A TRY

- (a) **Grounded on the goal line.** The goal line is part of the in-goal. If an attacking player is first to ground the ball on the opponents' goal line, a try is scored.
- (b) **Grounded against a goal post.** The goal posts and padding surrounding them are part of the goal line, which is part of in-goal. If an attacking player is first to ground the ball against a goal post or padding, a try is scored.



*Scoring a try - grounded against the goal post*

- (c) **Pushover try.** A scrum or ruck cannot take place in the in-goal. If a scrum or ruck is pushed into the in-goal, an attacking player may legally ground the ball as soon as the ball reaches or crosses the goal line and a try is scored.



- (d) **Momentum try.** If an attacking player with the ball is tackled short of the goal line but the player's momentum carries the player in a continuous movement along the ground into the opponents in-goal, and the player is first to ground the ball, a try is scored.
- (e) **Tackled near the goal line.** If a player is tackled near to the opponents' goal line so that this player can immediately reach out and ground the ball on or over the goal line, a try is scored.
- (f) In this situation, defending players who are on their feet may legally prevent the try by pulling the ball from the tackled player's hands or arms, but must not kick the ball.
- (g) **Player in touch or touch-in-goal.** If an attacking player is in touch or in touch-in-goal, the player can score a try by grounding the ball in the opponents' in-goal provided the player is not carrying the ball.

- (h) **Penalty try.** A penalty try is awarded if a try would probably have been scored but for foul play by the defending team. A penalty try is awarded if a try would probably have been scored in a better position but for foul play by the defending team.



*Player in touch-in-goal, not carrying the ball but grounding the ball and scoring a try*

- (i) A penalty try is awarded between the goal posts. The defending team may charge the conversion kick after a penalty try.

### 22.5 BALL GROUNDED BY A DEFENDING PLAYER

- (a) **Touch down.** When defending players are first to ground the ball in their in-goal, it results in a touch down.
- (b) **Player in touch or touch-in-goal.** If defending players are in touch-in-goal, they can make a touch down by grounding the ball in their in-goal provided they are not carrying the ball.
- (c) **Grounded against a goal post.** The goal posts and padding surrounding them are part of the goal line. If a defending player is first to ground the ball against a goal post or padding, the result is a touch down.



## **22.6 SCRUM OR RUCK IS PUSHED INTO IN-GOAL**

A scrum or ruck can take place only in the field of play. Therefore, if a scrum or ruck is pushed across the goal line, a defending player may legally ground the ball as soon as the ball reaches or crosses the goal line. This results in a touch down.

## **22.7 RESTARTING AFTER A TOUCH DOWN**

- (a) When an attacking player sends or carries the ball into the opponents' in-goal and it becomes dead there, either because a defender grounded it or because it went into touch-in-goal or on or over the dead ball line, a drop out is awarded.
- (b) If an attacking player knocks-on or throws-forward in the field of play and the ball goes into the opponents' in-goal and it is made dead there, a scrum is awarded where the knock on or throw forward happened.
- (c) If at a kick off the ball is kicked into the opponents' in-goal without having touched or been touched by a player and a defending player grounds it there or makes it dead without delay, the defending team have two choices:  
  
To have a scrum formed at the centre, and they throw in the ball;  
or  
To have the other team kick off again.
- (d) If a defending player threw or took the ball into the in-goal, and a defending player grounded it, and there has been no infringement, play is restarted by a 5-metre scrum. The position of the scrum is in line with where the ball has been touched down. The attacking side throws in the ball.



### **22.8 BALL KICKED DEAD IN IN-GOAL**

If a team kicks the ball through their opponents' in-goal, into touch-in-goal or on or over the dead ball line, except by an unsuccessful kick at goal or attempted dropped goal, the defending team has two choices:

To have a drop out,

or

To have a scrum at the place where the ball was kicked and they throw in.

### **22.9 DEFENDING PLAYER IN IN-GOAL**

A defending player who has part of one foot in in-goal is considered to have both feet in in-goal.

### **22.10 BALL HELD UP IN-GOAL**

When a player carrying the ball is held up in the in-goal so that the player cannot ground the ball, the ball is dead. A 5-metre scrum is formed. This would apply if play similar to a maul takes place in in-goal. The attacking team throws in the ball.

