

NCR Tag Rugby — Laws of the Game

For definitions, please see the appendix.

Where applicable a law will be marked (P), (R), or (T) to indicate that breach of the law results in a penalty tap, a roll, or a tag respectively.

1. How the game is played

- 1.1. Two teams play against one another, with the goal of winning the game by scoring more points than the other team.
- 1.2. A player of the attacking team may score points for their team by grounding the ball on or over the other team's goal line. This is called a try.
- 1.3. A player of the defending team may prevent the attacking team from scoring by removing one or both tags from the ball carrier.
- 1.4. After the 6th tag a changeover occurs and the defending team becomes the attacking team.
- 1.5. A player may pick up the ball and run with it.
- 1.6. A player may kick the ball.
- 1.7. A player may throw or knock the ball sideways or backwards.
- 1.8. A player may take a tap or roll when the referee awards one.
- 1.9. A player must avoid making contact with players of the other team, with the primary onus being on the attacking team to avoid contact.
- 1.10. While playing the game, all players must comply with the laws.

2. Players and equipment

- 2.1. Each team must have on the field of play at any one time no fewer than four and no more than seven players. (P)
 - 2.1.1. In a mixed competition, each team may have on the field of play at one time no more than four male players. (P)
 - 2.1.2. The match organiser may announce different team sizes and compositions.
- 2.2. The match organiser announces the maximum number of substitutes each team may nominate.
 - 2.2.1. Teams may bring on substitutes at any time whether the ball is in play or not. Unlimited interchange is permitted, and players who have been replaced may in turn come back on as substitutes later in the match.
 - 2.2.2. No stoppage or time will be allowed for substitutions except in the event of an injury.
 - 2.2.3. If a player is replaced while the ball is out of play, the referee waits for the player to leave the field of play before allowing play to restart.
 - 2.2.4. If a replacement is made whilst the ball is in play, the player entering the field

must not take part in or influence play until the player they replaced has left the field. (P)

2.3. Players' equipment must be safe.

2.3.1. A player wears underwear, a jersey or t-shirt, officially approved tag shorts, socks, and footwear.

2.3.2. A player may also wear a soft hat, gloves, an undershirt, a sweatshirt, leggings, and/or tights.

2.3.3. Wherever possible, players from the same team wear jerseys of the same or similar colours and designs, and each player's jersey has a unique number on the back. The match organiser may make this mandatory.

2.3.4. A player may not wear any clothing with pockets (unless fully closed with zips), jewellery, or any clothing or equipment which the referee deems to be dangerous in any way. Jewellery which cannot for whatever reason be removed may instead be covered completely with tape. A player may not wear any loose fitness trackers, watches, sweatbands, or other items on their wrists, but fitness trackers covered by bands that are tight to the skin are permissible. A player may not wear any peaked caps or visors unless the peak is worn to the rear or is soft and flexible.

2.3.5. A player must at all times keep their jersey and any sweatshirts and undershirts tucked into their shorts. A tag may be awarded against a player whose clothing obstructs their shorts and repeat violations may result in a penalty.

2.3.6. A player must wear footwear that fully covers the foot. NCR recommends wearing boots with plastic moulded studs or blades. Trainers are discouraged due to the reduced grip. A player must not wear footwear with metal studs.

2.3.7. The referee should inspect the players' equipment before the match to verify it is compliant with this section. If they discover non-compliant equipment during the match, they will require the player concerned to leave the field and replace or remove the equipment before they may return to the field. A player required to leave the field for this reason may be substituted.

2.3.8. The match organiser supplies enough tags for each team to have two per player on the field. Each team shall have a distinctive colour of tags.

2.4. A player who is bleeding must leave the field and attend to or seek attention for the bleeding. They may be replaced by a substitute. She may not return to the pitch until a match official is satisfied that the player is no longer bleeding.

2.5. A player whose clothing or boots are blood-stained or so damaged as to be dangerous must leave the field and replace the blood-stained or damaged items. They may be replaced by a substitute. They may not return to the pitch without a match official's permission.

2.6. The match ball is a standard size 5 oval rugby ball.

2.6.1. The referee determines whether the ball is sufficiently inflated and inflates it additionally if needed.

2.6.2. In the event of the ball bursting as it is kicked off, it is replaced, and the kick-off

taken again.

2.6.3. In the event of the ball bursting in the act of scoring a try, the try will be awarded.

2.6.4. In the event of the ball bursting otherwise during play, it shall be treated as though a player on the attacking team was tagged.

3. The referee

3.1. The referee is the sole judge of fact and of law.

3.2. All players are under the control of the referee from the start until the end of the match, as well as immediately before and afterwards.

