Laws of the game
Rugby Union

Incorporating the playing charter

2018

WORLD RUGBY™

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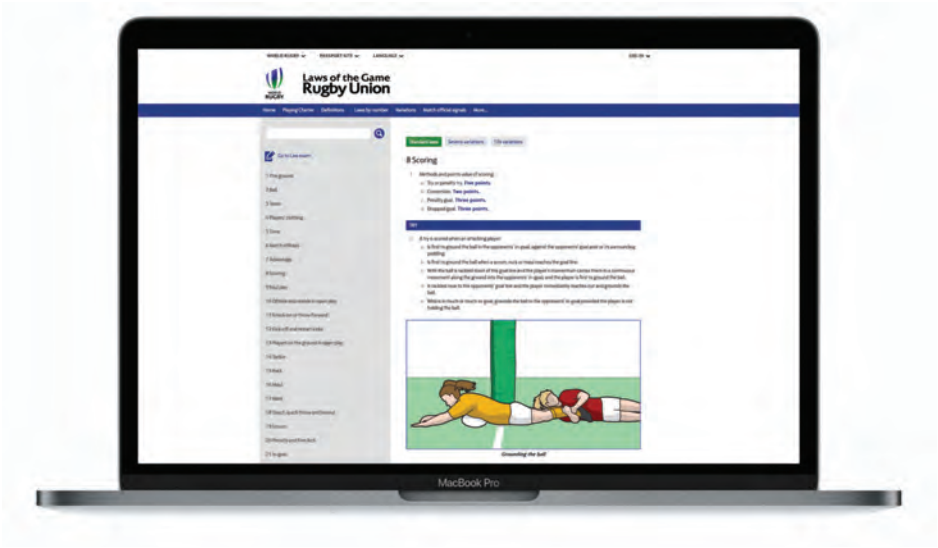

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FOREWORD

The object of the game is that two teams of 15, 10 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-19s, 10s and rugby sevens, 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 and, as such, presents inherent dangers. It is very important to play the game in accordance with the laws and be mindful of player welfare at all times.

It is the responsibility of players to ensure that they are physically and technically prepared to play within the laws and are committed to participate in accordance with safe practices and enjoyment.

It is the responsibility of those who coach or teach the game to ensure that players are prepared to comply with the laws, to play fairly and practice safe conduct.

It is the duty of the referee to apply fairly all the laws in every match, including law trials and variations as authorised by World Rugby.

It is the duty of the unions to ensure that the game at every level is conducted in accordance with disciplined and sporting behaviour.

The principle of fair play cannot be upheld solely by the referee. Responsibility for its observance also rests on unions, clubs, other affiliated bodies, coaches and players.

Each union should create a pathway programme for youth players. Through this programme, young players can be gradually introduced to the various phases of rugby at an appropriate time, offering them more protection from injury. The age and content of this programme should be determined by each union, depending on the unique characteristics of the playing environment within that union.

Playing charter

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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.

Rugby is played by men and women and by boys and girls worldwide. More than 8.5 million people aged from six to 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.

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, will set the standards for all those who are involved in rugby, at whatever level.

INTEGRITY • PASSION • SOLIDARITY
DISCIPLINE • RESPECT

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.

INTEGRITY

Integrity is central to the fabric of the game and is generated through honesty and fair play

PRINCIPLES OF THE GAME

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 game's objective is to score as many points as possible against an opposing team by carrying, passing, kicking and grounding the ball, according to the laws of the game, its sporting spirit and fair play.

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 open play
- when play is re-started at scrums, lineouts, kick-offs and restart kicks.

PASSION

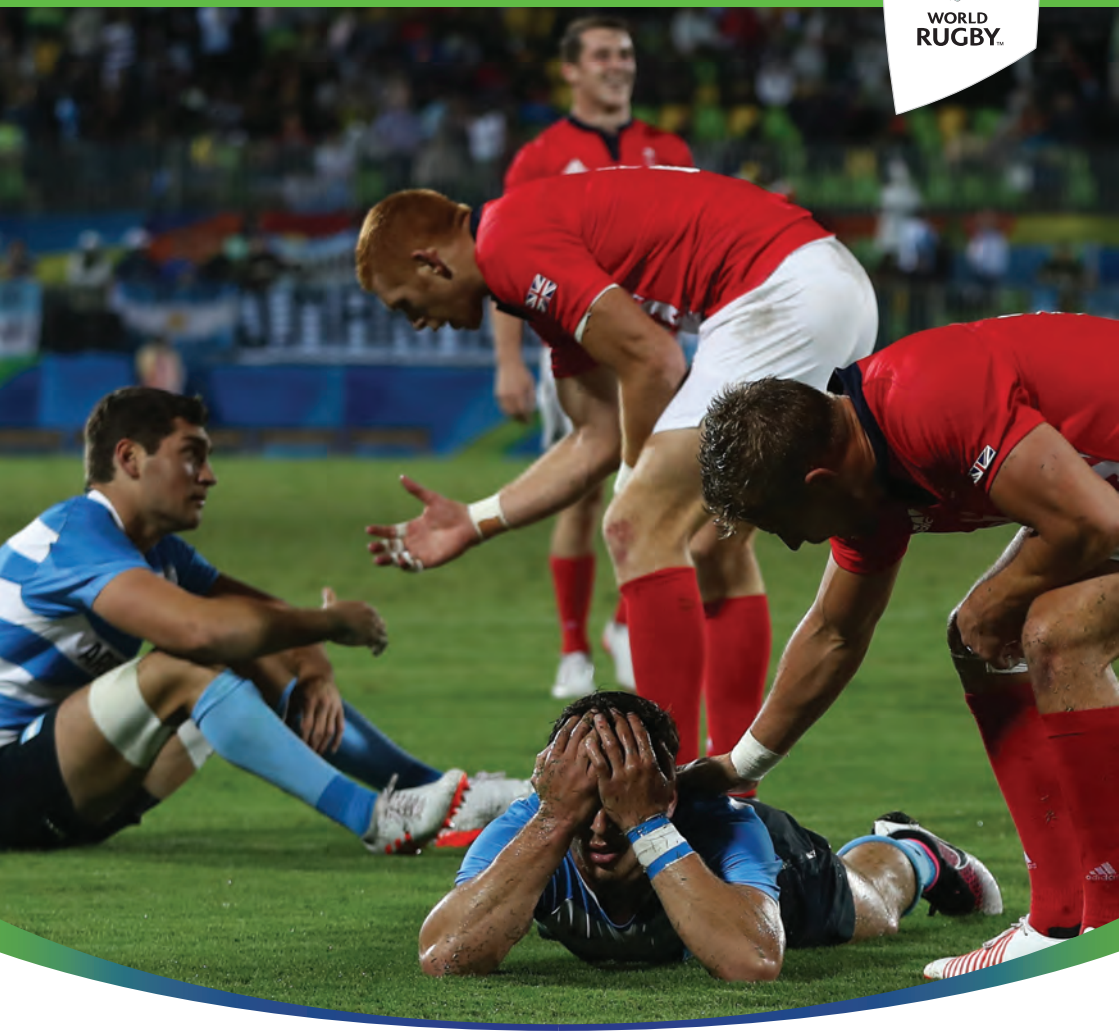
Rugby people have a passionate enthusiasm for the game. Rugby generates excitement, emotional attachment and a sense of belonging to the global rugby family

PRINCIPLES OF THE GAME

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 lineout. Similarly, the team knocking the ball on or passing the ball forward is denied the throw 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.

The team in possession aims 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 open play.



SOLIDARITY

Rugby provides a unifying spirit that leads to life long friendships, camaraderie, teamwork and loyalty which transcends cultural, geographic, political and religious differences

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, lineouts, 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 match officials can achieve this through fairness, consistency, sensitivity and, when appropriate, management. In return, it is the responsibility of coaches, captains and players to respect the authority of the match officials.

DISCIPLINE

Discipline is an integral part of the game, both on and off the field, and is reflected through adherence to the laws, the regulations and rugby's core values

CONCLUSION

Rugby is valued as a sport for men and women, boys and girls. It builds teamwork, understanding, co-operation and respect for fellow participants. 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
- 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 other's 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.

This charter will help to reinforce those cherished values.

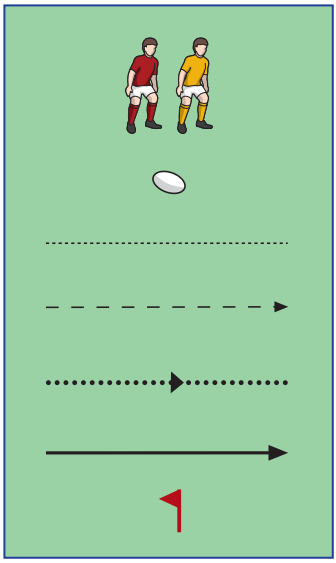
RESPECT

Respect for team-mates, opponents, match officials and those involved in the game is paramount

KEY TO TEXT AND DIAGRAMS

DIAGRAMS

Throughout this book, the diagrams conform to the following conventions:



Players

Ball

Path of ball when kicked

Path of ball when thrown / passed

Path of ball when knocked on / charged down

Path of player

Flag post

TEXT

Throughout this book, 2018 changes are denoted by:

Ongoing Global Law Trials are denoted by:

Sanctions are denoted by colour as follows:

Red for a sanction which results in the award of a penalty

Green for a sanction which results in the award of a free-kick

Blue for a sanction which results in the award of a scrum, restart kick, quick-throw or lineout

Gold for a sanction which results in the disallowing of a kick.

Definitions

WORLD RUGBY™

DEFINITIONS

0-9

22: The area between the goal line and the 22-metre line, and between the touchlines. It includes the 22-metre line but not the goal line or the touchlines.

A

Actual time: Continuous elapsed time (see playing time).

Advantage: A clear and real tactical or territorial benefit arising after an infringement by the opposition.

Attacking team: The opposition to the team in whose half play is taking place.

B

Ball-carrier: A player who is in possession of the ball.

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

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

Blood injury: Uncontrolled active bleeding.

C

Captain: The player nominated by a team to lead that team, consult the referee and select options relating to referee decisions.

Cavalry charge: An illegal type of attack, which usually happens near the goal line, when the attacking team is awarded a penalty or free-kick. At a signal from the kicker, a line of attacking players charge forward from a distance. When they get near, the kicker taps the ball and passes to a player.

D

Dead: The ball is dead when the referee blows the whistle to stop play or following an unsuccessful conversion.

Dead-ball line: The line at either end (and not part) of the playing area.

Defending team: The team in whose half play is taking place.

Directly caught: A ball caught without first touching anyone else or the ground.

Drop-kick: After being intentionally dropped to the ground from the hand or hands, the ball is kicked as it rises from its first bounce.

F

Field of play: The area between the goal lines and the touch lines. Those lines are not part of the field of play.

Flying wedge: An illegal type of attack, which usually happens near the goal line, when the attacking team is awarded a penalty or free-kick. The kicker taps 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 before engaging the opposition. Often one or more of these team-mates is in front of the ball-carrier.

Forward: Towards the opposition's dead-ball line.

Foul play: Anything a player does within the playing enclosure that is contrary to Law 9 governing obstruction, unfair play, repeated infringements, dangerous play and misconduct.

Free-kick: Awarded against a team for an infringement or to a team for a mark.

G

Goal: The ball is place-kicked or drop-kicked over the opponents' cross-bar from the field of play.

Goal line: The line at either end (and not part) of the field of play.

The ground: The total area shown in the ground diagram in Law 1.

H

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

Hand-off: A permitted action, taken by a ball-carrier to fend off an opponent, using the palm of the hand.

Hindmost foot: The foot nearest a team's own goal line in a scrum, ruck or maul.

Holding the ball: Being in possession of the ball in the hand or hands or in the arm or arms.

I

In-goal: The area between the goal line and dead-ball line, and between the touch-in-goal lines. It includes the goal line but not the dead-ball line or the touch-in-goal lines. The goal posts and their surrounding padding are located in in-goal.

Infield: Within the playing area, away from the touchlines.

J

Jersey: A shirt worn on the upper half of the body and which is not attached to shorts or underwear.

K

Kick: An act made by intentionally 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: The method of starting each half of a match and at the beginning of each period of extra-time with a drop-kick.

Kicked directly into touch: The ball is kicked into touch without first landing on the playing area or touching a player or the referee.

Kicking tee: Any device approved by the match organiser to support the ball when taking a place-kick.

Knock-on: 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.

L

Line of touch: See mark of touch.

Line through the mark or place: Unless stated otherwise, a line parallel to the touchline.

Lineout: A lineout is a set piece consisting of a line of at least two players from each team waiting to receive a throw from touch.

Lineout players: The players in either line of a lineout.

M

Mark: A method of suspending play and winning a free-kick by directly catching an opponent's kick in the catcher's own 22 or in in-goal and shouting "mark".

Mark of touch: An imaginary line in the field of play at right angles to the touchline through the place where the ball is thrown in. The mark of touch cannot be within five metres of a goal line.

Match officials: Those who control the game, usually consisting of a referee and two assistant referees or touch judges but may also include a television match official and, in sevens, two in-goal judges.

Match organiser: Administrative body responsible for the match which may be World Rugby, a union, a group of unions or any organisation approved by a union or World Rugby.

Maul: A phase of play consisting of a ball-carrier and at least one player from each team, bound together and on their feet.

N

Near: Within one metre.

O

Obstruction: When a player attempting to play is illegally impeded and prevented from doing so.

Off feet: Players are off their feet when any other part of the body is supported by the ground or players on the ground.

Offside: A positional offence meaning a player can take no part in the game without being liable to sanction.

On feet: Players are on their feet if no other part of their body is supported by the ground or players on the ground.

Open play: The period after a kick-off, restart kick, free-kick, penalty or set piece and before the next phase, or the period between phases of play, excluding when the ball is dead.

P

Participating players at a lineout: These consist of lineout players, one receiver from each team (if present), the player who throws in and an immediate opponent.

Pass: A player throws or hands the ball to another player.

Penalty: Awarded against a team for a serious infringement.

Penalty try: Awarded when, in the opinion of the referee, a try probably would have been scored (or scored in a more advantageous position) if not for an act of foul play by an opponent.

Phase of play: Scrum, lineout, ruck or maul.

Place-kick: The ball is kicked after it has been placed on the ground (or on an approved kicking tee) for that purpose.

Placer: A player holding the ball for a team-mate to place kick.

Plane of touch: The vertical space rising immediately above the touch line or touch-in-goal line.

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

DEFINITIONS

Player grounded: See "off feet".

Players' clothing: Anything players wear which, to be legal, must conform to World Rugby Regulation 12.

Playing area: The field of play plus the in-goal areas. The touch lines, touch-in-goal lines and dead-ball lines are not part of the playing area.

Playing enclosure: The playing area plus a space around it, which is known as the perimeter area.

Playing time: Actual time, excluding time lost for stoppages (see actual time).

Possession: An individual or team in control of the ball or who are attempting to bring it under control.

Punt: A player intentionally drops the ball and kicks it before it touches the ground.

Q

Quick-throw: A throw from touch taken before the lineout is formed. The ball is thrown in by the team that would have thrown the ball into the lineout.

R

Receiver: The player in a position to receive the ball if it is knocked or passed back from a lineout.

Red card: The card shown by the referee to a player to indicate that the player has been permanently excluded from the match.

Replacement: A player who replaces a team-mate because of injury or for tactical reasons.

Restart kick: The method of restarting play with a drop-kick after a score or a touch-down.

Ruck: A phase of play where one or more players from each team, who are on their feet and in physical contact, close around the ball, which is on the ground.

Rucking: Legally using one's feet to try to win or keep possession of the ball in a ruck.

S

Sanction: The method by which the game is restarted following an infringement or stoppage.

Scrum: A set piece, normally consisting of eight players from each team bound together in formation.

Scrum zone: The area in the field of play where a scrum may take place.

Sent off: A player is shown a red card and is permanently excluded from the match.

Shorts: Trousers that start at the waist and end above the knees, have an elasticated waist band and/or draw string, and are not attached to the jersey or underwear.

Sin-bin: The designated place outside the playing area within which a temporarily suspended player must remain.

Stiff-arm tackle: An illegal tackle whereby a player uses a stiff arm to strike the ball-carrier.

T

Tackle: The method of holding a ball-carrier and bringing that player to ground.

Tackled player: A ball-carrier who is held and taken to ground by a tackler or tacklers.

Tackler: An opposition player who holds the tackled player and goes to ground.

Team: A group of players, usually 15, who start the match plus any authorised replacements.

Team-mate: Another player of the same team.

Temporarily suspended: Excluded from the game for a specified period of playing time, usually 10 minutes.

Throw forward: When a player throws or passes the ball forward i.e. if the arms of the player passing the ball move forward.

Touch: The area alongside the field of play that includes the touchlines and beyond.

Touch-in-goal: The area alongside the in-goal area that includes the touch-in-goal lines and beyond.

U

Uncontested scrum: A scrum in which the team throwing-in gains possession without contest, with neither team being allowed to push from the mark.

Underwear: An undergarment, that covers the body from the waist, having short or no legs, ending above the knees, and is worn next to the skin or under clothing, and is not attached to the jersey or shorts.

Union: A body, approved by World Rugby, responsible for the organising and playing of games within a specific geographical area.

Y

Yellow card: The card shown by the referee to a player to indicate that the player has been cautioned and temporarily suspended.

Laws of the game

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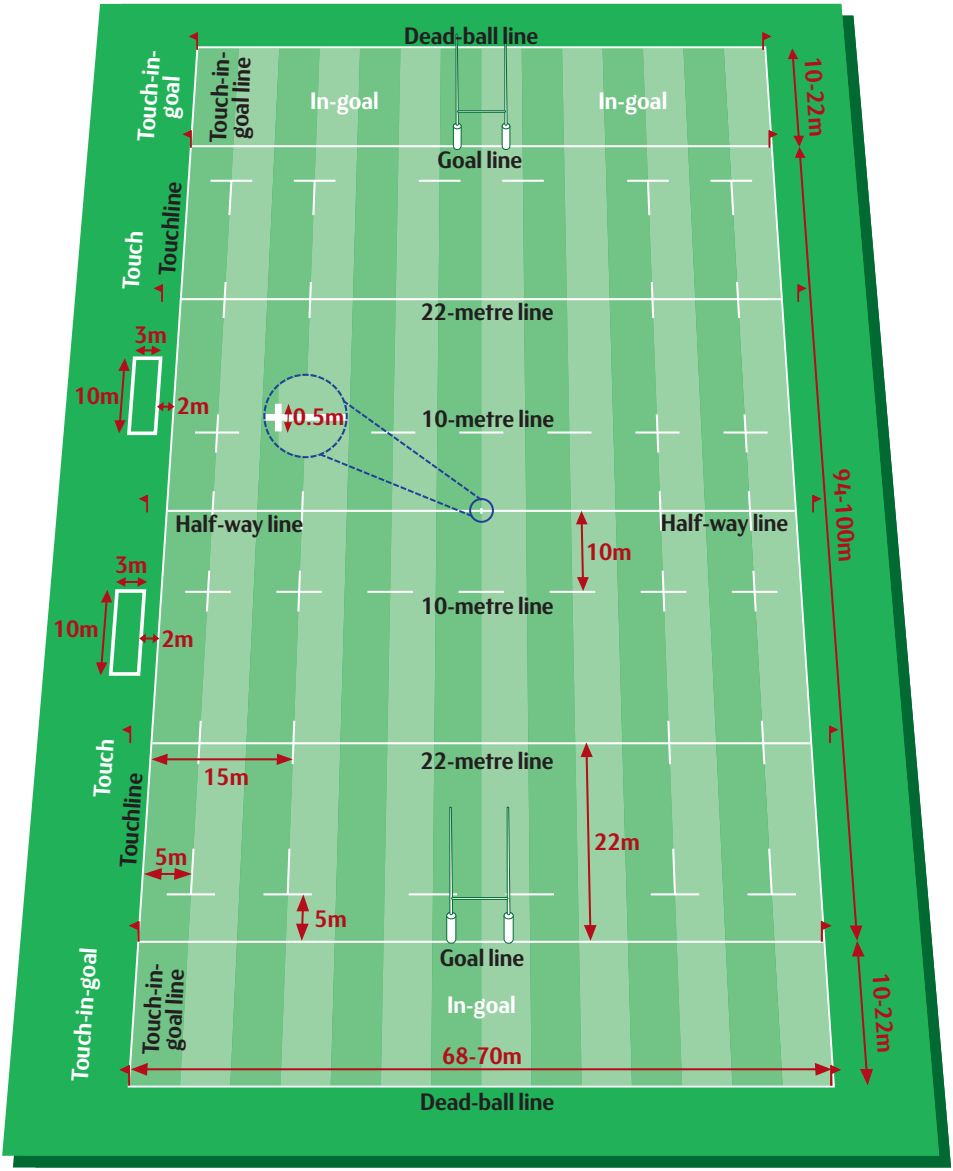

Dead-ball line
Touch-in-goal
Touch-in-goal line
In-goal
In-goal
10-22m
Goal line
Touch
Touchline
22-metre line
3m
10m
2m
0.5m
10-metre line
94-100m
Half-way line
Half-way line
10m
3m
10m
2m
10-metre line
Touch
Touchline
22-metre line
15m
22m
5m
5m
Goal line
Touch-in-goal
Touch-in-goal line
In-goal
10-22m
68-70m
Dead-ball line

The ground

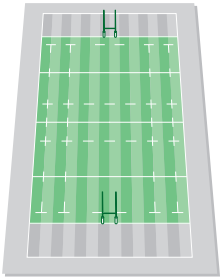
LAW 1 The ground

1. The playing surface must be safe.
2. The permitted surface types are grass, sand, clay, snow or artificial turf (conforming to World Rugby Regulation 22).
3. The dimensions of the playing area shown in the ground diagram.