## **22.11 BALL DEAD IN IN-GOAL**

- (a) When the ball touches the corner post, the touch-in-goal line or the dead ball line, or touches anything or anyone beyond those lines, the ball becomes dead. If the ball was played into in-goal by the attacking team, a drop out shall be awarded to the defending team. If the ball was played into in-goal by the defending team, a 5-metre scrum shall be awarded and the attacking team throws in the ball.
- (b) When a player carrying the ball touches the corner post, the touch-in-goal line, the dead ball line, or touches the ground beyond those lines, the ball becomes dead. If the ball was carried into in-goal by the attacking team, a drop out shall be awarded to the defending team. If the ball was carried into in-goal by the defending team, a 5-metre scrum shall be awarded and the attacking team throws in the ball.
- (c) When a player scores a try or makes a touch down, the ball becomes dead.

## **22.12 ATTACKING INFRINGEMENT WITH SCRUM PENALTY**

If an attacking player commits an infringement in in-goal, for which the penalty is a scrum, for example, a knock on, play is restarted with a 5-metre scrum. The scrum is formed in line with the place of the infringement and the defending team throws in the ball.

## **22.13 DEFENDING INFRINGEMENT WITH SCRUM PENALTY**

If a defending player infringes in in-goal, for which the penalty is a scrum, for example, a knock on, play is restarted with a 5-metre scrum. The scrum is formed in line with the place of the infringement and the attacking team throws in the ball.

## **22.14 DOUBT ABOUT GROUNDING**

If there is doubt about which team first grounded the ball in the in-goal, play is re-started by a 5-metre scrum, in line with the place where the ball was grounded. The attacking team throws in the ball.

## **22.15 INFRINGEMENTS IN IN-GOAL**

All infringements in the in-goal are treated as if they had taken place in the field of play.

A knock on or a throw forward in the in-goal results in a 5-metre scrum, opposite the place of infringement.

**Penalty:** For an infringement, the mark for a penalty kick or free kick cannot be in the in-goal.

When a penalty kick or free kick is awarded for an infringement in the In-goal, the mark for the kick is in the field of play, 5 metres from the goal line, opposite the place of infringement.

## 22.16 MISCONDUCT OR UNFAIR PLAY IN IN-GOAL

- (a) **Obstruction by the attacking team.** When a player charges or intentionally obstructs an opponent in the in-goal who has just kicked the ball, the opponent's team may choose to take the penalty kick either in the field of play, 5 metres from the goal line opposite the place of infringement, or where the ball landed.

If they make the second choice and the ball lands in or near touch, the mark for the penalty kick is 15 metres from the touchline, opposite where the ball went into touch or where it landed.

A try is disallowed and a penalty kick awarded if a try would probably not have been scored but for foul play by the attacking team.

- (b) **Foul play by the defending team.** The referee awards a penalty try if a try would probably have been scored but for foul play by the defending team.

The referee awards a penalty try if a try would probably have been scored in a better position but for foul play by the defending team. A penalty try is awarded between the goal posts. The defending team may charge the conversion kick after a penalty try.

A player who prevents a try being scored through foul play must either be cautioned and temporarily suspended or sent off.

- (c) **Any other foul play.** When a player commits any other foul play in the in-goal while the ball is out of play, the penalty kick is awarded at the place where the game would otherwise have restarted.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick.

# Under 19 Variations

Standard set of Variations  
Appropriate to the  
Under 19 Game



*The laws of the game apply to the Under 19 game, subject to the following variations:*

## **LAW 3: NUMBER OF PLAYERS - THE TEAM**

**3.5 (c)** If a team nominates 22 players, it **must** have at least six players who can play in the front row in order that there is replacement cover for the loose head prop, hooker and tight head prop.

If a team nominates more than 22 players it **must** have at least six players who can play in the front row in order that there is replacement cover for the loose head prop, hooker and tight head prop. There must also be three players who can play in lock position.

**3.12** A player who has been substituted may replace an injured player.

## **LAW 5: TIME**

**5.1** Each half of an Under 19 match lasts 35 minutes playing time. Play in a match lasts no longer than 70 minutes. After a total of 70 minutes playing time, the referee must not allow extra time to be played in the case of a drawn match in a knock-out competition.



## LAW 20: SCRUM

- 20.1 (f)** In an 8 person scrum the formation must be 3-4-1, with the single player (normally the Number 8) shoving on the 2 locks. The locks must pack with their heads on either side of the hooker.