3.3. The referee carries a whistle.

3.4. The referee blows their whistle:

3.4.1. To indicate that a team may kick off or restart play.

3.4.2. To signal an infringement

3.4.3. To signal that a try has been scored.

3.4.4. To stop play when there is an injury, when it is unsafe for play to continue, or for any other reason, and to restart play after a stoppage.

3.4.5. To indicate half-time or the end of the match

3.5. The referee carries a stopwatch and uses it to keep track of the time elapsed in the match unless the match organiser nominates a separate timekeeper.

3.5.1. The referee does not add time to make up for time lost to stoppages in play, unless otherwise instructed by the match organiser.

3.6. The match organiser may nominate one or more assistant referees.

3.6.1. The assistant referees perform such duties as the referee may assign to them. This may include monitoring whether the ball is out of play, watching for forward passes, indicating acts of foul play, and confirming that a try has been scored.

3.6.2. In all cases the referee retains the right to make the final decision and may overrule any assistant referee.

3.8. The referee checks the pitch is in a safe and appropriate condition before the match and reports to the match organiser if it is not.

3.9. The referee at her discretion may temporarily suspend or abandon a match for an appropriate reason, such as adverse weather, interference by spectators, or player misbehaviour. Where possible, the referee will consult the match organiser before abandoning a match.

4. Starting and ending the match

4.1. Before the match, the referee conducts a coin toss with the captains of the two teams. The team captain winning the toss will choose which direction to run in the

first half and which team will kick-off in the first half. In the second half, these are both reversed.

- 4.1.1. The referee may use another agreed random method in lieu of a toss, such as rock-paper-scissors.
- 4.2. The default match duration is 40 minutes, comprised of two halves each of 20 minutes. The match organiser may announce a different match duration and may announce that the match will be played without a half-time break and change of direction.
- 4.3. When the time allotted for a half expires, the referee does not immediately stop play, but instead allows it to continue until the next try, tag, or roll before declaring the end of the half. The award of a penalty does not end the half.
- 4.4. At the end of the match, the team with more points wins. If the teams have the same number of points, the match ends in a draw.
- 4.5. The match organiser may announce that the match cannot end in a draw. If they do, they will also announce what will be done in the event that the match time runs out while the scores are level.

5. The playing area and field of play

- 5.1. The field of play is rectangular.
 - 5.1.1. The match organiser decides the size of the field of play.
 - 5.1.2. The recommended size of the field of play is 70 metres by 50 metres.
 - 5.1.3. The lines along the shorter sides of the field of play are the try lines. A team's try line is the line away from which it is running.
 - 5.1.4. The lines along the longer sides of the field of play are the touch lines.
- 5.2. Behind each try line is another line, parallel to the try line, which is called the dead-ball line. There are also lines connecting the ends of the touch lines to the dead-ball line, which are called the touch-in-goal lines.
- 5.3. The match organiser arranges for lines to be marked, or other markers such as cones to be placed, along the touch lines, the try lines, the dead-ball lines, and the touch-in-goal lines.
- 5.4. The match organiser should also arrange for lines to be marked in the following places. As an alternative, he may arrange for other markers such as cones of a distinctive colour to be placed on the touch line at both sides, where these lines would intersect the touch line.
 - 5.4.1. One line, parallel to and the same distance from each of the try lines (called the half-way line)
 - 5.4.2. Two lines, parallel to the half-way line, each ten metres either side of the halfway line (called the 10 metre lines)
- 5.4. The match organiser should also arrange for short marks or markers such as cones to be placed on each of the touch lines, ten metres from the try line at each end.

- 5.5. The field of play and the immediately surrounding area form the playing area.
- 5.6. The surface of the playing area may be grass, sand, artificial grass, snow, or any other material which is agreed by the match organiser, having regard to health and safety.
- 5.7. Bonus boxes are marked in the centre of each try line, 5 metres wide and 3 metres deep behind the line.

6. Advantage

- 6.1. The advantage law is the most important law in the game and supersedes all other laws except those relating to safety.
- 6.2. If a player infringes a law, but it appears to the referee that it might be more advantageous to the non-offending team to allow play to continue, they may do so. They should communicate that advantage is being played.
- 6.3. If, having allowed play to continue in this way:
 - 6.3.1. the referee determines at any point that the non-offending team has gained more of an advantage than it would if he had awarded a sanction for the infringement, the referee declares “Advantage over” and play continues normally.
 - 6.3.2. the non-offending team commits an infringement, the referee stops play and awards the appropriate sanction for the first infringement. The referee may instead award the appropriate sanction for the second infringement if that infringement was a contact or other safety-related infringement.
 - 6.3.3. the offending team commits a further infringement, the referee may continue to allow play to proceed under this law; if no advantage is gained, he sanctions whichever infringement would lead to the best outcome for the non-offending team.
 - 6.3.4. the non-offending team loses possession, or the referee determines that it cannot gain any advantage from play continuing, the referee stops play and awards the appropriate sanction for the first infringement.
- 6.4. Advantage may not extend past a tag or any other stoppage.