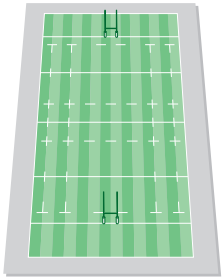
Dimensions	Field of play length	In-goal length	Width
Maximum (metres)	100	22	70
Minimum (metres)	94	6	68

a. The playing area is rectangular in shape.

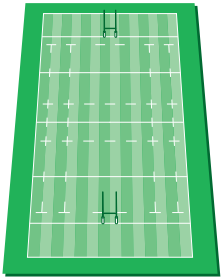
b. Any variations to these dimensions must be approved by the relevant union for domestic competitions or World Rugby for international matches.



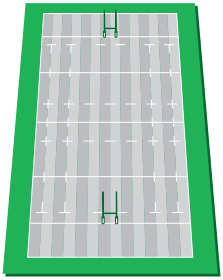
Field of play



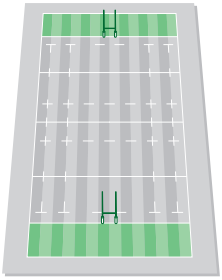
Playing area



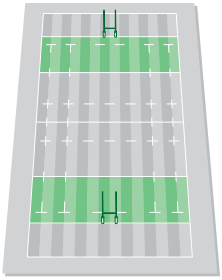
Playing enclosure



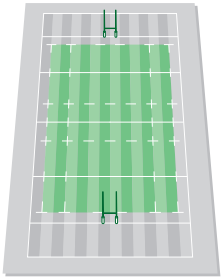
Perimeter area



In-goal



22



Scrum zone

c. Where the length of the field of play is less than 100 metres, the distance between the 10-metre lines and 22-metre lines is reduced accordingly.

d. Where the width of the playing area is less than 70 metres, the distance between the 15-metre lines is reduced accordingly.

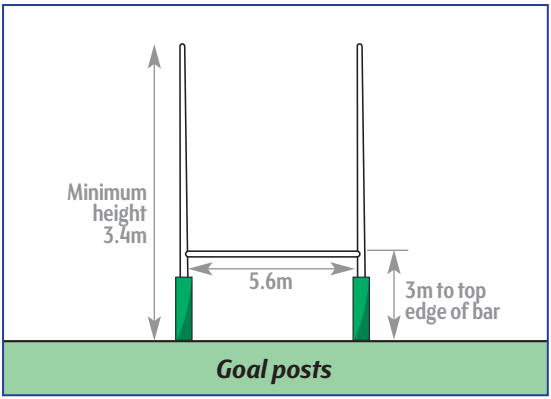
e. The perimeter area should not be less than five metres wide where practicable.

LINES

4. There are solid lines configured as shown in the ground diagram. The solid lines are on:
   a. The dead-ball lines and touch-in-goal lines.
   b. The goal lines.
   c. The 22-metre lines.
   d. The half-way line.
   e. The touchlines.
5. There are dash lines configured as shown in the ground diagram. Each dash within a dash line is five metres in length. There are dash lines:
   a. Five metres from, and parallel to each touchline.
   b. 15 metres from, and parallel to, each touchline.
   c. 10 metres from, and parallel to, each side of the half-way line.
   d. Five metres from, and parallel to, each goal line.
6. There is one line 0.5 metres long that intersects the centre of the half-way line.

GOAL POSTS AND CROSSBAR

7. When padding is attached to the goal posts the distance from the goal line to the external edge of the padding must not exceed 0.3 metres.



FLAG POSTS

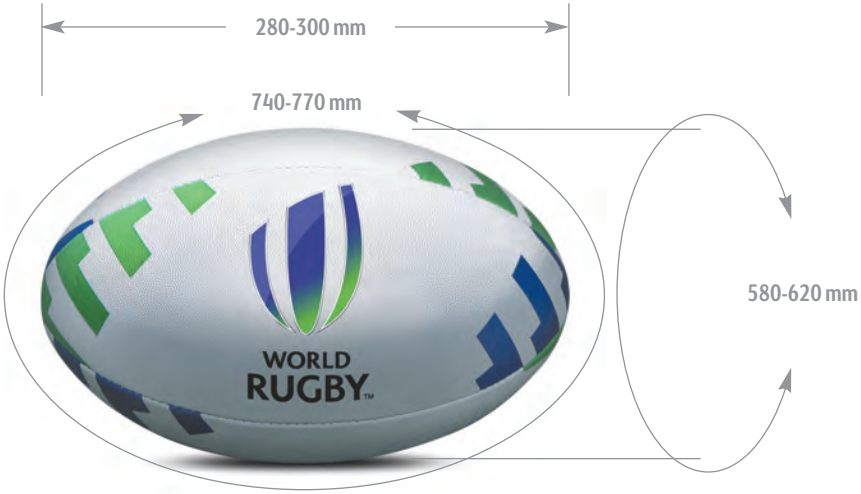
8. There are 14 flag posts with flags, each with a minimum height of 1.2 metres.
9. One flag post is positioned at each intersection of the touch-in-goal lines and the goal lines and one at each intersection of the touch-in-goal lines and the dead-ball lines (eight flag posts in total).
10. One flag post is positioned in line with the 22-metre line and the half-way line on each side of the pitch, two metres outside the touchlines and within the playing enclosure (six flag posts in total).

OBJECTIONS TO THE GROUND

11. Teams must inform the referee of any objections before the match starts.
12. The referee will attempt to resolve the issues and will not start a match if any part of the ground is considered to be unsafe.

LAW 2 Ball

1. The ball is oval and made of four panels.
2. It has dimensions as shown here:



3. It weighs 410-460 grams.
4. Smaller balls may be used for matches between young players.
5. The ball is made of leather or a suitable synthetic material. It may be treated to make it water resistant and easier to grip.
6. Its air pressure at the start of play is 65.71-68.75 kilopascals, 0.67-0.70 kilograms per square centimetre or 9.5-10.0 pounds per square inch.
7. Spare balls may be available during a match.

LAW 3 Team

NUMBERS

1. Each team has no more than 15 players in the playing area during play.
2. A match organiser may authorise matches to be played with fewer than 15 players in each team.
3. A team may make an objection to the referee about the number of players in their opponents' team. If a team has too many players, the referee orders the captain of that team to reduce the number appropriately. The score at the time of the objection remains unaltered. **Sanction:** Penalty.
4. For international matches, a union may nominate up to eight replacements.
5. For other matches, the match organiser decides how many replacements may be nominated, up to a maximum of eight.
6. Replacements are made only when the ball is dead and only with the permission of the referee.
7. If a player re-joins or a replacement joins the match without the referee's permission and the referee believes the player did so to gain an advantage, the player is guilty of misconduct. **Sanction:** Penalty.
8. The table indicates the minimum number of front-row players by squad size and the minimum replacement obligations. A match organiser may, having taken player welfare into account, amend the minimum number of front-row players in the squad and the minimum replacement obligations at defined levels of the game.

Squad size	Minimum number of front row players in the squad	Must be able to replace at the first time of asking
15 or fewer	3	-
16, 17 or 18	4	Either a prop or a hooker
19, 20, 21 or 22	5	Both a prop and a hooker
23	6	Loose-head prop, tight-head prop and hooker

9. Where the match organiser has determined squad sizes of 23 and a team is able to nominate only two front-row replacements, then that team may nominate only 22 players in their squad.
10. Prior to the match, each team must advise the appropriate match official of their front-row players and possible front-row replacements and which position(s) in the front row they can play. Only these players may play in the front row when the scrum is contested and only in their designated position(s).
11. A replacement front-row player may start the match in another position.
12. It is a team's responsibility to ensure that all front-row players and front-row replacements are suitably trained and experienced.

UNCONTESTED SCRUMS

13. Scrums will become uncontested if either team cannot field a suitably trained front row or if the referee so orders.
14. A match organiser may stipulate the conditions under which a game may start with uncontested scrums.
15. Uncontested scrums as a result of a sending off, temporary suspension or injury must be played with eight players per side.
16. When a front-row player leaves the playing area, whether through injury or temporary or permanent suspension, the referee enquires at that time whether the team can continue with contested scrums. If the referee is informed that the team will not be able to contest the scrum, then the referee orders uncontested scrums. If the player returns or another front-row player comes on, then contested scrums may resume.
17. In a squad of 23 players or at the discretion of the match organiser, a player whose departure has caused the referee to order uncontested scrums cannot be replaced.
18. Only when no replacement front-row player is available is any other player permitted to play in the front row.

19. If a front-row player is temporarily suspended, and the team cannot continue with contested scrums with players already on the field, then the team nominates another player to leave the playing area to enable an available front-row player to come on. The nominated player may not return until the period of suspension ends, or to act as a replacement.

20. If a front-row player is sent off, and the team cannot continue with contested scrums with players already on the field, then the team nominates another player to leave the playing area to enable an available front-row player to come on. The nominated player may act as a replacement.

PERMANENT REPLACEMENT

21. A player may be replaced if injured. An injured player may not return once replaced.

22. A player is deemed to be injured if:
    a. At national representative level, it is the opinion of a doctor that it would be inadvisable for the player to continue.
    b. In other matches, where a match organiser has given explicit permission, it is the opinion of a medically trained person that it would be inadvisable for the player to continue. If none is present, that player may be replaced if the referee agrees.
    c. The referee decides (with or without medical advice) that it would be inadvisable for the player to continue. The referee orders that player to leave the playing area.

23. The referee may also order an injured player to leave the playing area to be medically examined.

PERMANENT REPLACEMENT - RECOGNISE AND REMOVE

24. If, at any point during a match, a player is concussed or has suspected concussion, that player must be immediately and permanently removed from the playing area. This process is known as “Recognise and Remove”.

TEMPORARY REPLACEMENT - BLOOD INJURY

25. When a player has a blood injury, that player leaves the field of play and may be temporarily replaced. The injured player returns to play as soon as the bleeding has been controlled and/or covered. If the player is not available to return to the field of play within 15 minutes (actual time) of leaving the playing area, the replacement becomes permanent.

26. In international matches, the match-day doctor decides whether an injury is a blood injury necessitating a temporary replacement.

TEMPORARY REPLACEMENT - HEAD INJURY ASSESSMENT (HIA)

27. In elite adult matches, which have been approved in advance by World Rugby (pursuant to Regulations 10.1.4 and 10.1.5) for use of the HIA process, a player who requires an HIA:
    a. Leaves the field of play; and
    b. Is temporarily replaced (even if all the replacements have been used). If the player is not available to return to the field of play after 10 minutes (actual time) of leaving the playing area, the replacement becomes permanent.

TEMPORARY REPLACEMENTS - ALL

28. A temporary replacement can be temporarily replaced (even if all replacements have been used).

29. If a temporary replacement is injured, that player may also be replaced.

30. If a temporary replacement is sent off, the originally replaced player is not permitted to return to the playing area, except to comply Law 3.18 or 3.19, and only if the player has been medically cleared to do so and does so within the required time of leaving the field of play.

31. If the temporary replacement is temporarily suspended, the replaced player is not permitted to return to the field of play until after the period of suspension, except to comply with Law 3.18 or 3.19, and only if the player has been medically cleared to do so and does so within the required time of leaving the field of play.

32. If the time allowed for a temporary replacement elapses during half-time, the replacement shall become permanent unless the replaced player returns to the field of play immediately at the start of the second half.

TACTICAL REPLACEMENTS JOINING THE MATCH

33. Tactically replaced players may return to play only when replacing:
    a. An injured front-row player.
    b. A player with a blood injury.
    c. A player undertaking an HIA.
    d. A player who has just been injured as a result of foul play (as verified by the match officials).
    e. The nominated player described in Law 3.18 or 3.19.

ROLLING REPLACEMENTS

34. A match organiser may implement rolling tactical replacements at defined levels of the game within its jurisdiction. The number of interchanges must not exceed 12. The administration and rules relating to rolling replacements are the responsibility of the match organiser.

LAW 4 Players' clothing

1. All items of clothing must comply with World Rugby Regulation 12.
2. A player wears a jersey, shorts and underwear, socks and boots. The sleeve of a jersey must extend at least half-way from the shoulder point to the elbow.
3. Additional items are permitted. These are:
    a. Washable supports made of elasticated or compressible materials.
    b. Shin guards.
    c. 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. Mitts (fingerless gloves).
    e. Shoulder pads.
    f. Mouth guard or dental protector.
    g. Headgear.
    h. Bandages, dressings, thin tape or other similar material.
    i. Goggles (global law trial).
    j. Studs, including those of moulded rubber, on the soles of their boots.
4. In addition, women may wear:
    a. Chest pads.
    b. Cotton blend long tights, with single inside leg seam under their shorts and socks.
    c. Headscarves, providing they do not cause a danger to the wearer or other players.
5. A player may not wear:
    a. Any item contaminated by blood.
    b. Any sharp or abrasive item.
    c. Any items containing buckles, clips, rings, hinges, zippers, screws, bolts or rigid material or projection not otherwise permitted under this law.
    d. Jewellery.
    e. Gloves.
    f. Shorts with padding sewn into them.
    g. Any item that is normally permitted in law but, in the referee's opinion, is liable to cause injury.
    h. Communication devices.

6. The referee has the power to decide at any time that part of a player's clothing is dangerous or illegal. In this case, the referee must order the player to remove the item. The player must not take part in the match until the item is removed or rendered harmless.
7. If, at an inspection before the match, a match official 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. **Sanction:** Penalty.
8. The referee must not allow any player to leave the playing area to change items of clothing, unless they are bloodstained.

World Rugby Regulation 12 can be found at: **http://playerwelfare.worldrugby.org/reg12**

LAW 5 Time

1. A match lasts no longer than 80 minutes (split into two halves, each of not more than 40 minutes plus time lost), unless the match organiser has authorised the playing of extra-time in a drawn match within a knock-out competition.
2. Half-time consists of an interval not exceeding 15 minutes as decided by the match organiser. During this time, the teams and match officials may leave the playing enclosure.
3. In non-international matches, the match organiser may decide to reduce the length of a match. If the match organiser does not decide, the teams agree on the length of a match. If they cannot agree, the referee decides.
4. The referee keeps the time but may delegate the duty to either or both assistant referees and/or an official time-keeper, in which case the referee signals to them any stoppage. 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 assistant referees and may consult others but only if the assistant referees cannot help.
5. The referee may stop play and allow time for:
    a. Player injury for up to one minute. If a player is seriously injured, the referee has the discretion to allow more than one minute for that player to be removed from the playing area.
    b. Consultation with other officials.
6. Once the ball is already dead, the referee may allow time for:
    a. Replacement of players.
    b. Replacing or repairing players' clothing.
    c. Re-tying a boot-lace.
    d. Retrieving the ball.
7. A half ends when the ball becomes dead after time has expired unless:
    a. A scrum, lineout or restart kick following a try or touchdown, awarded before time expired, has not been completed and the ball has not returned to open play. This includes when the scrum, lineout or restart kick is taken incorrectly.
    b. The referee awards a free-kick or penalty.
    c. A penalty is kicked directly to touch without the ball first being tapped and without the ball touching another player.
    d. A try has been scored, in which case the referee allows time for the conversion to be taken.

8. A team scoring a try may attempt the conversion or may decline it.
    a. The decision to decline the conversion must be relayed by the try scorer to the referee by saying "no kick" after the try is awarded.
    b. Provided the conversion is attempted or declined before time elapses, the referee will award a restart kick.
    c. If the conversion is attempted, time is taken from the strike on the ball.
9. When weather conditions are exceptionally hot and/or humid, the referee has the discretion to allow for a water break. This one-minute break should be taken midway through the half, after a score or when the ball is dead near the half-way line.
10. The referee has the power to end or suspend the match at any time if the referee believes that it would be unsafe to continue.

LAW 6 Match officials

PRINCIPLE

Every match is under the control of match officials who consist of the referee and two touch judges or assistant referees. Additional persons, as authorised by the match organisers may include the reserve referee and/or reserve assistant referee, the television match official, the time-keeper, the match doctor, the team doctors, the non-playing members of the teams and the ball persons.

Assistant referees and touch judges are responsible for signalling touch, touch in-goal and the success or otherwise of kicks at goal. In addition, assistant referees provide assistance as the referee directs, including the reporting of foul play.

APPOINTMENT OF THE REFEREE

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

DUTIES OF THE REFEREE BEFORE THE MATCH

3. The referee organises the toss. One of the captains tosses a coin and the other captain calls. 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.
4. The match officials must inspect the players' clothing and studs for conformity to Law 4.

DUTIES OF THE REFEREE DURING A MATCH

5. Within the playing enclosure:
   a. The referee is the sole judge of fact and of law during a match. The referee must apply the laws of the game fairly in every match.
   b. The referee keeps the time. However, the match organiser may appoint a time-keeper who will signify the end of each half.
   c. The referee keeps the score.
6. The referee permits access to the playing area for players and replacements, when it is safe to do so.
7. The referee gives permission for players to leave the playing area.

THE WHISTLE

8. The referee carries a whistle and blows it:
   a. To indicate the beginning and the end of each half of the match.
   b. To stop play. The referee has the power to stop play at any time.
   c. To indicate a score or a touch down.
   d. To caution or send off an offender and a second time when the penalty or penalty try is awarded.
   e. When the ball becomes dead, other than after a failed conversion kick.
   f. When the ball becomes unplayable.
   g. When a penalty, free-kick or scrum is awarded.
   h. When it would be dangerous to let play continue or when it is suspected that a player is seriously injured.

THE BALL BECOMES DEAD

9. The referee will deem the ball to be dead when:
   a. The ball is in touch or touch in-goal.
   b. The ball is grounded in in-goal.
   c. A conversion has been attempted.
   d. A try, penalty or dropped goal has been scored.
   e. The ball or ball-carrier touches the dead-ball line or anything beyond it.
   f. The ball hits anything above the playing area.

THE BALL OR BALL-CARRIER TOUCHES THE REFEREE OR NON-PLAYER

10. If the ball or the ball-carrier touches the referee or other non-player and neither team gains an advantage, play continues. If either team gains an advantage in the field of play, a scrum is awarded to the team that last played the ball.

11. If the ball-carrier touches the referee or other non-player in in-goal and either team gains an advantage:
   a. If the ball is in possession of an attacking player, the referee awards a try where the contact took place.
   b. If the ball is in possession of a defending player, the referee awards a touch down where the contact took place.

12. If the ball is touched by the referee or other non-player in in-goal, the referee judges what would have happened next and awards a try or a touch down at the place where the contact took place.

INTERACTION BETWEEN THE REFEREE AND ASSISTANT REFEREES / TOUCH JUDGES

13. The referee may consult with assistant referees about matters relating to their duties, the law relating to foul play and timekeeping, and may request assistance related to other aspects of the referee's duties.

14. The referee may alter a decision after a touch judge or an assistant referee has raised the flag to signal touch, touch-in-goal or an assistant referee has signalled foul play.

TELEVISION MATCH OFFICIAL / GLOBAL LAW TRIAL

15. A match organiser may appoint a television match official (TMO), who uses technological devices to clarify situations relating to:
    a. The grounding of the ball in in-goal.
    b. Touch or touch-in-goal in the act of grounding the ball or the ball being made dead.
    c. Where there is doubt as to whether a kick at goal has been successful.
    d. Where match officials believe an infringement may have occurred in the playing area leading to a try or preventing a try.
    e. Foul play, including sanctions.
16. Any of the match officials, including the TMO, may recommend a review by the TMO. The reviews will take place in accordance with the TMO protocol which is available at **http://laws.worldrugby.org**

DUTIES OF THE REFEREE AFTER A MATCH

17. The referee communicates the score to the teams and to the match organiser.
18. If a player was sent off, the referee gives the match organiser a written report on the foul play infringement as soon as possible.

APPOINTING AND CONTROLLING ASSISTANT REFEREES AND TOUCH JUDGES

19. There are two assistant referees or 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.
20. The match organiser may nominate a person to act as a replacement for the assistant referees or touch judges. This person is called the reserve touch judge or reserve assistant referee and is situated in the perimeter area.
21. The referee has control over the assistant referees or 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 the power to send the touch judge off and make a report to the match organiser.

DURING THE MATCH

22. There is one assistant referee or touch judge on each side of the ground. The assistant referee or touch judge remains in touch except when judging a kick at goal. When judging a kick at goal they stand in in-goal, behind the goal posts.

23. An assistant referee may enter the playing area to report foul play. This may be done only at the next stoppage in play and when the referee allows.

SIGNALS

24. Each assistant referee or touch judge carries a flag or something similar with which to signal decisions.

25. Signalling the result of kicks at goal: One assistant referee or touch judge stands at or behind each goal post. If the ball goes over the crossbar and between the posts, they raise the flags to indicate a goal.

26. Signalling touch:
    a. When the ball or the ball-carrier has gone into touch or touch-in-goal, the assistant referee or touch judge holds up the flag.
    b. The assistant referee or touch judge stands at the place of the throw and points to the team entitled to throw in.
    c. When the ball is thrown in, the assistant referee or touch judge lowers the flag, with the following exceptions:
        i. When the player throwing in puts any part of either foot in the field of play.
        ii. When the team not entitled to throw in has done so.
        iii. When, at a quick throw, the ball that went into touch is replaced by another ball or, after it went into touch, it was touched by anyone except the ball-carrier who took it into touch or the player who takes the throw.
    d. It is for the referee, and not the assistant referee or touch judge, to decide whether the ball was thrown in from the correct place.