**Exception:** A team must have fewer than eight players in its scrum when **either** the team cannot field a complete team, or a player is sent off for Foul Play, **or** a player leaves the field because of injury.

Even allowing for this exception, each team must always have at least five players in a scrum.

If a team is incomplete, the scrum formation must be as follows:

If a team is without one player, then both teams must use a 3-4 formation (i.e. no No.8).

If a team is without two players, then both teams must use a 3-2-1 formation (i.e. no flankers).

If a team is without three players, then both teams must use a 3-2 formation (i.e. only front rows and locks).

When a normal scrum takes place, the players in the three front row positions and the two lock positions must have been suitably trained for these positions.

If a team cannot field such suitably trained players because:  
either they are not available, **or**  
a player in one of those five positions is injured **or**  
has been sent off for Foul Play and no suitably trained replacement is available, then the referee must order uncontested scrums.

In an uncontested scrum, the teams do not compete for the ball. The team putting in the ball must win it. Neither team is allowed to push the other team away from the mark.

- 20.1 (h)** The referee will call “crouch” then “touch”. The front rows crouch and using their outside arm each prop touches the point of the opposing prop's outside shoulder. The props then withdraw their arms. The referee will then call “pause”. Following a pause the referee will then call “engage”. The front rows may then engage.

The “engage” call is not a command but an indication that the front rows may come together when ready.

**Penalty:** Free Kick

***Note:** The engagement process above is now identical to senior law.*

**No wheeling.** A team must not intentionally wheel a scrum.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

If a wheel reaches 45 degrees, the referee must stop play. If the wheel is unintentional, the referee orders another scrum at the place where the scrum is stopped.

**Maximum 1.5 metres push.** A team in a scrum must not push the scrum more than 1.5 metres towards their opponents’ goal line.

**Penalty:** Free Kick

**Ball must be released from scrum.** A player must not intentionally keep the ball in the scrum once the player’s team has heeled the ball and controls it at the base of the scrum.

**Penalty:** Free Kick

# Seven-a-side Variations

Standard set of Variations  
Appropriate to the  
Seven-a-side Game



*The Laws of the Game apply to the seven-a-side game, subject to the following variations:*

## **LAW 3: NUMBER OF PLAYERS – THE TEAM**

### **3.1 MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PLAYERS ON THE PLAYING AREA**

**Maximum:** each team must have no more than seven players on the playing area.

### **3.4 PLAYERS NOMINATED AS SUBSTITUTES**

A team may nominate no more than five replacements/substitutes.

A team can substitute or replace up to three players.

### **3.12 SUBSTITUTED PLAYERS REJOINING THE MATCH**

If a player is substituted, that player must not return and play in that match even to replace an injured player.

**Exception:** A substituted player may replace a player with a bleeding or open wound.

## **LAW 5: TOSS TIME**

### **5.1 DURATION OF A MATCH**

A match lasts no longer than fourteen minutes plus lost time and extra time. A match is divided into two halves of not more than seven minutes playing time.

**Exception:** A competition final match may last no longer than twenty minutes plus lost time and extra time. The match is divided into two halves of not more than ten minutes playing time.



### 5.2 HALF TIME

After half time the teams change ends. There is an interval of not more than one minute. During a competition final there is an interval of not more than two minutes.

### 5.6 PLAYING EXTRA TIME

When there is a drawn match and extra time is required, the extra time is played in periods of five minutes. After each period, the teams change ends without an interval.

## LAW 6: MATCH OFFICIALS

### 6.A. REFEREE

#### 6.A.12. DUTIES OF THE REFEREE AFTER THE MATCH

Add extra paragraph:

#### **Extra Time - Toss.**

Before extra time starts, the referee organises a toss. One of the captains tosses a coin and the other captain calls to see who wins the toss. The winner of the toss decides whether to kick off or choose an end. If the winner of the toss decides to choose an end, the opponents must kick off and vice versa.

### 6.B. TOUCH JUDGES

#### 6.B.8 IN-GOAL JUDGES

- (a) There are two in-goal judges for each match.
- (b) The referee has the same control over both in-goal judges as the referee has over touch judges.
- (c) There is only one in-goal judge in each in-goal area.