7. Kicking

7.1. Kick-off

- 7.1.1. Each half starts with a kick-off. The result of the coin toss (law 4.1) determines which team will take the kick-off.
- 7.1.2. Play also restarts with a kick-off after a score. The team that scored takes the kick-off.
- 7.1.3. The kick-off is taken from the centre of the half-way line, unless the match organiser specifies a different location, such as due to a short pitch. In this case the rest of this section is adjusted accordingly.
- 7.1.4. The kick-off is taken by a place kick, once the referee has signalled that play can (re)commence. The ball is placed on the ground and no tee may be used. In the

event the ball will not stay in place (for example due to very windy weather) another player from the kicking team may hold it in place.

7.1.5. In mixed games, unless the match organiser announces otherwise, a female player must take the kick-off.

7.1.6. No player on the kicking team may be in front of the kicker when the ball is kicked. A player in violation of this law is treated as an attacking off-side player (see law 12).

7.1.7. Players on the non-kicking team must remain 10 metres from the half-way line until the kick is taken. (P)

7.1.8. No player from the kicking team may touch the ball after it has been kicked until it has either reached the 10-metre line or been touched by a player from the non-kicking team. (P)

7.1.8.1. The kicking team may not shepherd the ball or block defenders from gaining access to it. (P)

7.1.9. The kicker must not kick the ball out of play on the full. (P)

7.1.10. The mark for any penalty awarded under this section is the centre of the half-way line, even if the kick off was taken somewhere else due to law 7.1.3.

7.2. Drop-out.

7.2.1. To take a drop-out, a player drop-kicks the ball from behind their try-line and roughly in the centre.

7.2.2. Any player may take the kick. The ball may travel any height.

7.2.3. The kicker must not kick the ball out of play on the full. (P)

7.2.4. The ball must travel at least 10 metres from the kicking team's try line. (P)

7.2.5. (S) No player from the kicking team may be in front of the kicker when the ball is kicked. A player in violation of this law is treated as an attacking off-side player (see law 12).

7.2.6. No player from the kicking team may touch the ball after it has been kicked until either it has reached the 10-metre line, or a player of the non-kicking team has touched the ball. (P)

7.2.7. No player from the kicking team may shepherd the ball or block players from the other team from gaining access to it. (P)

7.2.8. The mark for any penalty awarded under this section is ten metres infield from the centre of the kicking team's try line.

7.3. Other kicks

7.3.1. A player may kick the ball from his hands.

7.3.2. A player may kick the ball when it is on the ground, except where it would be dangerous to do so. (P)

- 7.3.3. In either of the two above cases, the ball may not travel above the referee's shoulder height before it bounces. (R)
- 7.3.4. If the ball hits or rebounds off a player's leg or foot, this is not a kick and is not subject to the above rules.
- 7.3.5. A player may not intentionally kick the ball out of play in order to waste time. (P)
- 7.3.6. If a player kicks the ball and is simultaneously tagged, they may not kick the ball again until they have recovered their tag. (R)
- 7.4. If the ball is kicked and comes into contact with the referee, and they deem play to be irregularly affected, they award a roll to the defending team. (R)

8. Scoring

- 8.1. A player scores a try when they have control of the ball and ground it in the try zone.
- 8.2. A player may dive from the field of play whilst carrying or chasing the ball in order to score a try.
- 8.3. But a player must not make contact with an opponent whilst diving, dive under or over an opponent, nor dive in a dangerous manner. (P)
- 8.4. A try is worth one point, with the exception of a try scored by a female player in a mixed game, which is worth an additional point.
- 8.5. In certain games, a bonus box is in use. If a player grounds the ball within the bonus box, including on one of its edges, they will be awarded an additional point (a total of 3 points for a female player scoring in the bonus box in a mixed game).
- 8.5.1. Depending on the arrangements at the venue, the match organiser may announce that the extra point for scoring in the bonus box is only awarded if the scorer has entered the box through the front, or through the front or side.
- 8.5.2. If a player enters the box incorrectly and scores, the try will still be awarded but without the extra point.
- 8.6. The referee may award a penalty try when an offence punishable by a penalty prevents a likely try from being scored. The penalty try is worth the same number of points as the referee considers would have been scored but for the offence, and in this regard they may take into account whether the try would have been scored by a female player and/or in the bonus box.

9. Open play

- 9.1. A player may only have possession of the ball, or kick or play at the ball, if they have a tag of their team's colour attached to each side of their shorts. (T)
- 9.1.1. At any point that the ball carrier no longer has a tag of her team's colour on each side of their shorts, such as due to a tag being removed by the defending team or falling off, the referee will count a tag, and the play is restarted as per law 13.
- 9.1.2. There is an exception where a player has been early- or late-tagged (see law 13.7).