27. Signalling foul play:
    a. A match organiser may give authority to the assistant referee to signal for foul play.
    b. An assistant referee signals that foul play or misconduct has been seen by holding the flag horizontally and pointing infield at right angles to the touchline.
    c. If an assistant referee signals foul play, the assistant referee stays in touch and continues to carry out all the other duties until the next stoppage in play.
    d. At the invitation of the referee the assistant referee may then enter the playing area to report the offence to the referee. The referee will then take appropriate action.
    e. If an assistant referee's verbal report to the referee leads to a player being sent off, the assistant referee submits a written report about the incident to the referee as soon as possible after the match and the referee provides it to the match organiser.

ADDITIONAL PERSONS

28. Medically trained persons (only qualified doctors or physiotherapists) may enter the playing area to attend to injured players any time it is safe to do so.

29. The following may enter the playing area without the referee's permission, provided they do not interfere with play or make any comments to the match officials:
    a. Water-carriers during a stoppage in play for an injury to a player or when a try has been scored.
    b. A person carrying a kicking tee after a team has indicated they intend to kick at goal or a try has been scored.
    c. The coaches attending to their teams at half-time.

30. The management of replacements may be delegated to sideline managers appointed by the match organiser. Information relating to sideline management can be found at: **http://officiating.worldrugby.org**

LAW 7 Advantage

PRINCIPLE

If a team gains an advantage following an infringement by their opponents, the referee may allow play to continue in an effort to keep the game flowing.

1. Advantage:
   a. May be tactical. The non-offending team is free to play the ball as they wish.
   b. May be territorial. Play has moved towards the offending team's dead-ball line.
   c. May be a combination of tactical and territorial.
   d. Must be clear and real. A mere opportunity to gain an advantage is not sufficient.
2. Advantage ends when:
   a. The referee deems that the non-offending team has gained an advantage. The referee allows play to continue; or
   b. The referee deems that the non-offending team is unlikely to gain an advantage. The referee stops the game and applies the sanction for the infringement from which advantage was being played; or
   c. The non-offending team commits an infringement before they have gained an advantage. The referee stops the game and applies the sanction for the first infringement. If either or both infringements are for foul play, the referee applies the appropriate sanction(s) for the offence(s); or
   d. The offending team commits a second or subsequent infringement from which no advantage can be gained. The referee stops play and allows the captain of the non-offending team to choose the most advantageous sanction.

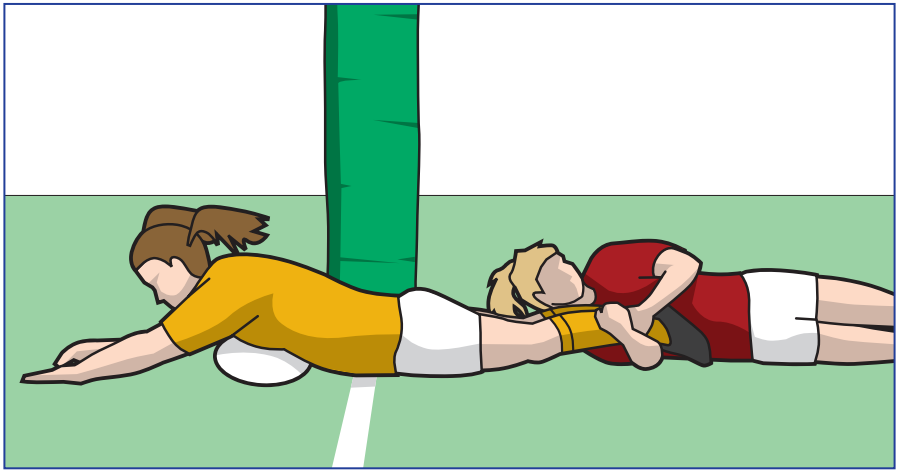
3. Advantage must not be applied and the referee must blow the whistle immediately when:
    a. The ball or a player in possession of the ball, touches the referee and an advantage is gained by either side.
    b. The ball comes out of either end of the tunnel at a scrum.
    c. A scrum is wheeled through more than 90 degrees.
    d. A player in a scrum is lifted or forced upwards so that the player is no longer in contact with the ground.
    e. A quick throw, free-kick or penalty is taken incorrectly.
    f. The ball is made dead.
    g. It would be dangerous to let play continue.
    h. It is suspected that a player is seriously injured.

LAW 8 Scoring

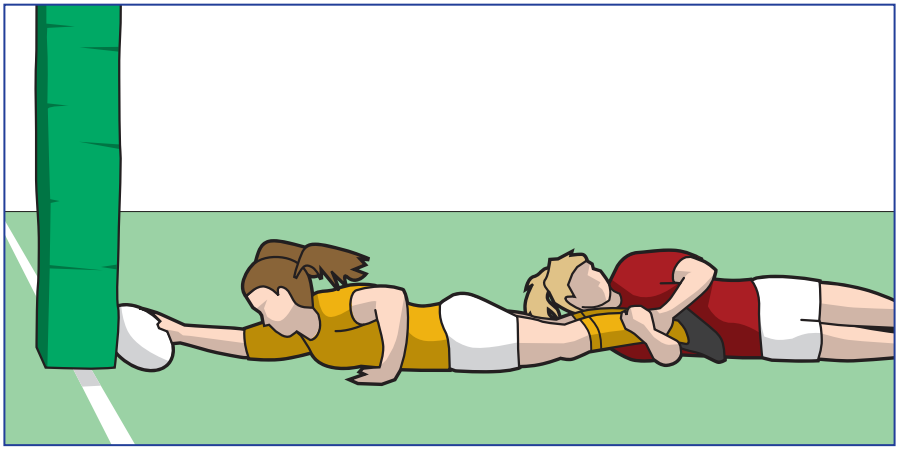
1. Methods and points value of scoring:
   a. Try. **Five points.**
   b. Conversion. **Two points.**
   c. Penalty try. **Seven points.**
   d. Penalty goal. **Three points.**
   e. Dropped goal. **Three points.**

TRY

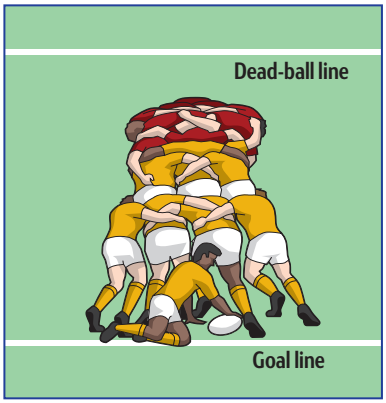
2. A try is scored when an attacking player:
   a. Is first to ground the ball in the opponents' in-goal, against the opponents' goal post or its surrounding padding.
   b. Is first to ground the ball when a scrum, ruck or maul reaches the goal line.
   c. With the ball is tackled short of the goal line and the player's momentum carries them in a continuous movement along the ground into the opponents' in-goal, and the player is first to ground the ball.
   d. Is tackled near to the opponents' goal line and the player immediately reaches out and grounds the ball.
   e. Who is in touch or touch-in-goal, grounds the ball in the opponents' in-goal provided the player is not holding the ball.



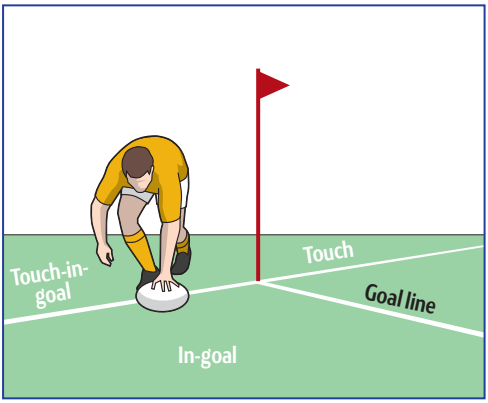
Grounding the ball



Scoring a try - grounded against the goal post



Scoring a try - when a scrum reaches the goal line



Scoring a try - a player in touch-in-goal who is not holding the ball

LAW 8 Scoring

PENALTY TRY

3. A penalty try is awarded between the goal posts if foul play by the opposing team prevents a probable try from being scored, or scored in a more advantageous position. A player guilty of this must be cautioned and temporarily suspended or sent off. No conversion is attempted.

CONVERSION, PENALTY GOAL AND DROPPED GOAL

4. For any goal to be successful, the ball must be kicked over the crossbar and between the goal posts without first touching a team-mate or the ground.
5. If the ball goes over the crossbar and over the height of the goal posts, the kick is successful if it is deemed that the ball would have gone between the goal posts had they been taller.
6. If the ball has crossed the crossbar and the wind blows it back into the field of play, the score stands.

CONVERSION

7. When a try is scored, it gives that team the right to attempt a conversion, which may be a place-kick or drop-kick.
8. The kicker:
    a. Uses the ball that was in play unless it is defective.
    b. Takes the kick in the field of play on a line through the place where the try was awarded, parallel to the touchlines.
    c. Places the ball directly on the ground or on sand, sawdust, or a kicking tee. The kicker may be assisted by a placer. Nothing else may be used to assist the kicker.
    d. Takes the kick within 90 seconds (playing time) from the time the try was awarded, even if the ball rolls over and has to be placed again.
    Sanction: Kick is disallowed.
9. The kicker's team, apart from a team-mate holding the ball, stay behind the ball when it is kicked and do nothing to mislead their opponents into charging too soon.
Sanction: Kick is disallowed.

10. If the ball falls over before the kicker begins the approach to kick, the referee permits the kicker to replace it. While the ball is replaced, the opponents remain behind their goal line.
11. If the ball falls over after the kicker begins the approach to kick, the kicker may then kick or attempt a dropped goal.
12. If the ball falls over and rolls away from the line through the place where the try was awarded and the kicker then kicks the ball over the crossbar, the conversion is successful.
13. If the ball falls over and rolls into touch after the kicker begins the approach to kick, the kick is disallowed.

THE OPPOSING TEAM AT A CONVERSION

14. All opposing players retire to their goal line and do not overstep that line until the kicker begins the approach 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.
15. The team must not shout during a conversion attempt.

Sanction: If the opposing team at a conversion attempt infringes but the kick is successful, the goal stands. If the kick is unsuccessful, the kicker retakes the conversion 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.

16. If the ball falls over after the kicker begins the approach to kick, the opponents may continue to charge.
17. If the opposition touches the ball and the kick is successful, the goal stands.

LAW 8 Scoring

PENALTY GOAL

18. A penalty goal can be scored only from a penalty.

19. The kicking team must indicate their intention to kick for goal without delay.

20. If the team indicates to the referee the intention to kick at goal, they must kick at goal. The intention to kick can be communicated to the referee or signalled by the arrival of the kicking tee or sand, or when the player makes a mark on the ground.

21. The kick must be taken within 60 seconds (playing time) from the time the team indicated their intention to do so, even if the ball rolls over and has to be placed again. **Sanction:** Kick is disallowed and a scrum is awarded.

22. 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.

23. If the kicker has not indicated an intention to kick at goal but takes a drop-kick and scores a goal, the goal stands.

24. The kicker places the ball directly on the ground or on sand, sawdust, or a kicking tee. The kicker may be assisted by a placer. Nothing else may be used to assist the kicker. **Sanction:** Scrum.

25. Any player who intentionally touches the ball in an attempt to prevent a penalty goal being scored is illegally touching the ball.

26. A defending player must not shout during a penalty kick at goal.

27. If the opposing team infringes while the kick is being taken but the kick at goal is successful, the goal stands and a further penalty is not awarded. If the kick is unsuccessful, the non-offending team is awarded a penalty 10 metres in front of the original mark. **Sanction:** Penalty.

DROPPED GOAL

28. A player scores a dropped goal by kicking a goal from a drop-kick in open play.

29. The team awarded a free-kick (including where they opt for a scrum or lineout instead) cannot score a dropped goal until the ball next becomes dead or until an opponent has played the ball, has touched it or has tackled the ball-carrier. Any such kick is deemed to be unsuccessful and play continues.

LAW 9 Foul play

PRINCIPLE

A player who commits foul play must either be cautioned or temporarily suspended or sent off.

OBSTRUCTION

1. When a player and an opponent are running for the ball, neither player may charge or push the other except shoulder-to-shoulder.
2. An offside player must not intentionally obstruct an opponent or interfere with play.
3. A player must not intentionally prevent an opponent from tackling or attempting to tackle the ball-carrier.
4. A player must not intentionally prevent an opponent from having the opportunity to play the ball, other than by competing for possession.
5. A ball-carrier must not intentionally run into an off-side team-mate to obstruct the opposition.
6. A player must not obstruct, or in any way interfere with an opponent while the ball is dead.

Sanction: Penalty.

UNFAIR PLAY

7. A player must not:
    a. Intentionally infringe any law of the game.
    b. Intentionally knock, place, push or throw the ball with arm or hand from the playing area.
    c. Do anything that may lead the match officials to consider that an opponent has committed an infringement.

Sanction: Penalty.

    d. Waste time. **Sanction:** Free-kick.

LAW 9 Foul play

REPEATED INFRINGEMENTS

8. A team must not repeatedly commit the same offence.

9. A player must not repeatedly infringe the laws.

Sanction: Penalty.

10. When different players of the same team repeatedly commit the same offence, the referee gives a general caution to the team and if they then repeat the offence, the referee temporarily suspends the guilty player(s).

DANGEROUS PLAY

11. Players must not do anything that is reckless or dangerous to others.

12. A player must not physically or verbally abuse anyone. Physical abuse includes, but is not limited to, biting, punching, contact with the eye or eye area, striking with any part of the arm (including stiff-arm tackles), shoulder, head or knee(s), stamping, trampling, tripping or kicking.

13. A player must not tackle an opponent early, late or dangerously. Dangerous tackling includes, but is not limited to, tackling or attempting to tackle an opponent above the line of the shoulders even if the tackle starts below the line of the shoulders.

14. A player must not tackle an opponent who is not in possession of the ball.

15. Except in a scrum, ruck or maul, a player who is not in possession of the ball must not hold, push, charge or obstruct an opponent not in possession of the ball.

16. A player must not charge or knock down an opponent carrying the ball without attempting to grasp that player.

17. A player must not tackle, charge, pull, push or grasp an opponent whose feet are off the ground.

18. A player must not lift an opponent off the ground and drop or drive that player so that their head and/or upper body make contact with the ground.

19. Dangerous play in a scrum.
    a. The front row of a scrum must not form at a distance from its opponents and rush against them.
    b. A front-row player must not pull an opponent.
    c. A front-row player must not intentionally lift an opponent off their feet or force the opponent upwards out of the scrum.
    d. A front-row player must not intentionally collapse a scrum.
20. Dangerous play in a ruck or maul.
    a. A player must not charge into a ruck or maul. Charging includes any contact made without binding onto another player in the ruck or maul.
    b. A player must not make contact with an opponent above the line of the shoulders.
    c. A player must not intentionally collapse a ruck or a maul.
21. A player must not retaliate.
22. Teams must not use the 'cavalry charge' or 'flying wedge'.
23. A player must not attempt to kick the ball from the hands of the ball-carrier.
24. A ball-carrier is permitted to hand off an opponent provided excessive force is not used.

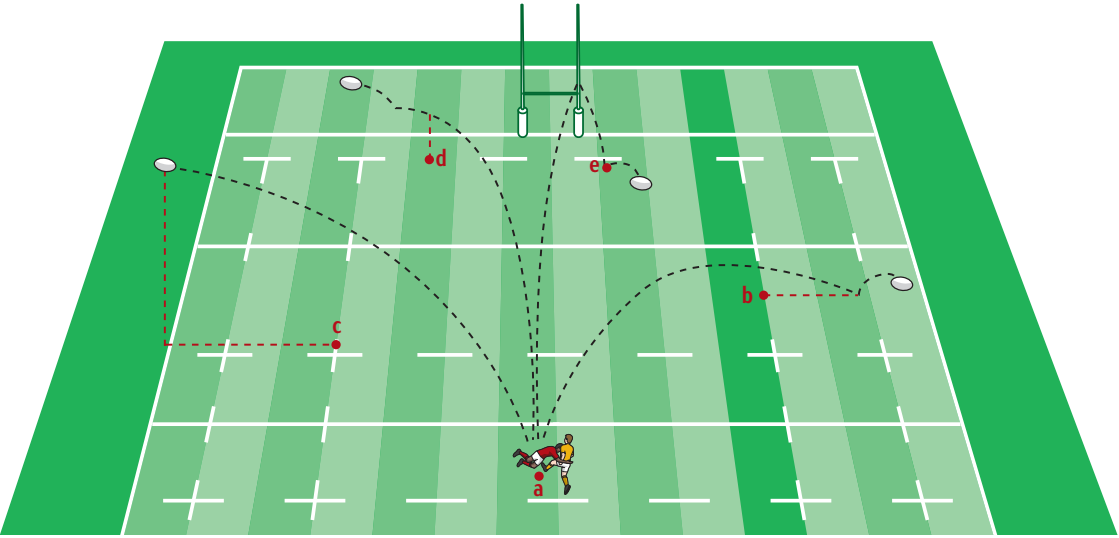
Sanction: Penalty.

25. A player must not intentionally charge or obstruct an opponent who has just kicked the ball.

Sanction: Penalty. The non-offending team chooses to take the penalty either:

- **a.** At the place of the infringement; or
- **b.** Where the ball lands or is next played but not nearer than 15 metres from the touchline; or
- **c.** If the ball is kicked directly into touch, on the 15-metre line in line with where the ball crossed the touchline; or
- **d.** If the ball lands in in-goal, touch-in-goal or on or over the dead-ball line, five metres from the goal line in line with where the ball crossed the goal line and at least 15 metres from the touchline; or
- **e.** If the ball hits a goal post or crossbar, where the ball lands.

26. In open play, any player may lift or support a player from the same team. Players who support or lift a teammate must lower the player to the ground safely as soon as the ball is won by a player of either team. **Sanction:** Free-kick.



Late charging the kicker

MISCONDUCT

26. A player must not do anything that is against the spirit of good sportsmanship.

27. Players must respect the authority of the referee. They must not dispute the referee's decisions. They must stop playing immediately when the referee blows the whistle to stop play.

Sanction: Penalty.

YELLOW AND RED CARDS

28. When a player is being cautioned and suspended for 10 minutes, the referee will show that player a yellow card. If that player later commits another yellow-card offence, the player must be sent off.

29. When a player is being sent off, the referee will show that player a red card and the player will take no further part in the match. A player sent off may not be replaced.

LAW 10 Offside and onside in open play

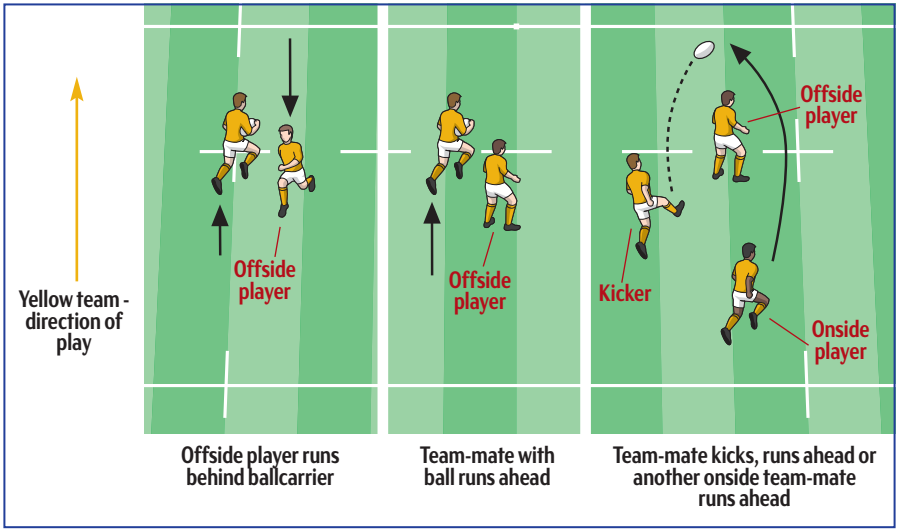
PRINCIPLE

The game is played only by players who are onside.