- (d) **Signalling result of kick at goal.** When a conversion kick or a penalty kick at goal is being taken, an in-goal judge must help the referee by signalling the result of the kick. One touch judge stands at or behind a goal post and an in-goal judge stands at or behind the other goal post. If the ball goes over the crossbar and between the posts, the touch judge and the in-goal judge raise their flags to indicate a goal.
- (e) **Signalling touch.** When the ball or the ball carrier has gone into touch-in-goal, the in-goal judge must hold up the flag.
- (f) **Signalling tries.** The in-goal judge will assist the referee in decisions on touch downs and tries if there is any doubt in the referee's mind.
- (g) **Signalling foul play.** A match organiser may give authority for the in-goal judge to signal foul play in the in-goal.

## LAW 9: METHOD OF SCORING

### 9.B CONVERSION KICK

#### 9.B.1 TAKING A CONVERSION KICK

##### *Amend*

- (c) The kick must be a drop kick.

##### *Delete (d)*

##### *Amend*

- (e) The kicker must take the kick within forty seconds of a try having been scored. The kick is disallowed if the kicker does not take the kick in the time allowed.





### 9.B.3 THE OPPOSING TEAM

#### *Amend*

- (a) All the opposing team must immediately assemble close to their own 10-metre line.

#### *Delete* (b)

- (c) Delete 3rd paragraph “When another kick is allowed.....”

### 9.B.4. EXTRA TIME – THE WINNER

In extra time, the team that scores points first is immediately declared the winner, without any further play.

## LAW 10: FOUL PLAY

**Note:** Temporary Suspension: When a player has been temporarily suspended, the players period of suspension will be for a period of two minutes.

## LAW 13: KICK OFF AND RESTART KICKS

### 13.2 WHO TAKES THE KICK OFF AND RESTART KICK

#### *Amend*

- (c) After a score, the team that has scored kicks off with a drop kick which must be taken at or behind the centre of the half-way line.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick at the centre of the half-way line.

#### *Amend*

### 13.3 POSITION OF THE KICKER’S TEAM AT THE KICK OFF

All the kicker’s team must be behind the ball when it is kicked. If they are not, a free kick is awarded to the non-offending team at the centre of the half-way line.

**Penalty:** Free Kick at the centre of the half-way line.



*Amend*

**13.7 KICK OFF OF UNDER 10 METRES AND NOT PLAYED BY AN OPPONENT.**

If the ball does not reach the opponents 10-metre line, a free kick is awarded to the non-offending team at the centre of the half-way line.

**Penalty:** Free Kick at the centre of the half-way line.

*Amend*

**13.8 BALL GOES DIRECTLY INTO TOUCH**

The ball must land in the field of play. If it is kicked directly into touch, a free kick is awarded to the non-offending team at the centre of the half-way line.

**Penalty:** Free Kick at the centre of the half-way line.

*Amend*

**13.9 BALL GOES INTO THE IN-GOAL**

- (b) If the opposing team grounds the ball, or if they make it dead, or if the ball becomes dead by going into touch-in-goal or on or over the dead ball line a free kick is awarded to the non-offending team at the centre of the half-way line.

**Penalty:** Free Kick at the centre of the half-way line.

## LAW 20: SCRUM

### DEFINITIONS

*Amend 2nd paragraph:*

A scrum is formed in the field of play when three players from each team, bound together in one row, close up with their opponents so that the heads of the players are interlocked. This creates a tunnel into which a scrum half throws in the ball so that the players can compete for possession by hooking the ball with either of their feet.

*Amend 4th paragraph:*

The tunnel is the space between the two rows of players.

*Amend 6th paragraph:*

The middle line is an imaginary line on the ground in the tunnel beneath the line where the shoulders of the two rows of players meet.

*Amend 7th paragraph:*

The middle player is the hooker.

*Delete paragraphs 9, 10 and 11.*

### 20.1 FORMING A SCRUM

*Amend*

- (f) **Number of players: three.** A scrum must have three players from each team. All three players must stay bound to the scrum until it ends.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick.

*Delete* **Exception**

- 20.1 (h)** The referee will call “crouch” then “touch”. The front rows crouch and using their outside arm each prop touches the point of the opposing prop's outside shoulder. The props then withdraw their arms. The referee will then call “pause”. Following a pause the referee will then call “engage”. The front rows may then engage. The “engage” call is not a command but an indication that the front rows may come together when ready.

**Penalty:** Free Kick

***Note:** The engagement process above is now identical to senior law.*

## 20.8 FRONT ROW PLAYERS

*Amend*

- (c) **Kicking out.** A front-row player must not intentionally kick the ball out of the tunnel or out of the scrum in the direction of the opponent's goal line.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick.