- 9.1.3.** There is also an exception for a player who is restarting play (see laws 14.5.1 and 15.7).
- 9.1.4.** A player may defend and tag another player whilst missing one or more tags.
- 9.2.** If a player catches, plays, or picks up the ball whilst they do not have a tag on each side of his shorts, they are treated as having been tagged where they caught or picked up the ball (and not where their tag is) unless an exception applies.
- 9.3.** The ball carrier may not touch or adjust either of their tags. (T) **9.4.** The ball carrier must not intentionally remove one of their own tags. (P) **9.5.** The ball carrier must not perform a roll when they have not been tagged. (P) **9.6.** The ball carrier must not jump nor bend forward to avoid a tag. (P)
- 9.7.** The ball carrier must not surrender and stop all attempts to attack with the intent of taking a quick roll. (P)
- 9.7.1.** This includes standing still for more than a brief period of time when a defender is within tagging distance or voluntarily offering up a tag.
- 9.7.2.** It also includes stopping and preparing for a roll before having been tagged, especially with the intention of making a quick roll.
- 9.7.3.** It does not include stopping in order to avoid contact or going into touch.
- 9.8.** Once the ball carrier has stepped on or over the other team's try line, they may not pass or kick the ball, nor run back into the field of play. (T)
- 9.9.** If the ball carrier has not been tagged, a defending player must not call "Tag" or take any action that would lead the ball carrier to believe he has been tagged. This is referred to as a phantom tag. (P)
- 9.10.** A player may not dive or fall on a loose ball except as follows. (P)
- 9.10.1.** A player may dive on a loose ball in the act of scoring.
- 9.10.2.** After the ball is kicked, a player from the non-kicking team may dive or fall on the ball until the next time a player takes hold of the ball.
- 9.10.3.** If the ball is loose other than after a kick, a player from the attacking team may dive or fall on the ball.
- 9.10.4.** In all cases, a player diving or falling on the ball must do so safely and without causing contact with an opponent. (P)
- 9.11.** A player on the defending team may not call for the ball carrier to pass the ball to him. (P)
- 9.12.** (B) If two players compete for the same ball after it has been kicked and the referee deems that there is a safety risk or a dispute over who is entitled to possession, they may deem the player from the non-kicking team to have been tagged and award a roll to that team on tag 1. This law is called the "safety law".
- 9.13.** If two players catch or take hold of the ball at the same time in other

circumstances and the referee cannot determine which player took hold of the ball first, they count an additional tag to the team last in possession. (T)

9.14. If a player engages in negative play, the referee will instruct them to "play now" and begin a 3-second count. The player must then attempt to attack within 3 seconds. (T)

9.14.1. The referee may issue a warning to a team which repeatedly engages in negative play and may then penalise further negative play by that team. (P)

10.Foul play

10.1. A player must not intentionally or persistently break any law. (P) **10.2.** (S)

A player must not trip, kick, or strike another player or the referee. (P)

10.3. (S) A player must not make contact with another player recklessly, intentionally, or carelessly. (P)

10.4. A player must not play in any way which the referee considers dangerous. (P)

10.5. (S) A player must not use foul, abusive, or insulting language or behaviour.

(P)

10.6. A player must not obstruct or impede an opponent, nor run behind a player from her own team in a way that results in an opponent being obstructed. (P)

10.7. (S) A player must not dispute the decision of the referee by word or action.

(P) **10.8.** A player must not engage in unsporting conduct of any sort. (P) **10.9.** (S) A

player must not deliberately waste time. (P)

10.10. A player in the defending team must not call for a pass from a player in possession. (P)

10.11.(S) A player who commits any of the above infringements or any serious infringement, or whose team commits the same or similar infringements repeatedly, may be cautioned, temporarily suspended (sin-binned), or sent-off.

10.12. The referee may issue a caution to an individual player or a general caution to a team. If he issues a caution to a team, each player is considered to have received an individual caution. If a player who has been cautioned commits an infringement of a similar nature to the one which led to the caution, he is liable to be sin-binned or sent-off.

10.13.(S) The referee may show a yellow card to a player whom he temporarily suspends and a red card to a player whom he sends-off.

10.14.(B) A player who is part of one of the teams that is playing but is not currently on the field of play (e.g. a substitute) may be penalised, sin-binned, or sent-off in the same way as one who is on the field. In the event of such a player being sin-binned or sent-off, the team must play with one fewer player for the duration of the sin bin or for the rest of the match as appropriate.