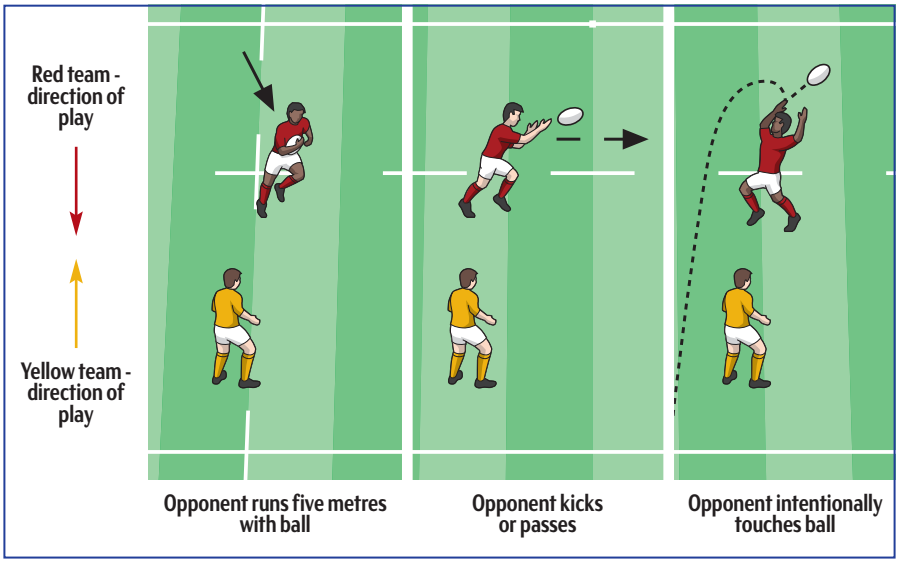
OFFSIDE AND ONSIDE IN OPEN PLAY

1. A player is offside in open play if that player is in front of a team-mate who is carrying the ball or who last played it. An offside player must not interfere with play. This includes:
    a. Playing the ball.
    b. Tackling the ball-carrier.
    c. Preventing the opposition from playing as they wish.
2. A player can be offside anywhere in the playing area.
3. A player who receives an unintentional throw forward is not offside.
4. An offside player may be penalised, if that player:
    a. Interferes with play; or
    b. Moves forwards towards the ball; or
    c. Was in front of a team-mate who kicked the ball and fails to retire immediately to an imaginary line across the field 10 metres on that player's side from where the ball is caught or lands, even if it hits a goal post or crossbar first. If this involves more than one player, then the player closest to where the ball lands or is caught is the one penalised. This is known as the 10-metre law and still applies if the ball touches or is played by an opponent but not when the kick is charged down.
    Sanction: The non-offending team can choose either:
        i. Penalty at the place of infringement; or
        ii. Scrum where the offending team last played the ball.
5. A player is accidentally offside if the player cannot avoid being touched by the ball or by a team-mate who is carrying the ball. Only if the offending team gains an advantage should play stop. **Sanction:** Scrum.

6. Other than under Law 10.4c, an offside player can be put onside when:
   a. That player:
      i. Moves behind a team-mate who last played the ball; or
      ii. Moves behind a team-mate who is onside.
   b. An onside team-mate of that player moves past the offside player and is within or has re-entered the playing area.
   c. An opponent of that player:
      i. Carries the ball five metres; or
      ii. Passes the ball; or
      iii. Kicks the ball; or
      iv. Intentionally touches the ball without gaining possession of it.
7. A player offside under Law 10.4c cannot be put onside by any action of an opponent, apart from a charge down.



Player made onside by team-mate



Player put onside by opponents

RETIRING FROM A RUCK, MAUL, SCRUM OR LINEOUT

8. A player who is offside at a ruck, maul, scrum or lineout remains offside, even after the ruck, maul, scrum or lineout has ended.

9. The player can be put onside only if:
   a. That player immediately retires behind the applicable offside line; or
   b. An opposition player carries the ball five metres in any direction; or
   c. An opposition player kicks the ball.

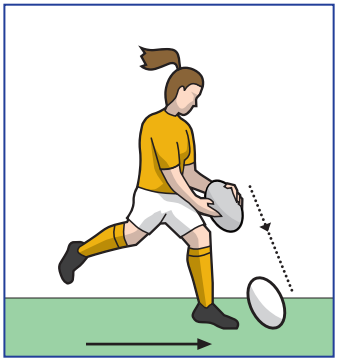
10. An offside player may be penalised if that player:
   a. Fails to retire without undue delay and benefits from being put onside in a more advantageous position; or
   b. Interferes with play; or
   c. Moves towards the ball.

Sanction: Penalty.

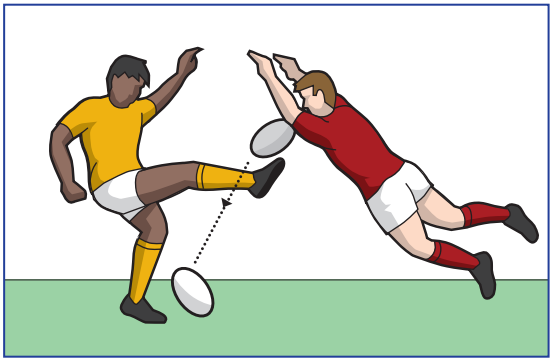
LAW 11 Knock-on or throw forward

KNOCK-ON

1. A knock-on may occur anywhere in the playing area.
2. It is a knock-on when a player, in tackling or attempting to tackle an opponent, makes contact with the ball and the ball goes forward. **Sanction:** Scrum (if the ball goes into touch, the non-offending team may opt instead for a quick-throw or lineout).
3. A player must not intentionally knock the ball forward with hand or arm. **Sanction:** Penalty.
4. It is not an intentional knock-on if, in the act of trying to catch the ball, the player knocks on provided that there was a reasonable expectation that the player could gain possession.
5. The ball is not knocked-on, and play continues, if:
   a. A player knocks the ball forward immediately after an opponent has kicked it (charge down).
   b. A player rips or knocks the ball from an opponent and the ball goes forward from the opponent's hand or arm.



Knock-on



Charge down

THROW FORWARD

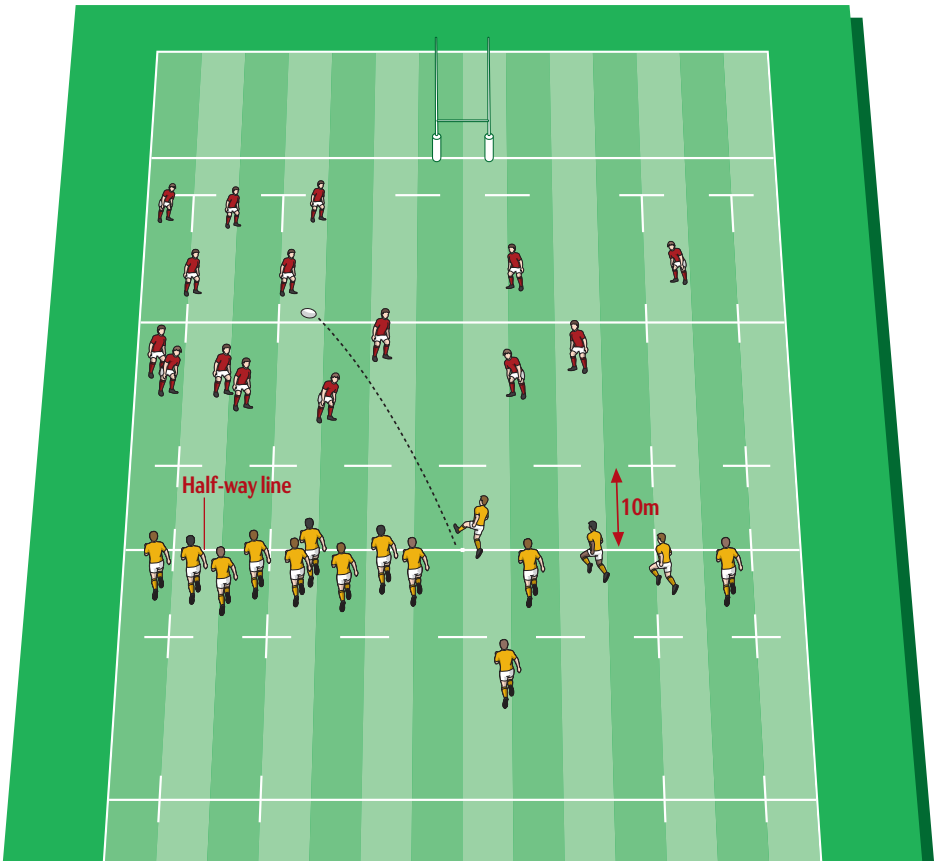
6. A throw forward may occur anywhere in the playing area. **Sanction:** Scrum.
7. A player must not intentionally throw or pass the ball forward. **Sanction:** Penalty.

LAW 12 Kick-off and restart kicks

PRINCIPLE

Kick-offs are used to start each half of the match or period of extra-time. Restart kicks resume play after a score or touch-down.

1. All kick-offs and restart kicks are drop kicks. **Sanction:** The non-kicking team has the option of the kick being retaken or a scrum.



Kick-off

LAW 12 Kick-off and restart kicks

KICK-OFFS AND RESTART KICKS FOLLOWING A SCORE

2. Kick-offs are taken on or behind the centre of the half-way line. **Sanction:** The non-kicking team has the option of the kick being retaken or a scrum.
3. The opponents of the team who kicked off the match start the second half.
4. After a team has scored, their opponents restart play on or behind the centre of the half-way line. **Sanction:** The non-kicking team has the option of the kick being retaken or a scrum.
5. When the ball is kicked:
   a. Team-mates of the kicker must be behind the ball. **Sanction:** Scrum.
   b. Opposition players must be on or behind the 10-metre line. **Sanction:** The kick is retaken.
6. The ball must reach the 10-metre line. **Sanction:** The non-kicking team has the option of the kick being retaken or a scrum.
7. If the ball reaches the 10-metre line but is then blown back or if an opponent plays the ball before it reaches the 10-metre line, play continues.
8. If the ball goes directly into touch, the non-kicking team chooses one of the following:
   a. The kick being retaken.
   b. Scrum.
   c. Lineout.
   d. Quick-throw.
9. If the ball is kicked into the opponents' in-goal without touching any player and an opponent grounds the ball without delay or it goes dead through in-goal, the non-kicking team has the option of having the kick retaken or a scrum.
10. If the ball is kicked into the kicking team's own in-goal and is made dead by a defending player or it goes dead through in-goal, the non-kicking team is awarded a five-metre scrum.

RESTART KICKS FOLLOWING A TOUCH-DOWN (22-METRE DROP-OUT)

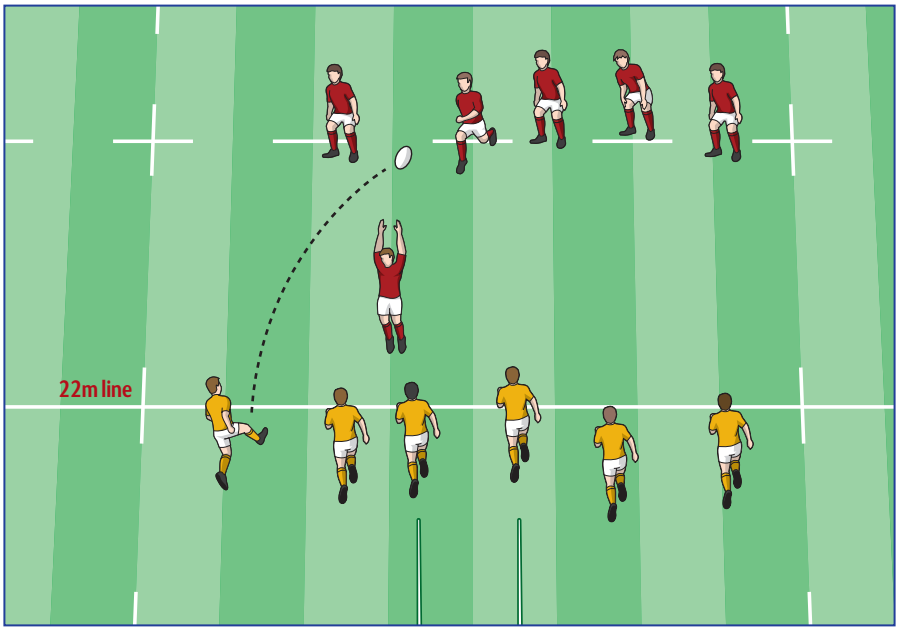
11. Apart from at a kick-off or restart kick, if the ball is played or taken into in-goal by an attacking player and is made dead by an opponent, play is restarted with a 22-metre drop-out.

12. A 22-metre drop-out:
    a. Is taken anywhere on or behind the defending team's 22-metre line. **Sanction:** Scrum.
    b. Must be taken without delay. **Sanction:** Free-kick.
    c. Must cross the 22-metre line. **Sanction:** The non-kicking team has the option of the kick being retaken or a scrum.
    d. Must not go directly into touch. **Sanction:** The opposing team chooses one of the following:
        i. The drop-out being retaken; or
        ii. A scrum; or
        iii. A lineout; or
        iv. A quick-throw.

13. An opponent must not charge over the 22-metre line before the ball is kicked. **Sanction:** Free-kick.

14. An opponent, who is inside the kicker's 22, may not delay or obstruct the drop-out. **Sanction:** Penalty.

15. If the ball crosses the 22-metre line but is then blown back, play continues.
16. If the ball does not cross the 22-metre line, advantage may apply.
17. If a 22-metre drop-out reaches the opponents' in-goal without touching any player and an opponent grounds the ball without delay or it goes into touch-in-goal or on or over the dead-ball line, the non-kicking team has the option of having the kick retaken or a scrum.
18. The team-mates of the kicker must be behind the ball when it is kicked. Those who are in front of the ball when it is kicked may be sanctioned unless they retire and do not interfere with play until they are put onside by the actions of a team-mate.
Sanction: Scrum.



Drop-out

LAW 13 Players on the ground in open play

PRINCIPLE

The game is played only by players who are on their feet.

1. Players, who go to ground to gather the ball or who go to ground with the ball, must immediately:
    a. Get up with the ball; or
    b. Play (but not kick) the ball; or
    c. Release the ball.

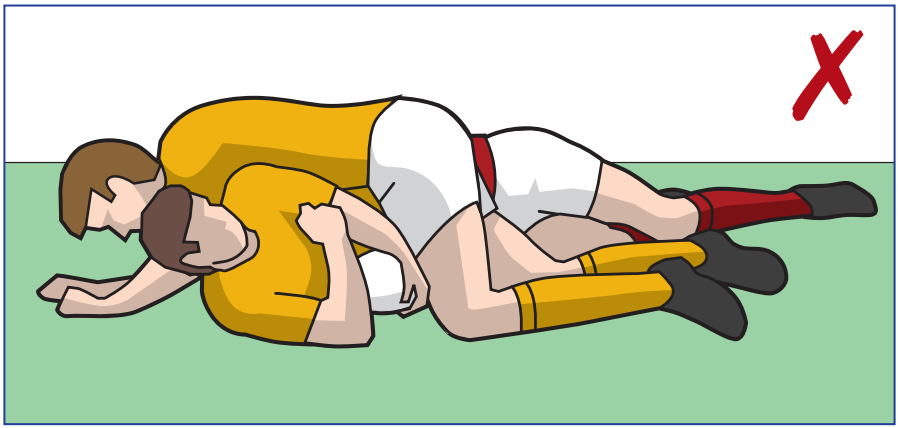
Sanction: Penalty.

2. Once the ball is played or released, players on the ground must immediately either move away from the ball or get up. **Sanction:** Penalty.

3. A player on the ground without the ball is out of the game and must:
    a. Allow opponents who are not on the ground to play or gain possession of the ball.
    b. Not play the ball.
    c. Not tackle or attempt to tackle an opponent.

Sanction: Penalty.

4. Players on their feet and without the ball must not fall on or over players on the ground who have the ball or who are near it. **Sanction:** Penalty.

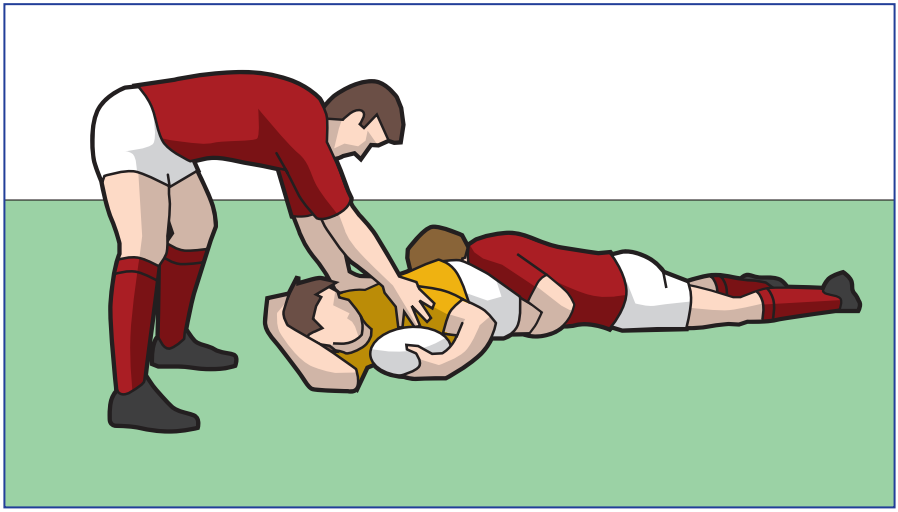


No player may fall on or over a tackled player

LAW 14 Tackle

PRINCIPLE

A tackle can take place anywhere in the field of play. The actions of players involved in the tackle must ensure a fair contest and allow the ball to be available for play immediately.



Tackle

REQUIREMENTS FOR A TACKLE

1. For a tackle to occur, the ball-carrier is held and brought to ground by one or more opponents.
2. Being brought to ground means that the ball-carrier is lying, sitting or has at least one knee on the ground or on another player who is on the ground.
3. Being held means that a tackler must continue holding the ball-carrier until the ball-carrier is on the ground.

LAW 14 Tackle

PLAYERS IN A TACKLE

4. Players in a tackle are:
    a. Tackled player.
    b. Tackler(s).
    c. Others:
        i. Player(s) who hold the ball-carrier during a tackle but do not go to ground.
        ii. Player(s) who arrive to contest possession in the tackle.
        iii. Player(s) who are already on the ground.

PLAYER RESPONSIBILITIES

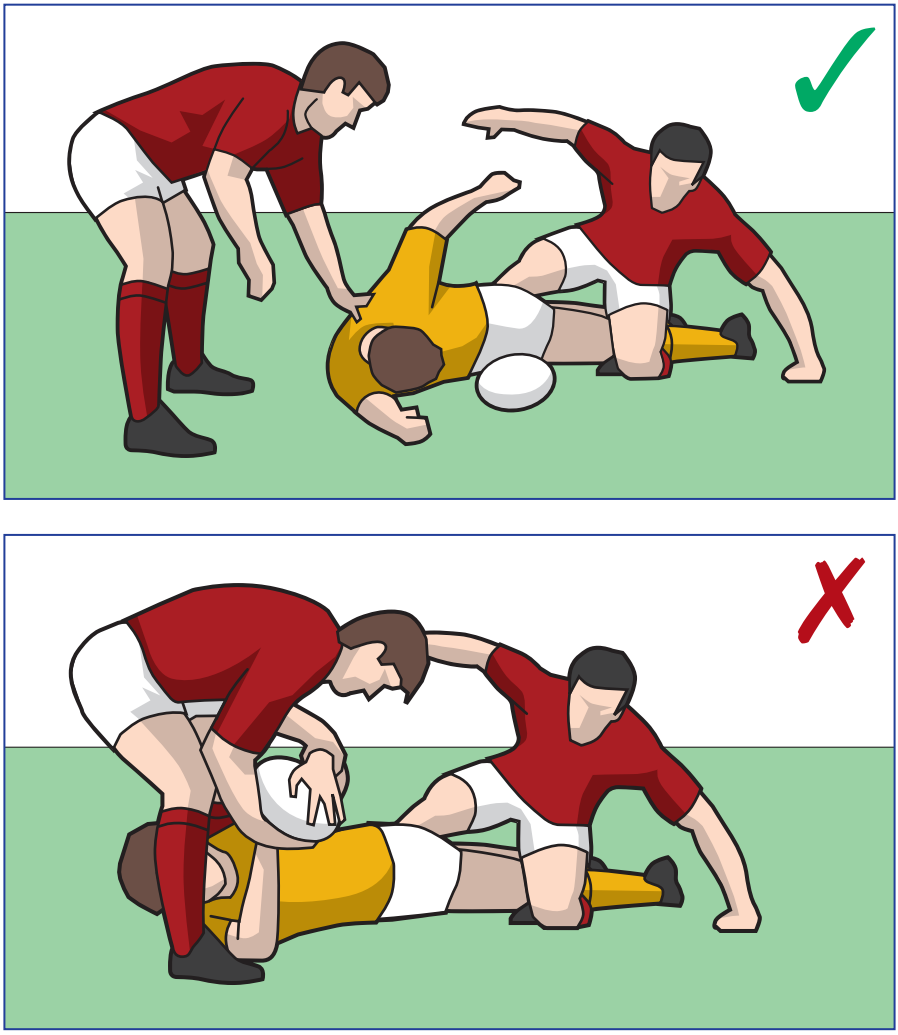
5. Tacklers must:
    a. Immediately release the ball and the ball-carrier after both players go to ground.
    b. Immediately move away from the tackled player and from the ball or get up.
    c. Be on their feet before attempting to play the ball.
    d. Allow the tackled player to release or play the ball.
    e. Allow the tackled player to move away from the ball.

Sanction: Penalty.

6. Tacklers may play the ball from the direction of their own goal line provided they have complied with the above responsibilities and a ruck has not formed.

7. Tackled players must immediately:
    a. Make the ball available so that play can continue by releasing, passing or pushing the ball in any direction except forward. They may place the ball in any direction.
    b. Move away from the ball or get up.
    c. Ensure that they do not lie on, over or near the ball to prevent opposition players from gaining possession of it.

