



IRB LEISURE RUGBY LAWS **BEACH TOUCH RUGBY**

INTRODUCTION

IRB Leisure Rugby Laws have been designed so that Unions may develop non-contact Rugby. These Laws have been produced so that there are some guidelines and principles in place for Beach Touch Rugby. Unions having jurisdiction over their developmental processes, matches, competitions and festivals may need to vary these Laws as deemed appropriate.

LAW 1: THE GROUND

1.1 Surface of the playing enclosure

- (a) The surface must be safe to play on at all times.
- (b) The surface must be sand.

1.2 Dimensions

Match organisers may decide the dimensions of the playing area according to the requirements of the competition.

1.3 Lines on the playing enclosure

The lines on the playing enclosure are made of tape, rope, string or inflatable surrounds and include:

- The dead ball lines and touch-in-goal lines which are outside the field of play (where in-goal areas apply)
- The goal lines which are within the in-goal areas but outside the field of play
- The touch lines which are outside the field of play

1.4 Objections to the ground

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

LAW 2: THE BALL

- 2.1 The ball must conform to IRB Laws of the Game Law 2.
- 2.2 The ball must be size 4.

LAW 3: NUMBER OF PLAYERS - THE TEAM

- 3.1 **Maximum:** Each team must have no more than six players on the playing area. Match organisers may vary the maximum numbers appropriate to the match or tournament.
- 3.2 **More than the permitted numbers:** At any time before or during a match a team captain may make an objection to the referee about the number of players in the opponent's team. As soon as the referee knows that a team has too many players, the referee must order the captain of that team to reduce the number appropriately. A try is disallowed when scored by a team with more than the permitted number of players.
Sanction: Free pass at the place where the game would restart
- 3.3 **Players nominated as substitutes:** A team may nominate up to five substitutes. A team may substitute any number of players during a match providing they do so when the ball is dead. Substitutes must enter the playing area at the half way line. A player leaving the playing area may do so from any place.
- 3.4 **Sent off for foul play:** A player sent off for foul play must not be replaced or substituted.
- 3.5 **Injured player:** If the referee decides – with or without the advice of a doctor or other medically qualified person – that a player is so injured that the player should stop playing, the referee should order that player to leave the playing area. The referee may also order an injured player to leave the field in order to be medically examined.
- 3.6 **Blood injury:** A player who has an open or bleeding wound must leave the playing area. The player may return only when the bleeding has stopped or controlled and covered.



LAW 4: PLAYERS' CLOTHING

- 4.1** A player wears a jersey, vest or tee-shirt. A player wears shorts. A player may wear socks.
- 4.2 Additional items of clothing:** A player may wear additional items of clothing as permitted by IRB Law 4 and IRB Regulation 12 except shin pads.
- 4.3 Banned Items of clothing**
- (a)** A player must not wear any item that is banned in accordance with IRB Law 4 or Regulation 12.
- (b)** A player should not wear footwear. In special circumstances, and at their discretion, match organisers may permit footwear, providing such items do not have studs.
- 4.4** The referee has the authority to decide at any time before or during the match that an item of a player's clothing is dangerous or illegal. Such clothing must be removed or replaced before the player takes part – or resumes play - in the match.

LAW 5 – TIME

- 5.1 Duration of the match:** A match lasts no longer than ten minutes plus time lost, extra time and any special conditions. A match is divided into two halves each of not more than five minutes playing time. Match organisers may vary the duration of the match appropriate to the match or tournament.
- 5.2 Half time:** After half time the teams change ends. There is an interval of not more than two minutes. During the interval the teams, the referee and the assistant referees remain in the playing area. Match organisers may vary the duration of the half time.
- 5.3** The referee keeps the time but may delegate the duty to either or both the assistant referees and/or the official time-keeper if appointed.
- 5.4 Time lost to injury:** The referee may stop play for not more than one minute so that an injured player can be treated, or for any other permitted delay. The referee may allow play to continue while a medically trained person treats an injured player at the touchline. If a player is seriously injured and needs to be removed from the field of play, the referee has the discretion to allow the necessary time to have the injured player removed from the field of play.
- 5.5 Making up time lost:** Any playing time lost is made up in the same half of the match.
- 5.6 Playing extra time:** A match may last more than ten minutes if the match organiser has authorised the playing of extra time and established the duration of extra time to take place following a drawn match.
- 5.7 Referee's right to end a match:** The referee has the authority to end a match at any time when believing further play would be dangerous.
- 5.8 When time expires:** Play ceases when the ball next becomes dead. When a free pass is awarded and then time expires, play continues until the ball next becomes dead unless a further free pass has been awarded.