10.15.(S) A player who is temporarily suspended plays no part in the match for the duration of the temporary suspension. The duration of the suspension is 5 minutes in a 20-minute half, and pro-rata for other match durations. The player may not be substituted or replaced and is required to stand behind the other team's try line for the duration of the suspension. They must surrender their tags to the referee while temporarily suspended.

10.16. A player who is sent-off plays no further part in the match and the referee may require them to leave the playing area. They may be subject to suspension as determined by the match organiser.

10.17. If the referee is assaulted or unduly harassed by any person in connection with any match he referees, the referee shall submit a report on the matter to the match organiser.

10.18.(S) The match organiser may also require the referee to report to him on sending's off, sinbanning's, or both.

11.(S) Ball out of play

1. When a player is carrying the ball, it is out of play when the player steps on or over the touch line or touch-in-goal line.

1. The ball is not out of play when a player carries the ball over the try line.

2. When a player is tagged while standing in his team's try zone, the ball is out of play.

3. When a player is not carrying the ball, it is out of play when it touches either touch line, either try line, or the ground outside those lines.

4. When the ball is kicked into the in-goal area, it is out of play when it touches a defending player, except if it was caught from a kick-off or drop-out, in which case play continues.

5. If the ball or the ball carrier goes out of play via the touch line (but not touch in-goal), then play restarts as follows.

1. If a player kicks the ball from inside his team's own half, the ball bounces anywhere in the field of play, and it then crosses the touchline within ten metres of the defending team's try line, the team that kicked takes a tap, 10 metres from the touchline and 10 metres from the try line. (This is called the 50:10 rule.)

2. Otherwise, the team that was not last to play at the ball takes a roll. The mark for the roll is ten metres away from the touch line, in line with the point where the ball crossed the touch line.

3. If the ball went out of play on a kick in open play, the non-kicking team may instead opt for the mark to be where the ball was kicked from.

4. If the ball deflects or rebounds off a player, this does not constitute playing at the ball.

5. The ball is out of play when a try is scored. Play restarts with a kick-off.

6. If the ball goes out of play via the try line, including via touch-in-goal, then the manner of restarting play depends on how it went out of play. In this section the team whose try line the ball crossed or touched is referred to as the defending team.
 1. If the ball went out of play on the full from a kick-off, the non-kicking team is awarded a penalty tap at the centre of the half-way line.
 2. If the ball went out of play on the from a goal-line drop out, the non-kicking team is awarded a penalty tap halfway between the touchlines and ten metres from the try line.
 3. Otherwise, if no player has held or kicked the ball since the last kick-off or goal-line drop out, the defending team restarts play with a goal-line drop out.
 4. (S) Otherwise, if the ball was last played at by the attacking team, the defending team restarts play with a tap kick halfway between the touch lines ten metres from the try line. This action is known as a “10 metre restart”. After a 10m restart, the team has 7 tags instead of 6 in their next set, and the next tag is called tag zero.
 5. If the ball was last played at by the defending team, or if a player was tagged on or behind their team’s try line, the defending team restarts play with a goal-line drop out.
7. The ball is also out of play when the referee blows the whistle to signal an infringement, when they call a tag, or when they stop play for any other reason.

12. Offside

- 12.1. (B) An attacking player becomes offside if they are in front of a team-mate who holds the ball, plays at the ball, or is hit by the ball. This includes at a kick-off or drop-out.
- 12.2. A defending player becomes offside if they are in front of the offside line when a tag has been made or a penalty tap awarded, unless they are the one permitted marker at a tag. (Note that this law applies to the new defending team in the event of a sixth tag.)
- 12.3. (B) An attacking player in the field of play becomes onside when an onside player from his team runs in front of them, or when they run behind an onside player from his team.
- 12.4. (S) A defending player in the field of play becomes onside when they reach the offside line or when the ball carrier runs 10 metres in any direction.
- 12.5. (B) A player who is offside must not take any action that interferes with play or has the potential to interfere with play. (P)
 - 12.5.1. This includes picking up or playing at the ball and may also include standing in or moving towards a place where they reduce the options of the attacking team.
 - 12.5.2. Being offside does not in itself incur a penalty, it is what a player does whilst offside that may incur a penalty.

12.5.3. The mark for a penalty awarded against a defending player who commits this infringement is where the player should have been standing on the offside line.

12.6. (B) If an offside player on the attacking team inadvertently interferes with play, such as by being hit by the ball or being run into by a teammate who is the ball carrier, a roll is awarded to the other team. (R)

13.The tag

13.1. A defending player tags the ball carrier by removing a tag from the ball carrier's shorts and holding it up in the air. A player may optionally shout "Tag" when they do this.

13.2. A defending player does not need to have their tags on to remove a tag from the ball carrier.

13.3. The ball carrier is also deemed to have been tagged if:

13.3.1. They touch either of their tags with hand or arm.

13.3.2. Any part of their body other than their feet touches the ground within the field of play whilst a member of the defending team is within tagging distance.