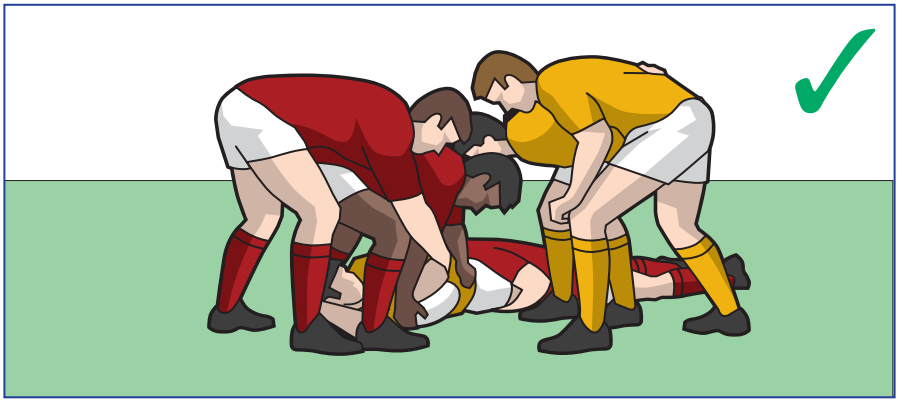
Sanction: Penalty.



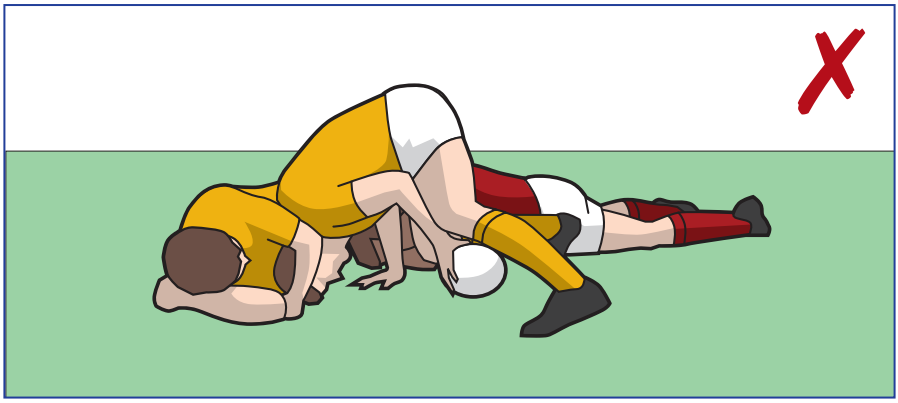
Tackled player must release the ball immediately

8. Other players must:
   a. Remain on their feet and release the ball and the ball-carrier immediately.
   b. Remain on their feet when they play the ball.
   c. Arrive at the tackle from the direction of their own goal line before playing the ball.
   d. Not play the ball or attempt to tackle an opponent while on the ground near the tackle.

Sanction: Penalty.



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



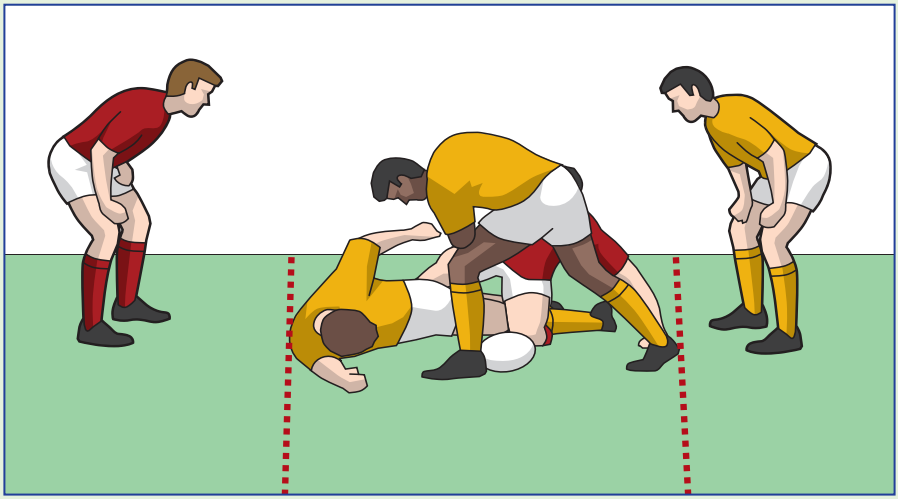
Player off feet and playing the ball at the tackle

Player off feet and playing the ball at the tackle

9. Any player who gains possession of the ball:
   - **a.** Must play it immediately, by moving away, or by passing or kicking the ball.
   - **b.** Must remain on their feet, and not go to ground at or near the tackle unless tackled by the opposition.
   - **c.** May be tackled, provided the tackler does so from the direction of their own goal line.

Sanction: Penalty.

10. Offside lines are created at a tackle when at least one player is on their feet and over the ball, which is on the ground. Each team's offside line runs parallel to the goal line through the hindmost point of any player in the tackle or on their feet over the ball. If that point is on or behind the goal line, the offside line for that team is the goal line.



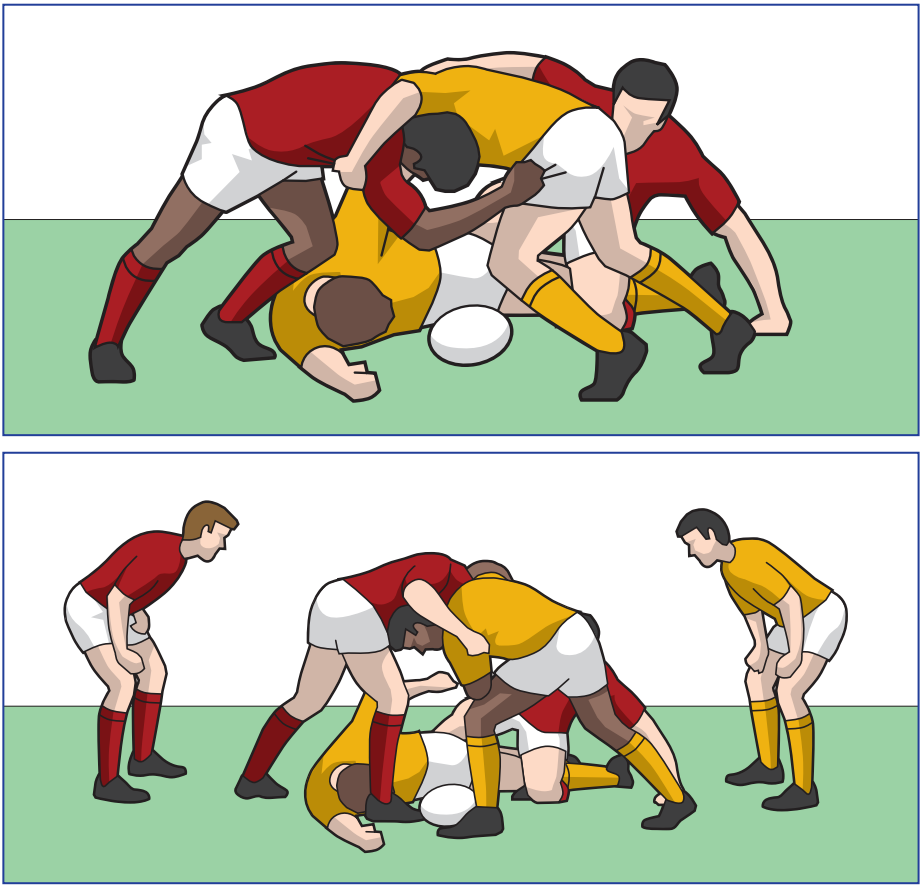
Offside lines created by player on feet over ball

11. The tackle ends when:
    a. A ruck is formed.
    b. A player on their feet from either team gains possession of the ball and moves away or passes or kicks the ball.
    c. The ball leaves the tackle area.
    d. The ball is unplayable. If there is doubt about which player did not conform to law, the referee orders a scrum. The throw is taken by the team moving forward prior to the stoppage or, if no team was moving forward, by the attacking team.

LAW 15 Ruck

PRINCIPLE

The purpose of a ruck is to allow players to compete for the ball which is on the ground.



Ruck

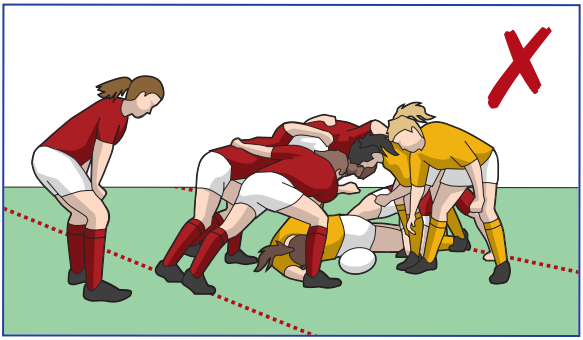
LAW 15 Ruck

FORMING A RUCK

1. A ruck can take place only in the field of play.
2. A ruck is formed when at least one player from each team are in contact, on their feet and over the ball which is on the ground.
3. Players involved in all stages of the ruck must have their heads and shoulders no lower than their hips. **Sanction:** Free-kick.

OFFSIDE AT A RUCK

4. Each team has an offside line that runs parallel to the goal line through the ruck participants' hindmost foot. If that foot is on or behind the goal line, the offside line for that team is the goal line.



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

JOINING A RUCK

5. An arriving player must be on their feet and join from behind their offside line.
6. A player may join alongside but not in front of the hindmost player.
7. A player must bind onto a team-mate or an opposition player. The bind must precede or be simultaneous with contact with any other part of the body.
8. Players must join the ruck or retire behind their offside line immediately.
9. Players who have previously been part of the ruck may rejoin the ruck, provided they do so from an onside position.

Sanction: Penalty.

LAW 15 Ruck

DURING A RUCK

10. Possession may be won either by rucking or by pushing the opposing team off the ball.
11. Once a ruck has formed, no player may handle the ball unless they were able to get their hands on the ball before the ruck formed and stay on their feet.
12. Players must endeavour to remain on their feet throughout the ruck.
13. All players in a ruck must be caught in or bound to it and not just alongside it.
14. Players may play the ball with their feet, provided they do so in a safe manner.
15. Players on the ground must attempt to move away from the ball and must not play the ball in the ruck or as it emerges.
16. Players must not:
    a. Pick the ball up with their legs.
    b. Intentionally collapse a ruck or jump on top of it.
    c. Intentionally step on another player.
    d. Fall over the ball as it is coming out of a ruck.
    e. Kick, or attempt to kick, the ball out of a ruck.

Sanction: Penalty.

    f. Return the ball into the ruck.
    g. Take any action to make opponents believe that the ruck has ended when it has not.

Sanction: Free-kick.

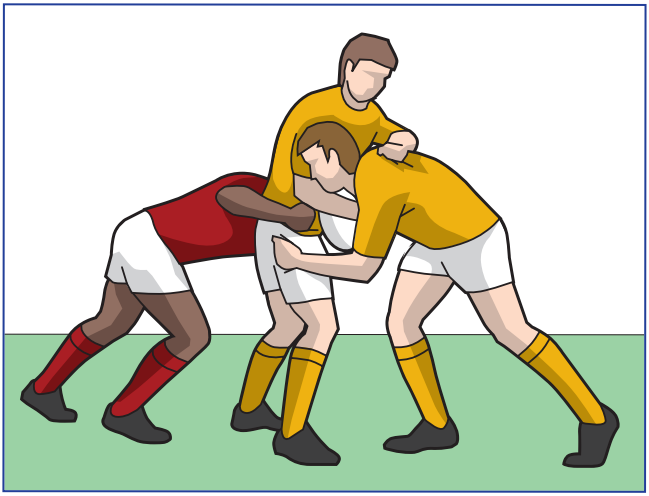
ENDING A RUCK

17. When the ball has been clearly won by a team at the ruck, and is available to be played, the referee calls "use it", after which the ball must be played away from the ruck within five seconds. **Sanction:** Scrum.
18. The ruck ends and play continues when the ball leaves the ruck or when the ball in the ruck is on or over the goal line.
19. The ruck ends when the ball becomes unplayable. If the referee decides that the ball will probably not emerge within a reasonable time, a scrum is awarded.

LAW 16 Maul

PRINCIPLE

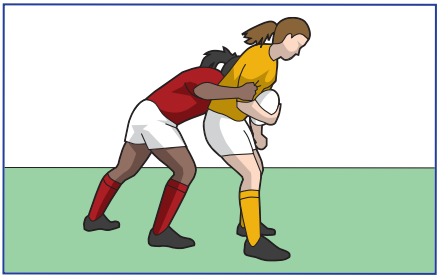
The purpose of a maul is to allow players to compete for the ball, which is held off the ground.

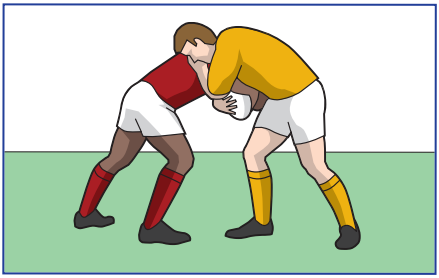


Maul

FORMING A MAUL

1. A maul can take place only in the field of play.
2. It consists of a ball-carrier and at least one player from each team, bound together and on their feet.
3. Once formed, a maul must move towards a goal line.





Maul not formed

LAW 16 Maul

OFFSIDE AT A MAUL

4. Each team has an offside line that runs parallel to the goal line through the maul participants' hindmost foot that is nearest to that team's goal line. If that foot is on or behind the goal line, the offside line for that team is the goal line.

5. A player must either join a maul from an onside position or retire behind their offside line immediately. **Sanction:** Penalty.

6. Players who leave a maul must immediately retire behind the offside line. These players may re-join the maul. **Sanction:** Penalty.

JOINING A MAUL

7. Players joining a maul must:
   a. Do so from an onside position.
   b. Bind on to the hindmost player in the maul.

Sanction: Penalty.

   c. Have their heads and shoulders no lower than their hips. **Sanction:** Free-kick.

DURING A MAUL

8. The ball-carrier in a maul may go to ground provided that player makes the ball available immediately. **Sanction:** Scrum.

9. All other players in a maul must endeavour to stay on their feet.

10. All players in a maul must be caught in or bound to it and not just alongside it.

11. Players must not:
   a. Intentionally collapse a maul or jump on top of it.
   b. Attempt to drag an opponent out of a maul.

Sanction: Penalty.

   c. Take any action to make opponents believe that the maul has ended when it has not. **Sanction:** Free-kick.

12. When players of the team who are not in possession of the ball intentionally leave the maul such that there are no players of that team left in the maul, the maul continues.

13. When all players of the team who are not in possession of the ball intentionally leave the maul, they may re-join provided that the first player binds on the frontmost player of the team in possession of the ball. **Sanction:** Penalty.

14. When a maul has stopped moving towards a goal line for more than five seconds but the ball is being moved and the referee can see it, the referee instructs the players to use the ball. The team in possession must then use the ball within a reasonable time. **Sanction:** Scrum.

15. When a maul has stopped moving towards a goal line, it may restart moving towards a goal line providing it does so within five seconds. If it stops a second time but the ball is being moved and the referee can see it, the referee instructs the team to use the ball. The team in possession must then use the ball in a reasonable time. **Sanction:** Scrum.

ENDING A MAUL

16. A maul ends and play continues when:
    a. The ball or ball-carrier leaves the maul.
    b. The ball is on the ground.
    c. The ball is on or over the goal line.

17. A maul ends unsuccessfully when:
    a. The ball becomes unplayable.
    b. The maul collapses (not as a result of foul play).
    c. The maul does not move towards a goal line for longer than five seconds and the ball does not emerge.
    d. The ball-carrier goes to ground and the ball is not immediately available.
    e. The ball is available to be played, the referee has called "use it" and it has not been played within five seconds of the call.

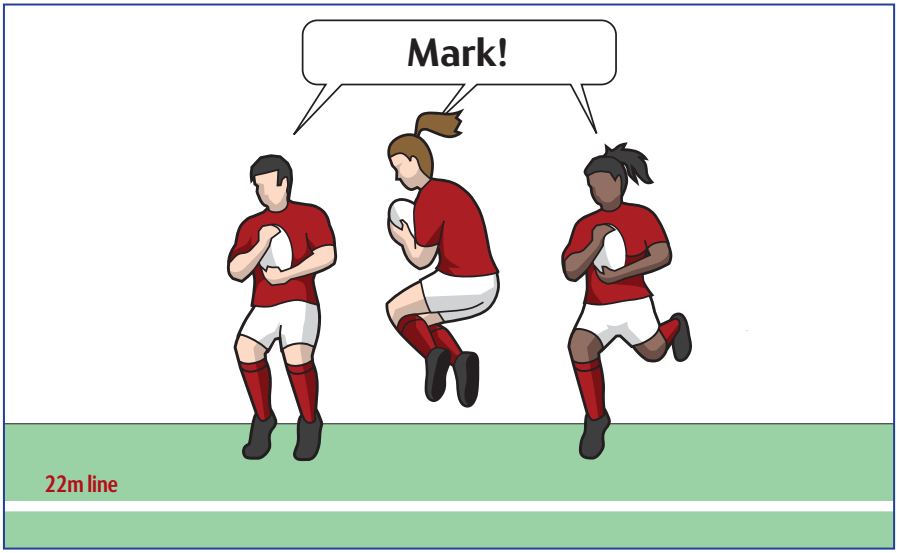
Sanction: Scrum.

18. If a maul is formed immediately after a player has directly caught an opponent's kick in open play, a scrum that is awarded for any of the above reasons will be to the team of the ball catcher.

LAW 17 Mark

PRINCIPLE

A means of stopping play within a player's own 22 by directly catching an opponent's kick.



CLAIMING A MARK

1. To claim a mark, a player must:
   a. Have at least one foot on or behind their own 22-metre line when catching the ball or when landing having caught it in the air; and
   b. Catch a ball that has reached the plane of the 22-metre line directly from an opponent's kick before it touches the ground or another player; and
   c. Simultaneously call "mark".
2. A player may claim a mark even if the ball hits a goal post or crossbar before being caught.
3. When a mark is called correctly, the referee immediately stops the game and awards a free-kick to the team in possession.
4. A mark may not be claimed from a kick-off or a restart kick after a score.

RESTARTING PLAY AFTER A MARK

5. The player who claimed the mark takes the free-kick (in accordance with Law 20).
6. If the player is unable to take the free-kick within one minute, a scrum is awarded to the team in possession.
7. The free-kick is taken at the following locations:

Place of the mark	Location of free-kick
Within the 22	At the place of the mark but at least five metres from the goal line, in line with the place of the mark.
Within the in-goal	On the five-metre line in line with the place of the mark.

LAW 18 Touch, quick throw and lineout

PRINCIPLE

The field of play has side boundaries known as touchlines. When play reaches a touchline, the ball is in touch and becomes dead.

Quick-throws and lineouts are methods of restarting the game with a throw after the ball or ball-carrier has gone into touch.

TOUCH OR TOUCH-IN-GOAL

1. The ball is in touch or touch-in-goal when:
   a. The ball or ball-carrier touches the touchline, touch-in-goal line or anything beyond.
   b. A player, who is already touching the touchline, touch-in-goal line or anything beyond, catches or holds the ball.
      i. If the ball has reached the plane of touch when it is caught, the catcher is not deemed to have taken the ball into touch.
      ii. If the ball has not reached the plane of touch when it is caught or picked up, the catcher is deemed to have taken the ball into touch, regardless of whether the ball was in motion or stationary.
2. The ball is not in touch or touch-in-goal if:
   a. The ball reaches the plane of touch but is caught, knocked or kicked by a player who is in the playing area.
   b. A player jumps, from within or outside the playing area, and catches the ball, and then lands in the playing area, regardless of whether the ball reached the plane of touch.

c. A player jumps from the playing area and knocks (or catches and releases) the ball back into the playing area, before landing in touch or touch-in-goal, regardless of whether the ball reached the plane of touch.

d. A player, who is in touch, kicks or knocks the ball, but does not hold it, provided it has not reached the plane of touch.

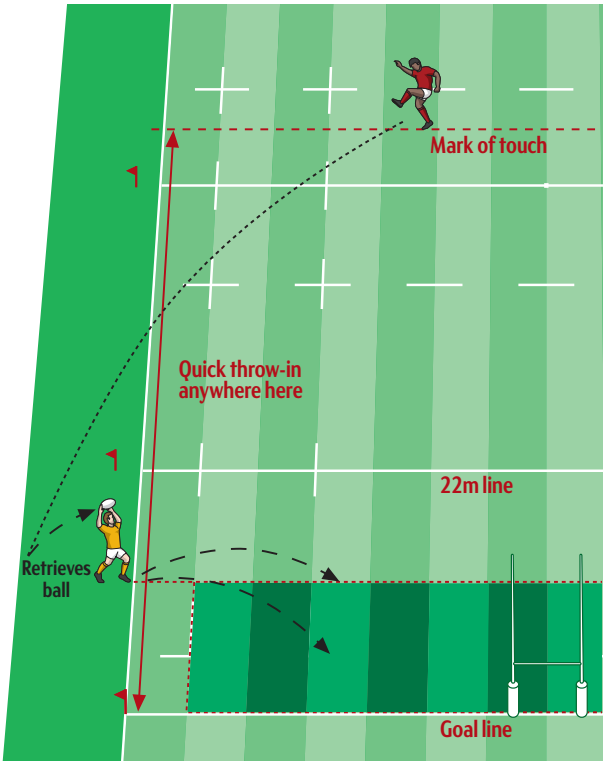
QUICK THROW

3. A player who carries the ball into touch must release the ball immediately so that a quick throw may be taken. **Sanction:** Penalty.

4. At a quick throw, the ball is thrown in:
   a. Between the mark of touch and the thrower's own goal line; and
   b. Parallel to or towards the thrower's own goal line; and
   c. So that it reaches the five-metre line before it touches the ground or hits a player; and
   d. By a player whose feet are both outside the field of play.