## LAW 21: PENALTY AND FREE KICKS

### 21.3 HOW THE PENALTY AND FREE KICKS ARE TAKEN

*Amend*

- (a) Any player may take a penalty or free kick awarded for an infringement with any kind of kick: punt, drop kick but not a place kick. The ball may be kicked with any part of the leg from below the knee to the toe but not with the heel.

### 21.4 PENALTY AND FREE KICK OPTIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

*Amend*

- (b) **No delay.** If a kicker indicates to the referee the intention to kick at goal, the kick must be taken within thirty seconds of the penalty having been awarded. If the 30 seconds is exceeded the kick is disallowed, a scrum is ordered at the place of the mark and the opponents throw in the ball.

# Referee Signals

The use of referee signals is recommended in order to help the referee communicate with players and spectators.





## 1. Penalty Kick

Shoulders parallel with touchline. Arm angled up, pointing towards non-offending team.



## 2. Free Kick

Shoulders parallel with touchline. Arm bent square at elbow, upper arm pointing towards non-offending team.



## 3. Try and Penalty Try

Referee's back to dead ball line. Arm raised vertically.



## 4. Advantage

Arm outstretched, waist high, towards non-offending team, for a period of approximately five seconds.



**5. Scrum awarded**

Shoulders parallel with touch-line. Arm horizontal pointing towards team to throw in the ball.



**6. Forming a scrum**

Elbows bent, hands above head fingers touching.



**7. Throw forward/  
forward pass**

Hands gesture as if passing an imaginary ball forward.



**8. Knock on**

Arm out-stretched with open hand above head, and moves backwards and forwards.





**9. Not releasing ball immediately in the tackle**

Both hands are close to the chest, as if holding an imaginary ball.



**10. Tackler not releasing tackled player**

Arms brought together as if grasping a player and then opening as if releasing a player.



**11. Tackler or tackled player not rolling away**

A circular movement with the finger and arm moving away from the body.



**12. Entering tackle from wrong direction**

Arm held horizontal then sweep of the arm in a semi-circle.





**13. Intentionally falling over on a player**

Curved arm makes gesture to imitate action of falling player. Signal is made in direction in which offending player fell.



**14. Diving to ground near tackle.**

Straight arm gesture, pointing downwards to imitate diving action.



**15. Unplayable ball in ruck or tackle**

Award of scrum to team moving forward at time of stoppage. Shoulders parallel with the touch-line, arm horizontal pointing towards the team to throw in the ball, then pointing the arm and hand towards the other team's goal line whilst moving it backwards and forwards.



**16. Unplayable ball in maul**

Arm out to award scrummage to side not in possession at maul commencement. Other arm out as if signalling advantage and then swing it across body with hand ending on opposite shoulder.



**17. Joining a ruck or a maul in front of the back foot and from the side**

The hand and arm are held horizontally moving sideways.



**18. Intentionally collapsing ruck or maul**

Both arms at shoulder height as if bound around opponent. Upper body is lowered and twisted as if pulling down opponent who is on top.



**19. Prop pulling down opponent**

Clenched fist and arm bent. Gesture imitates pulling opponent down.



**20. Prop pulling opponent on**

Clenched fist and arm straight, at shoulder height. Gesture imitates pulling opponent on.



**21. Wheeling scrum more than 90 degrees**

Rotating index finger, above the head.



**22. Foot-up by front-row player.**

Foot raised, foot touched.



**23. Throw in at scrum not straight**

Hands at knee level imitating action of throw in not straight.



**24. Failure to bind fully**

One arm out-stretched as if binding. Other hand moves up and down arm to indicate the extent of a full bind.



### 25. Handling ball in ruck or scrum

Hand at ground level, making sweeping action, as if handling the ball.



### 26. Throw in at lineout not straight

Shoulders parallel with touch-line. Hand above head indicates the path of the ball, not straight.



### 27. Closing gaps in lineout

Both hands at eye level, pointing up, palms inward. Hands meet in squeezing action.



### 28. Barging in lineout

Arm horizontal, elbow pointing out. Arm and shoulder move outwards as if barging opponent.



## 29. Leaning on player in lineout

Arm horizontal, bent at elbow, palm down. Downward gesture.



## 30. Pushing opponent in lineout

Both hands at shoulder level, with palms outward, making pushing gesture.