13.3.3. They have just legally dived or fallen on the ball and a member of the defending team is within tagging distance.

13.3.4. They come into contact with the referee.

13.3.5. Either tag falls off.

13.3.6. They hold or touch the ball in open play without a tag attached on each side of their shorts; or

13.3.7. The attacking team breaks any rule marked with (T).

13.4. When a defending player removes a tag, they must promptly drop it or hand it back to the player they tagged. They must not throw the tag more than one metre away from where they removed the tag. (P)

13.5. When the ball carrier is tagged, the referee announces the number of tags that have occurred in that set. The referee will also raise their hand to indicate the fifth tag. Then the player who was the ball carrier takes a roll at the mark, following law 14, unless it was the sixth tag in the set, in which case any player from the opposing team takes a roll instead (a changeover).

13.6. If a defending player tags the ball carrier as they pass or kick the ball, play continues. The referee should call "simultaneous" or "play on" to acknowledge the occurrence and the attacking player must reattach their tags properly before receiving a pass or otherwise picking up the ball again. (T)

13.7. A player must not call "tag" or make any other indication that a tag has been removed when it has not been. This is called a "phantom tag". (P)

13.8. A player must not tag an opposing player who is not carrying the ball. (P)

13.8.1. If a player does this, the referee may apply the advantage law and call "early

tag” or “late tag” as appropriate.

13.8.2. If the referee calls “early tag” or “late tag”, then the player who was illegally tagged may continue until the next legal tag or other stoppage without replacing his tags and may play at or carry the ball as though he had both tags on.

13.8.3. If the non-offending team keeps or regains possession after a late tag, the next time their player is tagged will be a tag zero.

13.8.4. A ball carrier who is missing both tags is deemed to be tagged if a defender comes within tagging distance. At this point the referee will determine whether to allow play to continue from that point or to stop play and award a penalty for the infringement committed.

13.9. If a player on the defending team plays at or holds the ball, their team becomes the attacking team and gains a new set of six tags.

13.9.1. This implies, for example, that if a player on the attacking team kicks the ball, a player from the defending team sticks out their foot and plays at it, and it is regathered by the kicking team, the kicking team will receive a new set of six tags as it was very briefly the defending team.

13.9.2. If the ball hits or rebounds off a player but the player was not attempting to play at the ball, the tag count continues.

14.The roll

14.1. A player takes a roll after they are tagged.

14.1.1. If a player becomes injured in the course of being tagged, any player from their team may take the roll.

14.1.2. The mark for the roll is where the player was tagged. If they were tagged twice, the mark is where they were tagged first. The mark will be a minimum of 2 metres from the try line.

14.2. When the referee awards a roll to a team for a violation of any law marked (R) or on a sixth tag:

14.2.1. Unless another law says otherwise, the mark for the roll is where the law was violated.

14.2.2. Any player may take the roll, at or directly behind the mark.

14.2.3. The mark for a roll will be a minimum of 5 metres from either try line or touch line.

14.3. Where the referee has stopped play and no other method of restarting the game is indicated, the team in possession immediately before the stoppage takes a roll, continuing the tag count from immediately before the stoppage. If neither team was in possession, the referee determines which team should take a roll to restart play.

14.4. The player who takes the roll is called the roller. He places the ball on the ground immediately in front of them, then pushes it straight backwards a maximum of two metres along the ground with the heel of either foot. If the roller does not roll the

ball in the correct manner, the referee blows the whistle and instructs them to take the roll again in the correct manner. Repeated failure to comply with this law may be deemed to be a violation of law 10.1 or 10.9.