Sanction: Option of lineout or scrum.

5. A quick throw is disallowed and a lineout is awarded to the same team if:
   a. A lineout had already been formed; or
   b. The ball had been touched after it went into touch by anyone other than the player throwing in or the player who carried the ball into touch; or
   c. A different ball is used from the one that originally went into touch.
6. The ball must reach the five-metre line before it is played and a player must not prevent the ball from travelling five metres. **Sanction:** Free-kick.
7. If the mark of touch is outside the 22, the defending team may take the quick throw inside the 22 but is deemed to have taken the ball into the 22.



Quick throw-in

LINEOUT

8. Where the game is restarted with a lineout and which team throws in is determined as follows:

   a. General

Event	Location of the mark of touch	Who throws in
The ball-carrier goes into touch.	Where the player touches the touchline or the ground beyond it.	The opposition.
A player unintentionally knocks, passes or throws the ball into touch.	Where the ball reaches the touchline.	The opposition.
The ball hits a player and goes directly into touch.	Where the ball reaches the touchline or at the point on the touchline closest to where the ball hit the player, whichever is nearer to that player's goal line.	The opposition.
The ball hits a player and it bounces into touch.	Where the ball reaches the touchline.	The opposition.
A player, who is in touch, catches or picks up a ball which has reached the plane of touch.	Where the ball reached the plane of touch.	The team of the player who caught or picked up the ball.
A player, who is in touch, catches or picks up a ball which has not reached the plane of touch.	Where that player is standing.	The opposition.

b. Ball is kicked directly into touch from a kick-off or restart kick

Event	Location of the mark of touch	Who throws in
The ball goes directly into touch from a kick-off or restart kick following a score.	If the touch option is taken, the throw is where the ball reaches the touchline or on the half-way line, whichever is nearer to the kicker's goal line.	The non-kicking team.
The ball goes directly into touch from a 22 drop-out.	If the touch option is taken, then the throw is where the ball reaches the touchline or on the 22-metre line, whichever is nearer to the kicker's goal line.	The non-kicking team.

c. Ball is kicked from a penalty

Event	Location of the mark of touch	Who throws in
A player kicks the ball into touch (either directly or first bouncing in the field of play or hitting a player or the referee).	Where the ball reaches the touchline.	The kicking team.
A player, who is in touch, catches the ball irrespective of whether the ball has reached the touchline.	Where the ball reaches the touchline or, if the ball hasn't reached the touchline, where the player catching the ball is standing.	The kicking team.
A player, who is in touch, picks up a ball that has not reached the plane of touch.	Where that player is standing.	The kicking team.

d. Ball is kicked directly into touch from within own 22 or in-goal

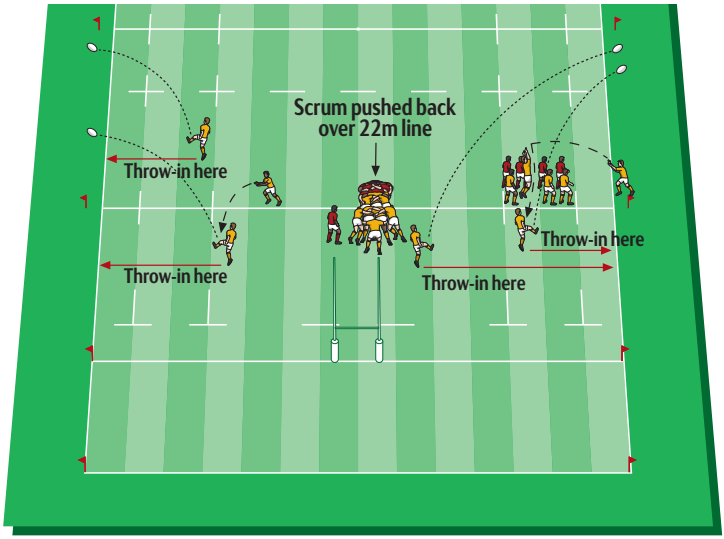
Event	Location of the mark of touch	Who throws in
NO GAIN IN GROUND		
The defending team took the ball into their 22, no tackle, ruck or maul took place and no opponent touched the ball within the 22. If a player, who is inside their own 22, picks up the ball when it is outside the 22, or catches the ball before it reaches the plane of the 22-metre line, and kicks it directly to touch from within the 22, then that player has taken the ball back into the 22.		
A player kicks the ball directly into touch.	Where the ball reaches the touchline or on the touchline in line with where the ball was kicked, whichever is nearer to the kicker's goal line.	The non-kicking team.
An opposition player, who is in touch, catches the ball.	Where the ball reaches the touchline or on the touchline in line with where the ball was kicked, whichever is nearer to the kicker's goal line.	The non-kicking team.
GAIN IN GROUND		
Either the defending team did not take the ball into their 22 or a tackle, ruck or maul took place within the 22 or an opponent touched the ball within the 22.		
A player kicks the ball directly into touch.	Where the ball reaches the touchline.	The non-kicking team.
An opposition player, who is in touch, catches the ball.	Where the ball reaches the touchline.	The non-kicking team.
A player kicks the ball from a free-kick awarded within the 22.	Where the ball reaches the touchline.	The non-kicking team.

e. Ball is kicked directly into touch from outside the 22

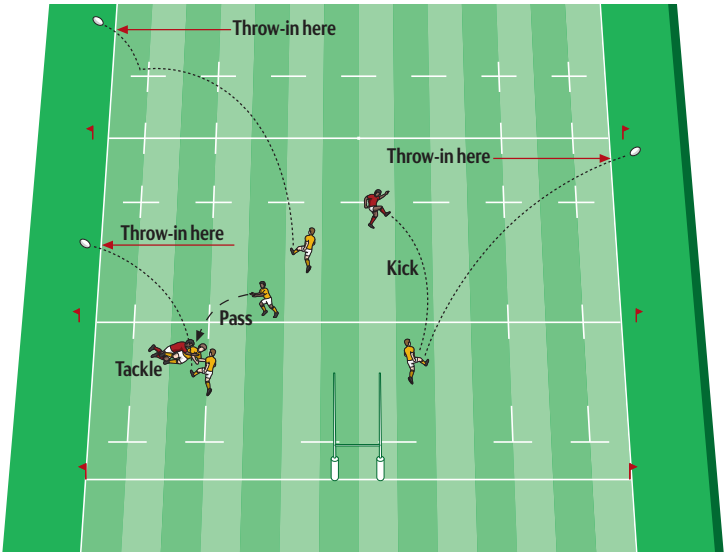
Event	Location of the mark of touch	Who throws in
A player kicks the ball directly into touch from open play or from a free-kick.	Where the ball reaches the touchline or on the touchline in line with where the ball was kicked, whichever is nearer to that player's goal line. No gain in ground.	The non-kicking team.

f. Lineout options

Event	Location of the mark of touch	Who throws in
Following an incorrect throw.	Where the original lineout took place.	The opposition.
Following a disallowed quick throw.	Where the formed lineout would have taken place if the quick throw had not been taken.	The same team.
Following an incorrect quick throw.	Where the incorrect throw was taken.	The opposition.
Following the ball going into touch from a knock-on or throw forward.	Where the ball reached the touchline.	The opposition.
From a penalty or free-kick awarded for a lineout infringement.	Where the original lineout took place.	The opposition.



No gain in ground



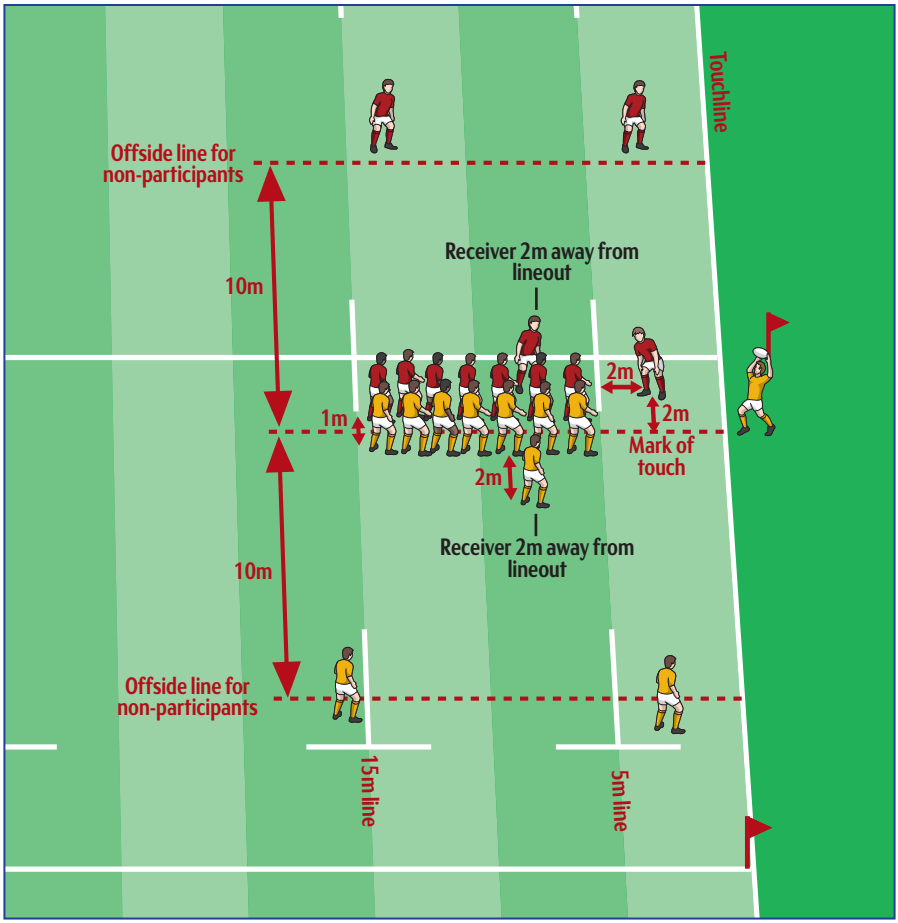
Gain in ground

FORMING A LINEOUT

9. A lineout is formed on the mark of touch.

10. Each team forms a single line parallel to and half a metre from the mark of touch on their side of the lineout between the five-metre and 15-metre lines. The gap between the lines must be maintained until the ball is thrown in. **Sanction:** Free-kick.

11. A minimum of two players from each team are required to form a lineout.



The lineout

12. Teams form the lineout without delay. **Sanction:** Free-kick.

13. The team throwing in determines the maximum number of players that each team may have in the lineout.

14. Unless the throw is taken as soon as the lineout is formed, the non-throwing team may not have more players (but may have fewer players) in the lineout than the throwing team. **Sanction:** Free-kick.

15. The non-throwing team must have a player between the touchline and the five-metre line. The player stands two metres from the mark of touch on their team's side of the lineout and two metres from the five-metre line. **Sanction:** Free-kick.

16. If a team elects to have a receiver, the receiver stands between the five-metre and the 15-metre lines, two metres away from their team-mates in the lineout. Each team may have only one receiver. **Sanction:** Free-kick.

17. Once the lineout is formed, players:
    a. From the team throwing in may not leave the lineout other than to change positions with other participating players.
    b. From the non-throwing team may leave the lineout only to ensure that they do not have more players than the opposition.

Sanction: Free-kick.

18. Participating players may change places in the lineout before the ball is thrown.

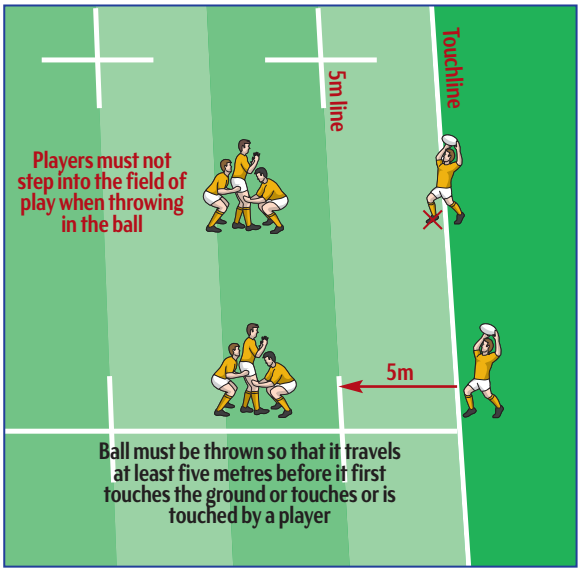
19. Players in the lineout who are going to lift or support a team-mate jumping for the ball may pre-grip that team-mate providing they do not grip below the shorts from behind or below the thighs from the front. **Sanction:** Free-kick.

20. Players must not jump or be lifted or supported before the ball has left the hands of the player throwing in. **Sanction:** Free-kick.

21. Players must not make any contact with an opponent before the ball is thrown in. **Sanction:** Penalty.

THROWING INTO A LINEOUT

22. The player throwing in the ball stands on the mark of touch with both feet outside the field of play. The thrower must not step into the field of play until the ball has been thrown.
Sanction: Option of lineout or scrum.



23. The ball must:
    a. Be thrown in straight along the mark of touch; and
    b. Reach the five-metre line before it hits the ground or is played.

Sanction: Option of lineout or scrum. If the lineout is chosen and the ball is again not thrown straight, a scrum is awarded to the team that originally threw in the ball.

    c. Be thrown in without delay once the lineout is formed. **Sanction:** Free-kick.

24. The thrower must not pretend to throw the ball. **Sanction:** Free-kick.

DURING A LINEOUT

25. The lineout commences once the ball leaves the hands of the thrower.
26. Once the lineout has commenced, the thrower and the thrower's immediate opponent may:
    a. Join the lineout.
    b. Retire to the offside line of the non-participating players of his own team.
    c. Stay within five metres of the touchline.
    d. Move to the receiver position if that position is empty.
27. If those players move anywhere else, they are offside. **Sanction:** Penalty.
28. Once the lineout has commenced, any player in the lineout may:
    a. Compete for possession of the ball.
    b. Catch or deflect the ball. A jumper may catch or deflect the ball with the outside arm only if they have both hands above their head. **Sanction:** Free-kick.
    c. Lift or support a player from the same team. Players who support or lift a team-mate must lower the player to the ground safely as soon as the ball is won by a player of either team. **Sanction:** Free-kick.
    d. Leave the lineout so as to be in a position to receive the ball, provided they remain within 10 metres of the mark of touch and they keep moving until the lineout is over. **Sanction:** Free-kick.
    e. Grasp and bring an opponent in possession of the ball to ground, provided that the player is not in the air. **Sanction:** Penalty.

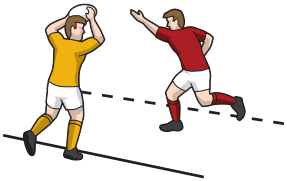
OFFSIDE AT A LINEOUT

29. All lineout players are onside if they remain on their side of the mark of touch until the ball has been thrown in and touched a player or the ground.
30. Players jumping for the ball who cross the mark of touch and do not catch the ball must immediately return to their own side.
31. Until the ball is thrown in, and has touched the player or the ground, the offside line for lineout players is the mark of touch. After that, their offside line is a line through the ball.

No levering on an opponent

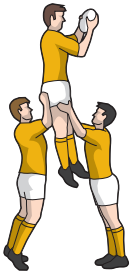
No holding or shoving

No illegal charging



No blocking the throw

Pre-gripping is permitted



Lifting of lineout players is permitted

32. When a ruck or maul forms at the mark of touch, a participating player may either:
    a. Join the ruck or maul; or
    b. Retire to the offside line, which is the hindmost foot of that player's team in the ruck or maul.
33. Once the ball has been thrown, a lineout player may move beyond the 15-metre line. If the ball does not go beyond the 15-metre line, the player must immediately return to the lineout.
34. Players not participating in the lineout must remain at least 10 metres from the mark of touch on their own team's side or behind the goal line if this is nearer. If the ball is thrown in before a player is onside, the player will not be liable to sanction if the player immediately retires to the onside position. The player cannot be put onside by the action of any other player.
35. Once the ball has been thrown in by a team-mate, players who are not participating in the lineout may move forward. If that occurs, then their opponents may also move forward. If the ball does not go beyond the 15-metre line, the players will not be liable to sanction if they immediately retire to their respective offside lines.

Sanction: Penalty.

ENDING A LINEOUT

36. The lineout ends when:
    a. The ball or a player in possession of the ball:
        i. leaves the lineout; or
        ii. enters the area between the touchline and the five-metre line; or
        iii. goes beyond the 15-metre line.
    b. A ruck or maul forms and all of the feet of all of the players in the ruck or maul move beyond the mark of touch.
    c. The ball becomes unplayable.
37. Other than by moving to the receiver position if that position is empty, no lineout player may leave the lineout until it has ended. **Sanction:** Penalty.

LAW 19 Scrum

PRINCIPLE

The purpose of a scrum is to restart play with a contest for possession after a minor infringement or stoppage.

1. Where the game is restarted with a scrum and which team throws in is determined as follows:

Infringement / stoppage	Location of scrum	Who throws in
A knock-on or throw forward, apart from at a lineout.	In the scrum zone at the point closest to the place of infringement.	The non-offending team.
A knock-on or throw forward at a lineout; incorrect throw at a lineout; incorrect quick throw.	15 metres in from the mark of touch.	The non-offending team.
Offside in open play (scrum option).	In the scrum zone at the point closest to where the offending team last played the ball.	The non-offending team.
A penalty or free-kick (scrum option).	In the scrum zone at the point closest to where the infringement took place.	The non-offending team.
The ball is taken into in-goal by the defending team and made dead.	In the scrum zone at the point closest to where the ball was made dead.	The attacking team.
An unplayable tackle or ruck.	In the scrum zone at the point closest to where the tackle or ruck took place.	The team last moving forward. If neither team was moving forward, the attacking team.

Infringement / stoppage	Location of scrum	Who throws in
A maul that ends unsuccessfully.	In the scrum zone at the point closest to where the maul ended.	The team not in possession at the start of the maul. If the referee cannot decide which team had possession, the team moving forward before the maul stopped. If neither team was moving forward, the attacking team.
An unplayable maul after kick in open play.	In the scrum zone at the point nearest to place of maul.	The team in possession at the start of the maul.
An incorrect kick-off or restart kick (scrum option).	At the middle point of the half-way line or 22-metre line if the restart kick was a 22 drop-out.	The non-kicking team.
Failure to "use it" at scrum, ruck or maul.	In the scrum zone at the point closest to where the scrum, ruck or maul took place.	The team not in possession.
The ball or ball-carrier touches the referee and either team gains an advantage.	In the scrum zone at the point closest to the incident.	The team that last played the ball.
Stoppage due to injury.	In the scrum zone at the point where the ball was last played.	The team last in possession.
Reset scrum – no infringement.	Where the original scrum took place.	The team originally awarded the scrum.
A penalty attempt at goal not taken within the time limit.	In the scrum zone at the point closest to where the penalty was awarded.	The non-offending team.

Infringement / stoppage	Location of scrum	Who throws in
A player unable to take a free-kick after a mark within one minute.	In the scrum zone at the point closest to where the free-kick was awarded.	Team of player who was awarded the free-kick.
The referee awards a scrum for any other reason not covered in law.	In the scrum zone at the point closest to the place of stoppage.	The team that was last moving forward or, if neither team was moving forward, the attacking team.

FORMING A SCRUM

2. A scrum is formed in the scrum zone at a mark indicated by the referee.
3. The referee makes the mark to create the middle line of the scrum, which runs parallel to the goal lines.
4. Teams must be ready to form the scrum within 30 seconds of the mark being made. **Sanction:** Free-kick.
5. When both teams have 15 players, eight players from each team bind together in formation as outlined in the diagram. Each team must have two props and one hooker in the front row and two locks in the second row. Three back-row players from each team complete the scrum. **Sanction:** Penalty.
6. When a team is reduced to fewer than 15 for any reason, then the number of players in 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.
7. The players in the scrum bind in the following way:
    a. The props bind to the hooker.
    b. The hooker binds with both arms. This can be either over or under the arms of the props.
    c. The locks bind with the props immediately in front of them and with each other.
    d. All other players in the scrum bind on a lock's body with at least one arm.

Sanction: Penalty.

Scrum

8. The two groups face each other, either side of and parallel to the middle line.
9. The two front rows stand not more than an arm's length apart with the hookers at the mark.

ENGAGEMENT

10. When both sides are square, stable and stationary, the referee calls "crouch".
    a. The front-rows then adopt a crouched position if they have not already done so. Their heads and shoulders are no lower than their hips, a position that is maintained for the duration of the scrum.
    b. The front-rows crouch, ear against ear with their heads to the left of their immediate opponents', so that no player's forehead is up against the forehead of an opponent.

Sanction: Free-kick.

11. When both sides are square, stable and stationary, the referee calls "bind".
    a. Each loose-head prop binds by placing the left arm inside the right arm of the opposing tight-head prop.
    b. Each tight-head prop binds by placing the right arm outside the left upper arm of the opposing loose-head prop.
    c. Each prop binds by gripping the back or side of their opponent's jersey.
    d. All players' binding is maintained for the duration of the scrum.

Sanction: Penalty.