LAW 6 – MATCH OFFICIALS

- 6.1 Every match is under the control of a referee. Additional persons, as authorised by the match organisers may include the assistant referees, reserve referee and/or reserve assistant referee.
- 6.2 **Toss.** The referee organises the coin toss to determine which team kicks off and in which direction. One of the captains tosses a coin and the other captain calls to see who wins the toss. The winner of the toss decides whether to kick off or to choose an end. If the winner of the toss decides to choose an end, the opponents must kick off and vice versa. (Other appropriate methods may be used.)
- 6.3 The referee may consult with assistant referees in regard to matters relating to their duties, the Law relating to foul play, or timekeeping.
- 6.4 If a player is injured and continuation of play would be dangerous, the referee must blow the whistle immediately.
- 6.5 If the referee stops play because of player injury when an infringement has not occurred, play resumes with a free pass to the team in possession of the ball when play stopped. If neither team had possession the attacking team is awarded the free pass.

LAW 7 – MODE OF PLAY

- 7.1 A match is started by a free pass, ground touch or uncontested punt. After the start, any player who is onside may take the ball and run with it. Any player may throw it. Any player may give the ball to another player. Any player may touch tackle a player holding the ball. Any player may ground the ball in in-goal. Whatever a player does must be in accordance with the laws of the game. The ball must not be kicked in open play.
Sanction: Free pass
- 7.2 Should an event occur which is not covered by these Laws, play restarts with a free pass to the team last in possession of the ball. If neither team was in possession, the attacking team is awarded the free pass.

LAW 8 – ADVANTAGE

- 8.1** The advantage Law precedes most other Laws to promote continuity. When a team infringes the Laws and opponents have opportunity to gain an advantage, the referee delays blowing the whistle until determining whether or not an advantage is gained.

LAW 9 – METHOD OF SCORING

- 9.1 Try.** A try is scored when a player is first to ground the ball in the opponents' In-goal.
Value: 1 point
- 9.2 Penalty try.** If a player would probably have scored a try but for foul play by an opponent, a penalty try is awarded.
Value: 1point

LAW 10 – FOUL PLAY

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

Sanction: Free pass at the place of infringement

10.2 All players must respect the authority of the referee. They must not dispute the referee's decisions. They must stop playing at once when the referee blows the whistle except at starts and restarts. The captain is the only player who can make a comment to the referee.

Sanction: Free pass at the place of infringement or where play would next commence

10.3 Sanctions for infringements of foul play

(a) Any player who infringes the foul play Law must be:

- admonished, or
- cautioned and temporarily suspended for a period of two minutes playing time, or
- sent off

(b) A player who has been cautioned and temporarily suspended who then commits a second cautionable offence must be sent-off.

LAW 11 – OFFSIDE

11.1 In general play a player is offside when ahead of a team mate who is carrying the ball or ahead of a team mate who last played it. An offside player is temporarily out of the game, and liable to sanction if taking part in the game.

Sanction: Free pass

LAW 12 – KNOCK ON AND THROW FORWARD

- 12.1** A knock on occurs when a player loses ball possession, or contacts the ball with hand or arm, and the ball goes forward to touch the ground or another player before this player gains, or regains, possession. Forward means towards the opposing team's goal line.
Sanction: Free pass to the non-offending team
- 12.2** A throw forward occurs when a player throws or passes the ball forward.
Sanction: Free pass to the non-offending team
- 12.3** **Intentional knock or throw forward:** A player must not intentionally knock the ball forward with hand or arm, nor throw forward.
Sanction: Free pass. A penalty try must be awarded if the offense prevents a try that would probably otherwise have been scored.

LAW 13 – STARTS AND RESTARTS

- 13.1** A free pass is used to start each half of the match. Restarts are taken as free passes and occur after a score or a touch down. The Match organisers may permit the use of a punt kick to kickoff. If a punt kick-off is used the kicking team must not cross the half-way line until the ball is in the possession of one of the opponents.
- 13.2** Free passes at the start of each half and at restarts must be taken at or behind the centre of the half-way-line. The match organisers may permit the use of a punt kick to restart play. If a punt restart kick is used the team that scored takes the restart kick. If a punt restart kick is used the kicking team must not cross the half-way line until the ball is in the possession of one of the opponents.

LAW 14 – BALL ON THE GROUND - NO TACKLE

- 14.1** If the ball goes to ground a free pass is awarded to the team in opposition to the team that was responsible for the ball going to ground.