- 14.4.1. The roller must take the roll without undue delay. (R)
- 14.4.2. Where the referee considers that a roll is being delayed, they may begin a three second count and the roller must take the roll within that time. (R)
- 14.4.3. If the roller strikes the ball more than once but the roll is otherwise taken properly, play continues.
- 14.5. A second player from the attacking team stands behind the roller. They are called the dummy-half. They pick up the ball after the roller plays it backwards and may then continue play.
 - 14.5.1. If the dummy-half does not have both their tags on, they may take up to one step before passing the ball or kicking it. This is an exception to rule 13.3.5. They may not run with the ball or take more than one step. (T)
 - 14.5.2. If the dummy-half does not promptly touch or pick up the ball, the referee begins a three-second count, and the dummy-half must touch or pick up the ball during that three-second period. (R)
- 14.6. The offside line for the defending team is a line parallel to the try lines and seven metres from the mark for the roll, except if the roll takes place within seven metres of the defending team's try line, the offside line is the try line. The offside line is no longer in effect once the dummy-half touches the ball.
- 14.7. At most one member of the defending team may choose to be the marker. All other players must retreat to the offside line. (P)
 - 14.7.1. (S) If there is a marker, he must stand directly in front of the roller and not to either side and must remain within one metre of the roller until the dummy-half touches the ball. (P)
 - 14.7.2. The marker must not touch or interfere with the roller. (P)
 - 14.7.3. (S) The marker must not make contact with the roller, such as by resting his hand on him. (P)
 - 14.7.4. The marker must not attempt to strike for the ball. (P)
 - 14.7.5. The marker must not under any circumstances whatsoever run around the roller to attempt to pick up or kick the ball until the dummy-half has played the ball. (P)
 - 14.7.6. The marker must not attempt to stand in front of their correct position or misrepresent the correct location of the mark. (P)
- 14.8. When the defending team does not assign a marker to a roll, the roller may, instead of taking a roll in the above manner, replace his tags, place the ball on the ground, tap it with his foot, pick it up, and continue play. If he is missing a tag, he may tap the ball but must then kick or pass it without taking more than one step. (T)
- 14.9. If the roller drops the ball or otherwise loses control of it whilst attempting to roll

the ball, a roll is awarded to the other team. (R)

14.10. The roller must not touch or interfere with the marker. (P)

15.The penalty tap

15.1. The referee awards a penalty tap to the non-infringing team whenever a player infringes any law marked (P).

15.2. When the referee awards a penalty tap, all players from the infringing team must promptly retreat from the mark until they reach the offside line. (P)

15.3. The mark for a penalty tap is, unless specified otherwise, where the infringement occurred.

15.3.1. The mark for a penalty tap is always at least 5 metres from either try line or touch line.

15.3.2. The mark for a penalty awarded for a violation of any law in section 7.1 (kick-off) is the centre of the half-way line, even if kick-offs are not being taken from there.

15.3.3. The mark for a penalty awarded for a violation of any law in section 7.2 (drop out) is in the centre of the field, ten metres from the try-line of the kicking team.

15.3.4. (S) If a defending player interferes with the kicker after a kick (including committing a late or early tag), the mark is where the ball stops rolling or was stopped by another player.

15.3.5. (B) If a player commits an infringement while the ball is out of play, the mark is where play would have otherwise restarted, except that if a goal-line drop-out had been awarded, the mark is halfway between the touchlines and 10 metres from the try line.

15.4. The offside line at a penalty tap is a line 10 metres from the mark and parallel to the try lines, except that if the mark is within 10 metres of the infringing team's try line, the offside line is that try line. The offside line ceases to apply once the ball is tapped.

15.5. Any player from the non-infringing team takes the penalty tap in one of the following ways:

15.5.1. (S) By standing on the mark, holding the ball in their hands, and bringing the ball into contact with their foot or vice-versa. The ball does not have to leave her hands.

15.5.2. (S) By placing the ball on the mark and bringing their foot into contact with it. The ball does not have to move any visible distance.

15.5.3. By taking a roll. If a player opts to take a roll, this follows all of the usual rules for a roll except that the defending team may not appoint a marker.

15.6. (S) A player may also take the penalty tap anywhere behind the mark on a line parallel to the touchlines.

- 15.7. If a player who does not have both tags on takes a penalty tap, she may take up to one step with the ball and must then pass or kick it. This is an exception to rule 13.3.5. (T)
- 15.8. A player may not take a penalty tap until the referee has physically and verbally given the mark.
- 15.9. If a player takes a penalty tap too quickly or from the wrong location, the referee blows the whistle and requests the player to take it again from the right location, subject to law 10.9.
- 15.10. If the offending team commits a further offence after the penalty is awarded, the referee may advance the mark once only by ten metres, subject to law 15.3.1. This includes if a player from the offending team fails to comply with law 15.2. If the mark is advanced this way, the referee will instruct the non-offending team to wait until all of the offending team members have retreated to the offside line and will then blow their whistle to signal that the game may be restarted.

16. Knock-on and throw-forward

- 16.1. (S) A player commits a knock-on when they lose possession of the ball and it travels forward, or when the ball travels forward off their hand or arm, whether intentionally or not. (R)
- 16.1.1. This includes a situation where a player loses possession of the ball, it hits their leg in an uncontrolled manner, and travels forward.
- 16.1.2. However, if the player regains control of the ball before it touches the ground or another player, this is not a knock-on. Nor is it a knock-on when the ball is knocked backwards but bounces forward.
- 16.1.3. If the ball is propelled forward in another way, such as off a player's head, torso, or legs, play continues.
- 16.1.4. There is no additional sanction for a deliberate knock-on.
- 16.2. A player commits a throw-forward when they throw or pass the ball and it travels forward before touching the ground. (R)
- 16.2.1. But it is not a throw-forward if a player throws the ball backwards or sideways and it is blown forward by the wind.
- 16.3. If a player commits a knock-on or throw-forward, the non-offending team receives a roll at the location of the infringement.
- 16.4. After a knock-on or throw-forward, the advantage law (law 5) may apply.
- 16.4.1. If it does, and the non-offending team gains possession of the ball, they have one extra play in their next set.
- 16.4.2. The referee will declare the next tag "tag zero" to account for this, irrespective of the field position of that tag.
- 16.4.3. If tag zero occurs in a location that is disadvantageous to the non-offending team, the referee may instead award a roll to that team at the location of the infringement.