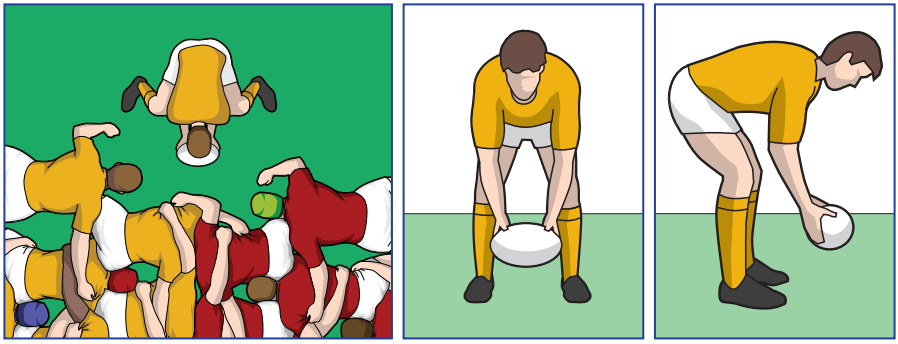
12. When both sides are square, stable and stationary, the referee calls "set".
    a. Only then may the teams engage, completing the formation of the scrum and creating a tunnel into which the ball will be thrown.
    b. All players must be in position and ready to push forward.
    c. Each front-row player must have both their feet on the ground, with their weight firmly on at least one foot.
    d. Each hooker's feet must be in line with, or behind, the foremost foot of that team's props.

Sanction: Free-kick.

THROW

13. The scrum-half chooses which side of the scrum to throw in the ball.
14. The scrum-half holds the ball as shown in the diagram.
15. When both sides are square, stable and stationary, the scrum-half throws in the ball:
    a. From the chosen side.
    b. From outside the tunnel.
    c. Without delay.
    d. With a single forward movement.
    e. At a quick speed.
    f. Straight. The scrum-half may align their shoulder on the middle line of the scrum, thereby standing a shoulder-width closer to their side of the scrum.
    g. So that it first touches the ground inside the tunnel.

Sanction: Free-kick.



Throw-in at the scrum

DURING A SCRUM

16. The scrum begins when the ball leaves the hands of the scrum-half.
17. Only when the scrum begins may the teams push. **Sanction:** Free-kick.
18. Possession may be gained by pushing the opposition backwards and off the ball.
19. Players may push provided they do so straight and parallel to the ground. **Sanction:** Penalty.
20. Front-row players may gain possession by striking for the ball but only once the ball touches the ground in the tunnel. **Sanction:** Free-kick.
21. A front-row player striking for the ball may do so with either foot but not both at the same time. **Sanction:** Penalty.
22. The hooker from the team which threw in the ball must strike for the ball. **Sanction:** Free-kick.
23. A front-row player must not intentionally kick the ball out of the tunnel from the direction it was thrown. **Sanction:** Free-kick.
24. Any player within the scrum may play the ball but only with their feet or lower legs and they must not lift the ball. **Sanction:** Penalty.
25. If a scrum collapses or if a player in the scrum is lifted or is forced upwards out of the scrum, the referee must blow the whistle immediately so that players stop pushing.
26. When the scrum is stationary and the ball has been available at the back of the scrum for three-five seconds, the referee calls "use it". The team must then play the ball out of the scrum immediately. **Sanction:** Scrum.

OFFSIDE AT A SCRUM

27. Players remain onside for the duration of the scrum.

28. Prior to the start of play in the scrum, the scrum-half of the team not throwing in the ball stands:
    a. On that team's side of the middle line next to the opposing scrum-half, or
    b. At least five metres behind the hindmost foot of their team's last player in the scrum and remains there until the completion of the scrum.

29. Once play in the scrum begins, the scrum-half of the team in possession has at least one foot level with or behind the ball.

30. Once play in the scrum begins, the scrum-half of the team not in possession:
    a. Takes up a position with both feet behind the ball and close to the scrum or
    b. Permanently retires to a point on the offside line either at that team's hindmost foot, or
    c. Permanently retires at least five metres behind the hindmost foot.

31. All players not participating at the scrum remain at least five metres behind the hindmost foot of their team.

32. When the hindmost foot of a team is in in-goal or within five metres of that team's goal line, the offside line for that team's non-participants is the goal line.

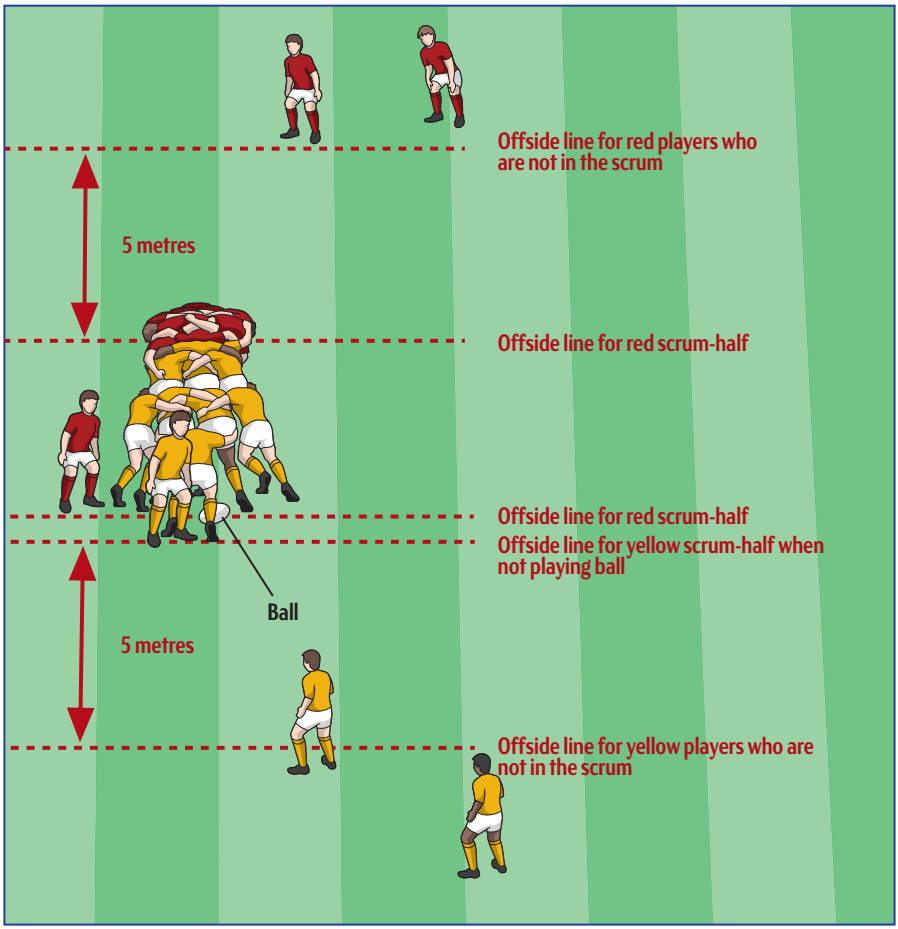
Sanction: Penalty.

33. As soon as the scrum ends, offside lines no longer apply.

RESETTING A SCRUM

34. When there is no infringement, the referee will stop play and reset the scrum if:
    a. The scrum-half throws in the ball and it comes out at either end of the tunnel.
    b. The scrum collapses or breaks up before it has otherwise ended.
    c. The scrum is wheeled through more than 90 degrees, so the middle line has passed beyond a position parallel to the touchline.
    d. Neither side wins possession.
    e. The ball is unintentionally kicked out of the tunnel. Exception: If the ball is repeatedly kicked out, the referee must treat this as intentional. **Sanction:** Penalty.

35. When a scrum is reset, the ball is thrown in by the team that previously threw it in.



Scrum offside

ENDING A SCRUM

36. The scrum ends:

- **a.** When the ball comes out of the scrum in any direction except the tunnel.
- **b.** When the ball reaches the feet of the hindmost player and it is picked up by that player or is played by that team's scrum-half.
- **c.** When the number eight picks up the ball from the feet of a second-row player.
- **d.** When the referee blows the whistle for an infringement.
- **e.** When the ball in a scrum is on or over the goal line.

DANGEROUS PLAY AND RESTRICTED PRACTICES IN A SCRUM

37. Dangerous play in a scrum includes:

- **a.** A front-row charging against the opposition.
- **b.** Pulling an opponent.
- **c.** Intentionally lifting an opponent off their feet or forcing them upwards out of the scrum.
- **d.** Intentionally collapsing a scrum.
- **e.** Intentionally falling or kneeling.

Sanction: Penalty.

38. Other restricted practices at a scrum include:

- **a.** Falling on or over the ball immediately after it has emerged from the scrum.
- **b.** Scrum-half kicking the ball while it is in the scrum.
- **c.** Non-front-row player holding or pushing an opponent.

Sanction: Penalty.

- **d.** Bringing the ball back into the scrum once it has left.
- **e.** Non-front-row players playing the ball in the tunnel.
- **f.** Scrum-half attempting to make an opponent believe the ball is out of the scrum when it is not.

Sanction: Free-kick.

SCRUM LAW VARIATIONS

39. A union may implement the under-19 scrum law variations at defined levels of the game within its jurisdiction.

LAW 20 Penalty and free-kick

PRINCIPLE

Penalties and free-kicks are awarded to restart play after infringements.

LOCATION OF A PENALTY OR FREE-KICK

1. The mark for a penalty or free-kick must be in the field of play and be no closer than five metres from the goal line, as per the following table:

Infringement	Location of penalty or free-kick
While the ball is in play excluding a late charge after a kick.	At the place of infringement.
While the ball is dead.	- At the point where play would have restarted or, if that place is on the touchline or within 15 metres of it, the mark is on the 15-metre line, in line with that place. - If play would have restarted with a 22 drop-out, the mark is anywhere on the 22-metre line (non-offending team decides).
Any infringement that takes place outside the playing area while the ball is in play.	On the 15-metre line, in line with where the offence occurred or if the offence occurred in touch-in-goal or beyond the dead-ball line, on the five-metre line, in line with the place of the infringement, but no less than 15 metres from the touchline.
Any infringement in a lineout.	15 metres from the touchline on the mark of touch.
Offside at a phase of play.	At the offending team's offside line.
Any subsequent infringement by the original offending team after the first penalty or free-kick is awarded but before it is taken.	Advanced 10 metres from the original mark.

Infringement	Location of penalty or free-kick
Late charging the kicker.	The opposition chooses either at the place of the infringement, where the ball landed or where the ball was next played. - If the infringement takes place in the kicker's in-goal, the penalty is taken five 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 where the ball lands or where it is next played before landing, at least 15 metres from the touchline. - If the ball lands in touch, the optional penalty is on the 15-metre line, in line with where it went into touch. - If the ball lands, or is next played before landing, within 15 metres of the touchline, the mark is on the 15-metre line opposite where the ball landed or was played. - If the ball lands in in-goal, in touch-in-goal, or on or over the dead-ball line, the optional penalty is five 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.

Infringement	Location of penalty or free-kick
Intentionally throwing or knocking the ball into touch.	If the ball is thrown or knocked: - Into touch or touch-in-goal or over the dead-ball line from the playing area, the mark is where the infringement occurred but no closer than 15 metres from the touchline and five metres from the goal line. - Into touch or touch-in-goal from in in-goal, the mark is on the five-metre line at least 15 metres from the touchline. - Over the dead-ball line from in-goal, the mark is on the five-metre line in a line with where the infringement occurred.
Any infringement in in-goal or within five metres of a goal line.	In the field of play, five metres from the goal line, in line with the place of infringement.

2. A penalty or free-kick is taken from where it is awarded or anywhere behind it on a line through the mark and parallel to the touchlines. When a penalty or free-kick is taken at the wrong place, it must be re-taken.

OPTIONS AT A PENALTY OR FREE-KICK

3. A team awarded a penalty or free-kick may instead choose a scrum.
4. A team awarded a penalty or free-kick at a lineout may instead choose a lineout or a scrum at the same mark.

TAKING A PENALTY OR FREE-KICK

5. A penalty or free-kick must be taken without delay.
6. Any player from the non-offending team may take it, other than for a free-kick awarded for a mark.
7. The kicker must use the ball that was in play unless the referee decides it is defective.

8. The kicker may punt, drop-kick or place-kick (other than for touch) the ball.
9. The kicker may kick the ball in any direction.
10. Other than the placer at a place-kick, the kicker's team must remain behind the ball until it has been kicked.
11. The ball must be kicked 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. Once the kick has been successfully taken the kicker may play the ball again.

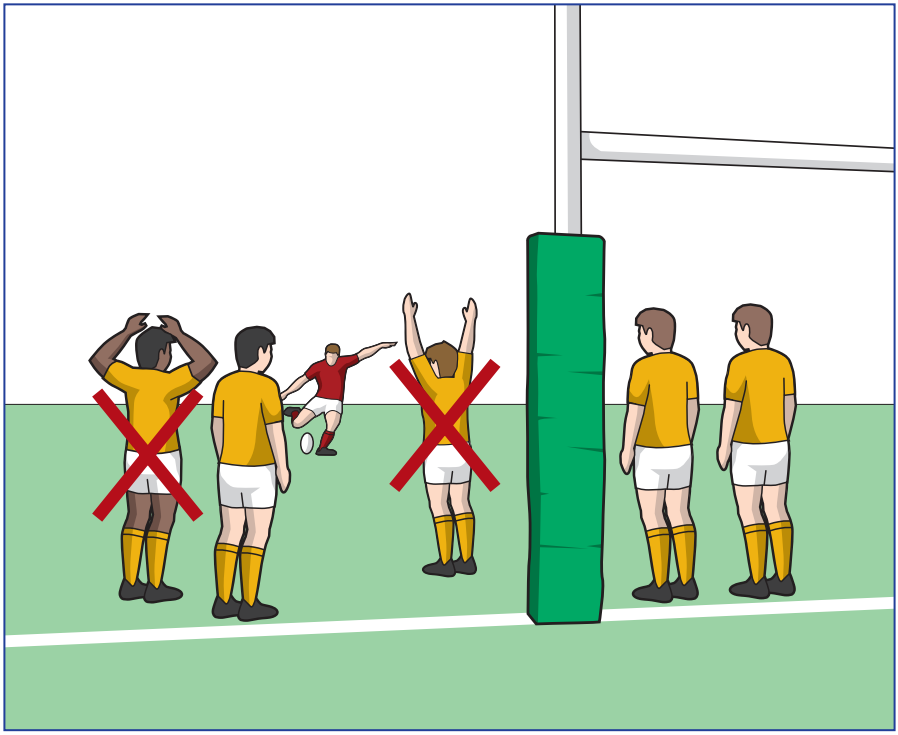
OPPOSING TEAM AT A PENALTY OR FREE-KICK

12. When a penalty or free-kick is awarded, the opposing team must immediately retreat 10 metres towards their own goal line or until they have reached their goal line if that is closer.
13. Even if the penalty or free-kick is taken quickly and the kicker's team is playing the ball, opposing players must keep retreating the necessary distance. They may not take part in the game until they have done so.
14. If it is taken so quickly that opponents have no opportunity to retreat, they will not be sanctioned for this. However, they may not take part in the game until they have retreated 10 metres from the mark or until a team-mate who was 10 metres from the mark has moved in front of them.
15. The opposing team may not do anything to delay the kick or obstruct the kicker, including intentionally taking, throwing or kicking the ball out of reach of the team awarded the penalty. **Sanction:** Second penalty or free-kick, 10 metres in front of the original mark. The second penalty or free-kick must not be taken before the referee has made the mark.

OPPOSING TEAM AT A FREE-KICK

16. As soon as the kicker initiates movement to kick, the opposing team may charge and try to prevent the free-kick being taken by tackling the kicker or to block the kick.

17. If the opposing team charge fairly and prevent the free-kick being taken, the kick is disallowed. Play restarts with a scrum at the mark with the opposing team throwing in.

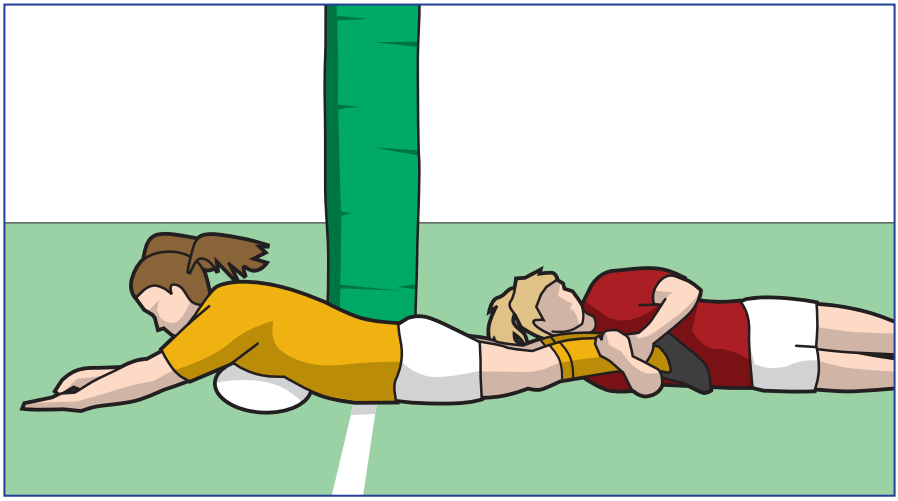


Penalty kick at goal

LAW 21 In-goal

GROUNDING THE BALL

1. The ball can be grounded in in-goal:
   a. By holding it and touching the ground with it; or
   b. By pressing down on it with a hand or hands, arm or arms, or the front of the player's body from waist to neck.



Grounding the ball

2. Picking up a ball is not grounding it. A player may pick up the ball in in-goal and ground it elsewhere in in-goal.
3. An attacking player grounding the ball in in-goal scores a try.
4. When an attacking player holding the ball grounds the ball in in-goal and simultaneously makes contact with the touch-in-goal line or the dead-ball line (or anywhere beyond either), a 22-metre drop-out is awarded to the defending team.
5. When the ball-carrier grounds the ball in in-goal and simultaneously makes contact with the touch line (or the ground beyond), the ball is in touch in the field of play and a lineout is awarded to the opposition.
6. A defending player grounding the ball in in-goal results in a touch down.

7. If a tackled player has momentum that carries them into their own in-goal area, they can make a touch down.
8. A tackled player near their own goal line may reach out and ground the ball in in-goal to make a touch down, provided it is done immediately. **Sanction:** Penalty.
9. If a defending player grounds the ball against a goal post or its surrounding padding, the result is a touch down.
10. If a player is in touch or touch-in-goal, they can make a touch down or score a try by grounding the ball in in-goal provided they are not holding the ball.
11. If a tackled player is in the act of reaching out to ground the ball for a try or touch down, players may pull the ball from the player's possession but must not kick or attempt to kick the ball. **Sanction:** Penalty.

BALL KICKED DEAD THROUGH IN-GOAL

12. If a team kicks the ball through their opponents' in-goal from the field of play into touch-in-goal or on or over the dead-ball line, the defending team can choose:
    a. To have a drop-out anywhere on or behind the 22-metre line; or
    b. To have a scrum at the place where the ball was kicked.

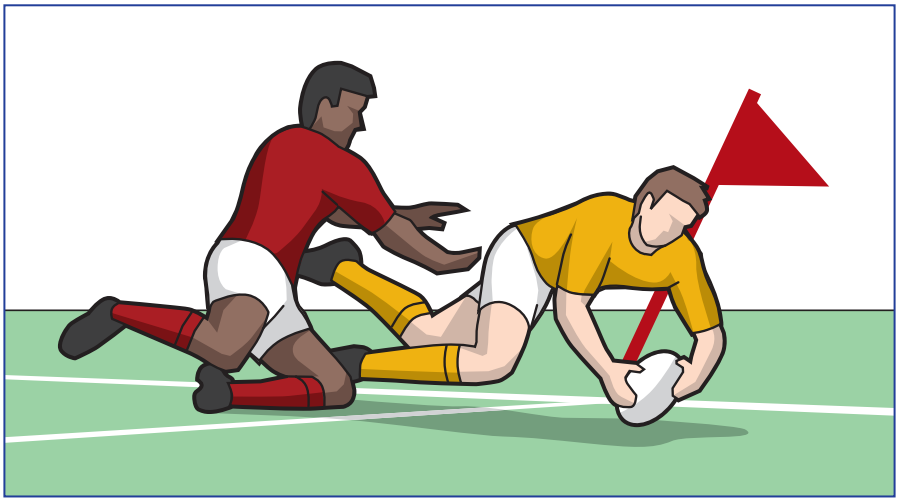
Exception: An unsuccessful kick at goal or attempted dropped goal. In these cases, the defending team restarts with a 22-metre drop-out.

DEFENDING PLAYER IN IN-GOAL

13. If any part of a defending player is in in-goal, that player is considered to be in in-goal, provided they are not also in touch or on or over the dead-ball line.
14. If a player, who is in in-goal, catches or picks up a ball that is still in the field of play, that player has taken the ball into in-goal.
15. If a player who is on or beyond the dead-ball-line, or who is in touch-in-goal, catches or picks up a ball within in-goal, that player has made the ball dead.

CORNER FLAG POST

16. If the ball or ball-carrier touches a corner flag or corner flag post without otherwise being in touch or touch-in-goal, play continues unless the ball is grounded against the post.



Player touches corner post before ball is grounded

BALL HELD UP IN-GOAL

17. When a player carrying the ball is held up in the in-goal so that the player cannot ground or play the ball, the ball is dead. Play restarts with a five-metre scrum, in line with the place where the player was held up. The attacking team throws in.

DOUBT ABOUT GROUNDING

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

Law variations
UNDER-19

WORLD RUGBY™

UNDER-19 Law variations

The laws of the game apply to the under-19 game, subject to the following variations:

LAW 3: TEAM

Addition:

8. If a team nominates 22 players, it must have at least six players who can play in the front row so that there is replacement cover for the loose-head prop, hooker and tight-head prop.