## 31. Early lifting and lifting in lineout

Both fists clenched in front, at waist level, making lifting gesture.



## 32. Offside at lineout

Hand and arm move horizontally across chest, towards offence.



### 33. Obstruction in general play

Arms crossed in front of chest at right angles to each other, like open scissors.



### 34. Offside at scrum, ruck or maul

Shoulders parallel with touchline. Arm hanging straight down, swings in arc along offside line.



### 35. Offside choice: penalty kick or scrum

One arm as for penalty kick. Other arm points to place where scrum may be taken instead of kick.



### 36. Offside under 10-metre Law or not 10 metres at penalty and free kicks

Both hands held open above head.



**37. High Tackle (foul play)**

Hand moves horizontally in front of neck.



**38. Stamping (foul play: illegal use of boot)**

Stamping action or similar gesture to indicate the offence.



**39. Punching (foul play)**

Clenched fist punches open palm.



**40. Dissent (disputing referee's decision)**

Outstretched arm with hand opening and closing to imitate talking.





## 41. Award of drop-out on 22-metre line

Arm points to centre of 22-metre line.



## 42. Ball held up in in-goal

Space between hands indicates that ball was not grounded.



## 43. Physiotherapist needed

One arm raised indicates physiotherapist is needed for injured player.



## 44. Doctor needed

Both arms raised above head indicates a doctor and/or stretcher is needed for injured player.



### **45. Bleeding wound**

Arms crossed above head indicates player has bleeding injury and may be temporarily replaced.



### **46. Timekeeper to stop and start watch**

Arm held up in air and whistle blown when watch should be stopped or started.

## Regulation 12 - Extract

This is an extract of Regulation 12, which is '**Specifications Relating to Players' Dress**'. For a full explanation of this regulation as it relates to Law 4 go to:

[www.irb.com/lawregulations/regulations/index.html](http://www.irb.com/lawregulations/regulations/index.html)

### 1 **ADDITIONAL ITEMS OF CLOTHING**

#### (b) **SHIN GUARDS**

A player may wear shin guards worn under the socks with padding incorporated in non-rigid fabric with no part of the padding thicker than 0.5cm when compressed.

#### (d) **FINGERLESS MITTS**

Coverage of the fingers and thumbs be permitted to the outer joint but no further. The mitt zone of coverage should not continue beyond the wrist.

The body of the mitt should be of a stretch type material with the grip material being made of a soft rubber/synthetic compound not exceeding a depth of 1mm.

No part of a mitt should contain buttons or potentially dangerous items

#### (e) **SHOULDER PADS\***

A player may wear shoulder pads, made of soft and thin materials, which may be incorporated in an undergarment or jersey provided that the pads cover the shoulder and collar bone only. No part of the pads may be thicker than 1cm when uncompressed. No part of the pads may have a density of more than 45 kilograms per cubic metre.

#### (g) **HEADGEAR\***

A player may wear headgear made of soft and thin materials provided that no part of the headgear is thicker than 1cm when uncompressed and no part of the headgear has a density of more than 45 kilograms per cubic metre.

**2 SPECIAL ADDITIONAL ITEMS FOR WOMEN****CHEST PADS\***

Besides the previous items, women may wear chest pads made of soft and thin materials which may be incorporated as part of a garment provided

that the pads cover the shoulder and/or collar bone and/or chest only with no part of the pads thicker than 1cm when uncompressed and no part of the pads having a density of more than 45 kilograms per cubic metre.

**3 STUDS**

Studs of players' boots must conform to the "Safety Aspects of Rugby Boot Sole Design" set out in Appendix 2 of this Regulation which you can read at:

[www.irb.com/lawregulations/regulations/index.html](http://www.irb.com/lawregulations/regulations/index.html)

**4 BANNED ITEMS OF CLOTHING**

- (g) A player must not wear any item of which any part is thicker than 0.5cm when uncompressed or is denser than 45 kilograms per cubic metre unless specified within this Regulation 12/Law 4. Where this overall thickness consists of padded material covered by fabric, 0.5 cm is the maximum measured thickness for the combination of the uncompressed padding and the fabric. The fabric can contribute up to a maximum measured thickness of 1mm on each side of the padding.

*\* Shoulder Pads, Headgear, Chest Pads (Women) must conform to the Standard Performance Specification for Specific Items of Players' Clothing (Appendix 1 of this Regulation).*