16.4.4. If a knock-on occurs and the non-offending team immediately kicks the ball forward but fails to regain possession, then no advantage has occurred, and the referee awards a roll to the non-offending team at the location of the infringement.

16.5. A player must not deliberately commit a throw-forward. (P)

16.6. A player must not deliberately throw, pass, or knock the ball over the head of an opponent. (P)

16.7. If a player knocks the ball sideways or backwards, play continues. It is not an infringement to knock or throw the ball out of play.

17.Contact

17.1. A player must not initiate contact with an opposing player or physically impede their progress. (P)

17.1.1. This applies to both attacking players and defending players. When contact occurs, the referee determines which player initiated the contact.

17.1.2. This applies whether or not a player has the ball.

17.1.3. An attacking player who is spinning or rotating will always be deemed to have initiated any contact that occurs.

17.1.4. As it is primarily the duty of attacking players to avoid contact, where the referee is in doubt as to which player-initiated contact, they will deem it to have been initiated by the attacking player.

17.2. (S) The ball carrier must not use her hand, any part of their body, or the ball to fend off another player nor to block access to their tags. (P)

17.3. When attempting to make a tag, a defending player may reach across the ball-carrier's body, but only if they do not make contact or slow down the ball-carrier. (P)

17.4. A player must not hold onto another player or their clothing or equipment.

(P) **17.5.** A player must not knock or grab the ball out of the hands of an opponent.

(P)

Appendix 1 — Definitions

- **Arm:** From a player's fingers to their armpit, not including the shoulder.
- **Attacking player:** A player on the attacking team.
- **Attacking team:** The team currently in possession of the ball, or if no team is in possession, the team which was last to hold or play at the ball.
- **Backward:** Towards the team's own try line, except when a player has crossed behind her try line, in which case backward means away from the line.
- **Defending team:** The team which is not the attacking team.
- **Drop-kick:** A kick where the kicker holds the ball in his hands, drops it onto the

ground, and kicks it on the first rebound.

- Forward: Towards the opposing team's try line, except when a player has crossed the opposing team's try line, in which case forward means away from that line.
- Ground the ball: A player grounds the ball by holding it and touching the ground with it, or by pushing the ball downwards with their hand or arm so that it touches the ground.
- Jump: To spring off the ground with both feet simultaneously.
- Mark (1): The place on the field of play where a roll or penalty tap is to be taken.
- Mark (2): To stand in front of a roll whilst it is being taken.
- Marker: The member of a defending team who is standing in front of a roll.
- Match official: The match organiser, the referee, any assistant referees, and any timekeeper.
- Match organiser: The person responsible for arranging the match and setting any special rules.
- Negative play: When a player in possession of the ball stops attacking or attempting to pass any defenders, instead trying to entice the defending team forwards, but the defending team holds its position, resulting in a standoff.
- Offside: A player who is offside is in a position where they must temporarily take no part in the game.
- Offside line: The line where players must stand on or behind
- On his feet: With no part of his body touching the ground other than his feet or legs below (but not including) his knees.
- On the full: Without bouncing.
- Penalty tap: See law 15
- Phantom tag: See law 13.6
- Play at: To intentionally touch or kick the ball or hold it.
- Roll: See law 14
- Set: The series of (usually) six tags which a team can take before it must surrender possession.
- Surrender: The ball-carrier gives up and fails to attack or evade being tagged with the intent of getting a quick play-the-ball. This can include, for example, standing in place and swivelling.
- Tag zero: When a team has been awarded an extra tag in their next set, the first tag will be called tag zero, followed by one and so on.
- Tagging distance: A player is within tagging distance of another player if he is close enough to remove that player's tag, or would be close enough if that player had

both tags on in the correct manner.

- Tap kick: The action of briefly bringing the foot into contact with the ball, which is either on the ground or held in the hands. The ball does not need to move any visible distance nor leave the hand.
- Touch: The area outside the field of play behind both touch lines.
- Touch-in-goal: The area outside the field of play with is both outside the nearest touchline and the nearest try-line.
- Touch the ball: When the ball comes into contact with a player, intentionally or not.