Addition:

34. A player who has been tactically replaced may replace any injured player.

LAW 5: TIME

1. A match lasts no longer than 80 minutes (split into two halves, each of not more than 40 minutes plus time lost), unless the match organiser has authorised the playing of extra-time in a drawn match within a knock-out competition.

Replaced by:

1. A match lasts 70 minutes (split into two halves, each of not more than 35 minutes) plus time lost. No extra-time is permissible.

LAW 19: SCRUM

6. When a team is reduced to fewer than 15 for any reason, then the number of players in 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.

Replaced by:

6. All players in the three front-row positions and the two lock positions must be suitably trained for these positions. If a team cannot field such suitably trained players for whatever reason, then the referee must order uncontested scrums. Uncontested scrums as a result of a sending off, temporary suspension or injury must be played with eight players per side.

    a. In an eight-person scrum, the formation must be 3-4-1, with the single player (normally the number eight) shoving on the two locks. The locks must pack with their heads on either side of the hooker.

    b. When a team is reduced to fewer than 15 for any reason, the number of players in each team in the scrum may be similarly reduced.

    c. Where a permitted reduction is made in the scrum by one team, the other team must reduce their scrum accordingly, down to a minimum of five.

    d. Where there is an incomplete scrum, it must be formed as follows:

        i. Seven players – three-four formation (i.e. no number eight).

        ii. Six players – three-two-one formation (i.e. no flankers).

        iii. Five players – three-two formation (i.e. no flankers or number eight).

Sanction: Free-kick.

34. When there is no infringement, the referee will stop play and reset the scrum if:

    c. The scrum is wheeled through more than 90 degrees, so the middle line has passed beyond a position parallel to the touchline.

Replaced by:

    c. The scrum is unintentionally wheeled through more than 45 degrees.

38. Other restricted practices at a scrum include:

Addition:

    g. Pushing the scrum more than 1.5 metres towards the opponents' goal line.

    h. Keeping the ball in the scrum once it is heeled and controlled at the base of the scrum.

Sanction: Free-kick.

    i. Intentionally wheeling the scrum.

Sanction: Penalty.

Law variations
SEVENS

WORLD RUGBY™

SEVENS Law variations

The laws of the game apply to sevens, subject to the following variations:

LAW 3: TEAM

1. Each team has no more than 15 players in the playing area during play.

Replaced by:

1. Each team has no more than seven players in the playing area during play.

2 deleted

4. For international matches, a union may nominate up to eight replacements.

Replaced by:

4. A team may nominate and use up to five replacements.

5. For other matches, the match organiser decides how many replacements may be nominated, up to a maximum of eight.

Replaced by:

5. The match organiser decides how many replacements may be nominated, up to a maximum of five.

8-13 deleted

15-19 deleted

30. If the temporary replacement is temporarily suspended, the replaced player is not permitted to return to the field of play until after the period of suspension, except to comply with Law 3.18 or 3.19, and only if the player has been medically cleared to do so and does so within the required time of leaving the field of play.

Replaced by:

30. If the temporary replacement is temporarily suspended, the replaced player is not permitted to return to the field of play until after the period of suspension, and only if the player has been medically cleared to do so and does so within the required time of leaving the field of play.

32a deleted
32e deleted

33 deleted

LAW 5: TIME

1. A match lasts no longer than 80 minutes (split into two halves, each of not more than 40 minutes plus time lost), unless the match organiser has authorised the playing of extra-time in a drawn match within a knock-out competition.

Replaced by:

1. A match lasts 14 minutes (split into two halves, each of not more than seven minutes) plus time lost. When a drawn match requires extra-time, play restarts after a one-minute break with periods of no more than five minutes. After each period, the teams change ends without an interval.
   A competition final match may last no longer than 20 minutes (split into two halves, each of not more than 10 minutes) plus lost time and extra-time.

2. Half-time consists of an interval not exceeding 15 minutes as decided by the match organiser. During this time, the teams and match officials may leave the playing enclosure.

Replaced by:

2. Half-time consists of an interval not exceeding two minutes.

LAW 6: MATCH OFFICIALS

3. The referee organises the toss. One of the captains tosses a coin and the other captain calls. 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.

Addition:

a. Before extra-time starts, the referee organises a toss in the same way as before the match.

Addition:

IN-GOAL JUDGES

Addition:

31. There are two in-goal judges for each match, one in each in-goal area.
32. The referee has the same control over in-goal judges as with assistant referees or touch judges.
33. In-goal judges signal the result of conversions or penalty kicks at goal.
34. In-goal judges signal when the ball or the ball-carrier has gone into touch-in-goal.
35. If required, the in-goal judge will assist the referee in decisions on touch downs and tries.
36. A match organiser may give authority for the in-goal judge to signal foul play in in-goal.

LAW 8: SCORING

7. When a try is scored, it gives that team the right to attempt a conversion, which may be a place-kick or drop-kick.

Replaced by:

7. When a try is scored, it gives that team the right to attempt a conversion, which must be a drop kick.

8. The kicker:

c deleted

d. Takes the kick within 90 seconds (playing time) from the time the try was awarded, even if the ball rolls over and has to be placed again.
Sanction: Kick is disallowed.

Replaced by:

d. Takes the kick within 30 seconds (playing time) from the time the try was awarded. **Sanction:** Kick is disallowed.

THE OPPOSING TEAM AT A CONVERSION

14. All opposing players retire to their goal line and do not overstep that line until the kicker begins the approach 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.

Replaced by:

14. All opposing players immediately assemble close to their own 10-metre line.

Sanction: If the opposing team at a conversion attempt infringes but the kick is successful, the goal stands. If the kick is unsuccessful, the kicker retakes the conversion 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.

Replaced by:
Sanction: If the opposing team at a conversion attempt infringes but the kick is successful, the goal stands. If the kick is unsuccessful, the kicker retakes the conversion and the opposing team is not allowed to charge.

16 deleted

21. The kick must be taken within 60 seconds (playing time) from the time the team indicated their intention to do so, even if the ball rolls over and has to be placed again. **Sanction:** Kick is disallowed and a scrum is awarded.

Replaced by:

21. The kick must be taken within 30 seconds (playing time) from the time the team indicated their intention to do so. **Sanction:** Kick is disallowed and a scrum is awarded.

24. The kicker places the ball directly on the ground or on sand, sawdust, or a kicking tee. The kicker may be assisted by a placer. Nothing else may be used to assist the kicker. **Sanction:** Scrum.

Replaced by:

24. The kick must be a drop-kick. **Sanction:** Scrum.

Addition:

EXTRA TIME

Addition:

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

LAW 9: FOUL PLAY

28. When a player is being cautioned and suspended for 10 minutes, the referee will show that player a yellow card. If that player later commits another yellow-card offence, the player must be sent off.

Replaced by:

28. When a player is being cautioned and suspended for two minutes, the referee will show that player a yellow card. If that player later commits another yellow-card offence, the player must be sent off.

LAW 12: KICK-OFF AND RESTART KICKS

4. After a team has scored, their opponents restart play on or behind the centre of the half-way line. **Sanction:** The non-kicking team has the option of the kick being retaken or a scrum.

Replaced by:

4. After a team has scored, the same team restarts with a drop kick on or behind the centre of the half-way line. The restart kick must be taken within 30 seconds from the time a conversion has been taken or declined, or from the time a penalty goal or dropped goal is kicked. **Sanction:** Free-kick.

5. When the ball is kicked:
   a. Team-mates of the kicker must be behind the ball. **Sanction:** Scrum.

Replaced by:

   a. Team-mates of the kicker must be behind the ball. **Sanction:** Free-kick.

6. The ball must reach the 10-metre line. **Sanction:** The non-kicking team has the option of the kick being retaken or a scrum.

Replaced by:

6. The ball must reach the 10-metre line. **Sanction:** Free-kick.

8. If the ball goes directly into touch, the non-kicking team chooses one of the following:
   a. The kick being retaken.
   b. Scrum.
   c. Lineout.
   d. Quick-throw.

Replaced by:

8. The ball must not go directly into touch. **Sanction:** Free-kick.

9. If the ball is kicked into the opponents' in-goal without touching any player and an opponent grounds the ball without delay or it goes dead through in-goal, the non-kicking team has the option of having the kick retaken or a scrum.

Replaced by:

9. If the ball is kicked into the opponents' in-goal without touching any player and an opponent grounds the ball without delay or it goes into touch-in-goal or on or over the dead-ball line, the non-kicking team is awarded a free-kick.

LAW 18: TOUCH, QUICK THROW AND LINEOUT

12. Teams form the lineout without delay. **Sanction:** Free-kick.

Replaced by:

12. Teams form the lineout within 15 seconds of the assistant referee or touch judge indicating the mark of touch. **Sanction:** Free-kick.

LAW 19: SCRUM

4. Teams must be ready to form the scrum within 30 seconds of the mark being made. **Sanction:** Free-kick.

Replaced by:

4. Teams must be ready to form the scrum within 15 seconds of the mark being made. **Sanction:** Free-kick.

5. When both teams have 15 players, eight players from each team bind together in formation as outlined in the diagram. Each team must have two props and one hooker in the front row and two locks in the second row. Three back-row players from each team complete the scrum. **Sanction:** Penalty.

Replaced by:

5. A scrum must have three players from each team. All three must stay bound to the scrum until it ends. **Sanction:** Penalty.

6 deleted
7c deleted
7d deleted

23. A front-row player must not intentionally kick the ball out of the tunnel from the direction it was thrown. **Sanction:** Free-kick.

Replaced by:

23. A front-row player must not intentionally kick the ball out of the tunnel or out of the scrum in the direction of the opponents' goal line. **Sanction:** Penalty.

36. The scrum ends:

    b. When the ball reaches the feet of the hindmost player and it is picked up by that player or is played by that team's scrum-half.

Replaced by:

    b. When the ball is played by that team's scrum-half.

LAW 20: PENALTY AND FREE-KICK

8. The kicker may punt, drop-kick or place-kick (other than for touch) the ball.

Replaced by:

8. The kicker may punt or drop-kick the ball but may not place-kick it.

LAW 21: IN-GOAL

BALL KICKED DEAD THROUGH IN-GOAL

Addition:

The restart kick must be taken within 30 seconds from the time the unsuccesful kick at goal was taken.

Variations

10s

WORLD RUGBY™

10s Variations

The laws of the game apply to 10s, subject to the following variations:

LAW 3: TEAM

1. Each team has no more than 15 players in the playing area during play.

Replaced by:

1. Each team has no more than 10 players in the playing area during play.

2 deleted

4. For international matches, a union may nominate up to eight replacements.

Replaced by:

4. A team may nominate up to five replacements.

5. For other matches, the match organiser decides how many replacements may be nominated, up to a maximum of eight.

Replaced by:

5. Match organisers may vary the number of replacements a team may nominate and/or use.

6. Replacements are made only when the ball is dead and only with the permission of the referee.

Replaced by:

6. A team may replace any number of players during a match at any time. Players entering the field of play must do so at the half-way line after the replaced player has left the field of play. **Sanction:** Penalty.

33 deleted

LAW 5: TIME

1. A match lasts no longer than 80 minutes (split into two halves, each of not more than 40 minutes plus time lost), unless the match organiser has authorised the playing of extra-time in a drawn match within a knock-out competition.

Replaced by:

1. A match lasts 20 minutes (split into two halves, each of not more than 10 minutes) plus time lost. Match organisers may vary the duration of the match. When a drawn match requires extra-time, play restarts after a one-minute break with periods of no more than five minutes. After each period, the teams change ends without an interval.

2. Half-time consists of an interval not exceeding 15 minutes as decided by the match organiser. During this time, the teams and match officials may leave the playing enclosure.

Replaced by:

2. Half-time consists of an interval not exceeding two minutes.

LAW 6: MATCH OFFICIALS

3. The referee organises the toss. One of the captains tosses a coin and the other captain calls. 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.

Addition:

a. Before extra-time starts, the referee organises a toss in the same way as before the match.

LAW 8: SCORING

7. When a try is scored, it gives that team the right to attempt a conversion, which may be a place-kick or drop-kick.

Replaced by:

7. When a try is scored, it gives that team the right to attempt a conversion, which must be a drop kick.

8. The kicker:

c deleted

d. Takes the kick within 90 seconds (playing time) from the time the try was awarded, even if the ball rolls over and has to be placed again.
Sanction: Kick is disallowed.

Replaced by:

d. Takes the kick within 30 seconds (playing time) from the time the try was awarded. **Sanction:** Kick is disallowed.

THE OPPOSING TEAM AT A CONVERSION

14. All opposing players retire to their goal line and do not overstep that line until the kicker begins the approach 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.

Replaced by:

14. All opposing players immediately assemble close to their own 10-metre line.

Sanction: If the opposing team at a conversion attempt infringes but the kick is successful, the goal stands. If the kick is unsuccessful, the kicker retakes the conversion 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.

Replaced by:
Sanction: If the opposing team at a conversion attempt infringes but the kick is successful, the goal stands. If the kick is unsuccessful, the kicker retakes the conversion and the opposing team is not allowed to charge.

16 deleted

21. The kick must be taken within 60 seconds (playing time) from the time the team indicated their intention to do so, even if the ball rolls over and has to be placed again. **Sanction:** Kick is disallowed and a scrum is awarded.

Replaced by:

21. The kick must be taken within 30 seconds (playing time) from the time the team indicated their intention to do so. **Sanction:** Kick is disallowed and a scrum is awarded.

24. The kicker places the ball directly on the ground or on sand, sawdust, or a kicking tee. The kicker may be assisted by a placer. Nothing else may be used to assist the kicker. **Sanction:** Scrum.

Replaced by:

24. The kick must be a drop-kick. **Sanction:** Scrum.

Addition:

EXTRA TIME

Addition:

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

LAW 9: FOUL PLAY

28. When a player is being cautioned and suspended for 10 minutes, the referee will show that player a yellow card. If that player later commits another yellow-card offence, the player must be sent off.

Replaced by:

28. When a player is being cautioned and suspended for two minutes, the referee will show that player a yellow card. If that player later commits another yellow-card offence, the player must be sent off.

LAW 12: KICK-OFF AND RESTART KICKS

4. After a team has scored, their opponents restart play on or behind the centre of the half-way line. **Sanction:** The non-kicking team has the option of the kick being retaken or a scrum.

Replaced by:

4. After a team has scored, the same team restarts with a drop kick on or behind the centre of the half-way line. **Sanction:** Free-kick.

5. When the ball is kicked:
   a. Team-mates of the kicker must be behind the ball. **Sanction:** Scrum.

Replaced by:

   a. Team-mates of the kicker must be behind the ball. **Sanction:** Free-kick.

6. The ball must reach the 10-metre line. **Sanction:** The non-kicking team has the option of the kick being retaken or a scrum.

Replaced by:

6. The ball must reach the 10-metre line. **Sanction:** Free-kick.

8. If the ball goes directly into touch, the non-kicking team chooses one of the following:
   a. The kick being retaken.
   b. Scrum.
   c. Lineout.
   d. Quick-throw.

Replaced by:

8. The ball must not go directly into touch. **Sanction:** Free-kick.

9. If the ball is kicked into the opponents' in-goal without touching any player and an opponent grounds the ball without delay or it goes dead through in-goal, the non-kicking team has the option of having the kick retaken or a scrum.

Replaced by:

9. If the ball is kicked into the opponents' in-goal without touching any player and an opponent grounds the ball without delay or it goes into touch-in-goal or on or over the dead-ball line, the non-kicking team is awarded a free-kick.

LAW 19: SCRUM

5. When both teams have 15 players, eight players from each team bind together in formation as outlined in the diagram. Each team must have two props and one hooker in the front row and two locks in the second row. Three back-row players from each team complete the scrum. **Sanction:** Penalty.

Replaced by:

5. A scrum must have five players in two rows from each team. The front row consists of two props and a hooker and the second row consists of two locks. All five must stay bound to the scrum until it ends and may not unbind to play the ball. **Sanction:** Penalty.

6 deleted
7d deleted

36. The scrum ends:

b. When the ball reaches the feet of the hindmost player and it is picked up by that player or is played by that team's scrum-half.

Replaced by:

b. When the ball is played by that team's scrum-half.

LAW 20: PENALTY AND FREE-KICK

8. The kicker may punt, drop-kick or place-kick (other than for touch) the ball.

Replaced by:

8. The kicker may punt or drop-kick the ball but may not place-kick it.

Match official signals

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MATCH OFFICIAL SIGNALS

Primary referee signals

Scrum

Shoulders parallel with touchline. Arm horizontal pointing towards team to throw in the ball.

Free-kick

Shoulders parallel with touchline. Arm bent square at elbow, upper arm pointing towards non-offending team.

Penalty

Shoulders parallel with touchline. Arm angled up, pointing towards non-offending team.

Advantage

Arm outstretched, waist high, towards non-offending team, for a period of approximately five seconds.

Try and penalty try

Referee's back to dead-ball line. Arm raised vertically.

No try

Arms crossed then uncrossed in front of the body.

22 drop-out

Arm points to centre of 22-metre line.

Secondary referee signals

SCRUM

Throw forward or forward pass

Hands gesture as if passing an imaginary ball forward.

Knock-on

Arm outstretched with open hand above head, and moves backwards and forwards.

Unplayable ball in ruck or tackle

Shoulders parallel with the touchline, arm horizontal pointing towards the team to throw in the ball, then pointing the other arm and hand towards the other team's goal line whilst moving it backwards and forwards.

MATCH OFFICIAL SIGNALS

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.

Scrum wheeled more than 90 degrees

Rotating index finger, above the head.

Throw at lineout not straight

Shoulders parallel with touchline. Hand above head indicates the path of the ball, not straight.

Ball held up in in-goal

Space between hands indicates that ball was not grounded.

FREE-KICK

Foot-up by front-row player

Foot raised, foot touched.

Throw at scrum not straight

Hands at knee level imitating action of throw not straight.

Closing gaps in lineout

Both hands at eye level, pointing up, palms inward. Hands meet in squeezing action.

Early lifting and lifting in lineout

Both fists clenched in front, at waist level, making lifting gesture.

PENALTY

Not releasing ball immediately in the tackle

Both hands are close to the chest, as if holding an imaginary ball.

Tackler not releasing tackled player

Arms brought together as if grasping a player and then opening as if releasing a player.

Tackler or tackled player not rolling away

A circular movement with the finger and arm moving away from the body.

Entering tackle from wrong direction

Arm held horizontally then sweep of the arm in a semi-circle.

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.

Diving to the ground near the tackle

Straight arm gesture, pointing downwards to imitate diving action.

MATCH OFFICIAL SIGNALS

Joining a ruck or a maul in front of the back foot and from the side

The hand and arm held horizontally, moving sideways.

Intentionally collapsing ruck or maul

Both arms at shoulder height as if bound around opponent. Upper body lowered and twisted as if pulling down opponent who is on top.

Prop pulling down opponent

Clenched fist and arm bent. Gesture imitates pulling opponent down.

Prop pulling opponent

Clenched fist and arm straight, at shoulder height. Gesture imitates pulling opponent.

Failure to bind

One arm out-stretched as if binding. Other hand moves up and down arm to indicate the extent of a full bind.

Handling ball in ruck or scrum

Hand at ground level, making sweeping action, as if handling the ball.

MATCH OFFICIAL SIGNALS

Barging in lineout

Arm horizontal, elbow pointing out. Arm and shoulder move outwards as if barging opponent.

Leaning on player in lineout

Arm horizontal, bent at elbow, palm down. Downward gesture.

Pushing opponent in lineout

Both hands at shoulder level, with palms outward, making pushing gesture.

Offside in the lineout

Hand and arm move horizontally across chest, towards offence.

Obstruction in open play

Arms crossed in front of chest at right angles to each other, like open scissors.

Offside at scrum, ruck or maul

Shoulders parallel with touchline. Arm hanging straight down, swings in arc along offside line.

MATCH OFFICIAL SIGNALS

Offside under 10-metre law or not 10 metres at penalty and free-kicks

Both hands held open above head.

High tackle (foul play)

Hand moves horizontally in front of neck.

Stamping (foul play)

Stamping action or similar gesture to indicate the offence.

Punching (foul play)

Clenched fist punches open palm.

Dissent (disputing referee's decision)

Outstretched arm with hand opening and closing to imitate talking.

Other signals

Forming a scrum

Elbows bent, hands above head fingers touching.

Offside choice: penalty or scrum

One arm as for penalty. Other arm points to place where scrum may be taken instead of penalty.

Physiotherapist needed

One arm raised indicates physiotherapist is needed for injured player.

Doctor needed

Both arms raised above head indicates a doctor and/or a stretcher is needed for injured player.

Bleeding wound

Arms crossed above head indicates player has bleeding injury and may be temporarily replaced.

Timekeeper to stop and start watch

Arm held up in air and whistle blown when watch should be stopped or started.

Head injury assessment required

Abducted arm flexes and extends to touch head.

Time off

Arms form a T shape.

Referee consults TMO

Extended index fingers draw a rectangle to represent a television screen.

Assistant referee signals

Kick at goal successful

Raises flag to indicate that the ball has gone over the crossbar and between the posts.

Touch and team to throw

Raises flag with one arm, moves to the mark of touch and stands there, pointing with the other arm towards the team entitled to throw.

Foul play

Holds flag horizontally and points infield at right angles to the touchline.

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