LAW 15 – TACKLE

- 15.1** A tackle occurs when the ball carrier is touched by an opposition player with two hands simultaneously on any part of the body below the shoulders. Match organisers may introduce one handed touches. Match organisers may decide to restrict body areas where touches may be made particularly where there are mixed gender matches.
- 15.2** When a player on their feet tackles an opponent the word “Touch!” must be called at the same time by that player. If the referee considers that a touch has not taken place the referee will call “Play on!”.
- 15.3** The tackler must not attempt to pull the ball from the ball carriers hands and must not prevent the ball carrier from playing the ball.
Sanction: Free pass
Match organisers have three options for the application of Laws at a tackle:
A. Pass from the tackle
B. Ground touch
C. Place the ball

A - Pass from the tackle

- 15.4** No player may prevent the tackled player from passing the ball.
Sanction: Free pass
- 15.5** Players in opposition to a tackled player must immediately retire to behind the ball and if they are in front of the ball must not attempt to play the ball or obstruct opponents.
Sanction: Free pass
- 15.6** The tackled player must pass the ball within three strides or stop and pass within two seconds.
Sanction: Free pass
- 15.7** If a player is tackled near the goal line that player may take one step into the in-goal, and then the player can score a try.
Sanction: Free pass
- 15.8** All players must stay on their feet.
Sanction: Free pass

B - Ground Touch

Definition: The tackled player holds the ball, faces the opponents' goal line, and touches the ball on the ground.

Sanction: Free pass

15.4 No player may prevent the tackled player from passing the ball.

Sanction: Free pass

15.5 Opposing players must immediately retreat five metres from the tackled player. If play continues before they do so they must not interfere with play or obstruct opponents.

Sanction: Free pass

15.6 The tackled player must ground touch the ball.

Sanction: Free pass

15.7 If a player is tackled near the goal line that player may take one step into the in-goal, and then the player can score a try.

Sanction: Free pass

15.8 After six tackles on a ball carrying team the referee awards a ground touch to the opposing team where the sixth tackle took place.

15.9 All players must stay on their feet.

Sanction: Free pass

C - Place the ball

Definition: The tackled player holds the ball, faces the opponents' goal line, and places the ball on the ground between the legs.

Sanction: Free pass

15.4 No player may prevent the tackled player from placing the ball.

Sanction: Free pass

15.5 Opposing players must immediately retreat five metres from the tackled player. If play continues before they do so they must not interfere with play or obstruct opponents.

Sanction: Free pass

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- 15.6 The tackled player, facing the opponents' goal line, must place the ball between the legs.
Sanction: Free pass
- 15.7 A ball carrier may touch an opposition player and will be considered to be tackled.
- 15.8 A tackled player must stop and place the ball within one step of having been tackled.
Sanction: Free pass
- 15.9 A tackled player must not pass the ball.
Sanction: Free pass
- 15.10 If a player is tackled near the goal line that player may take one step into the in-goal, and then the player can score a try.
Sanction: Free pass
- 15.11 The player who 'places the ball' after a tackle is designated scrum half. If an opponent tackles the scrum half in possession of the ball, the opposition team to the scrum half is awarded a free pass.
- 15.12 The scrum half who takes a placed ball at the tackle cannot score a try from that position but can cross the goal line.
Sanction: Free pass
- 15.13 After six tackles on a ball carrying team the referee awards a place the ball to the opposing team where the sixth tackle took place.
- 15.14 All players must stay on their feet.
Sanction: Free pass

LAW 16 – RUCKS

Rucks do not exist in Beach Touch Rugby.

LAW 17 – MAULS

Mauls do not exist in Beach Touch Rugby.

LAW 18 – MARK

The mark does not exist in Beach Touch Rugby.

LAW 19 – TOUCH AND LINEOUT

There are no lineouts in Beach Touch Rugby.

- 19.1** The ball is in touch when it is not being carried by a player and it touches the touchline or anything or anyone on or beyond the touchline.
- 19.2** The ball is in touch when the ball carrier (or the ball) touches the touchline or the ground beyond the touchline.
- 19.3** The place where the ball carrier (or the ball) touched or crossed the touchline is where it went into touch.
- 19.4** When the ball is in touch the referee wards a free pass to the team who did not carry or put the ball into touch.
- 19.5 Player with one or both feet beyond the touch line**
- (a)** If a player with one or both feet on or beyond the touch-line (or touch-in-goal line), picks up the ball, which was stationary within the playing area, that player has picked up the ball in the playing area and thereby that player has taken the ball into touch (or touch-in-goal).
- (b)** If a player with one or both feet on or beyond the touch-line (or touch-in-goal line), picks up the ball, which was in motion within the playing area, that player is deemed to have picked up the ball in touch (or touch-in-goal).



LAW 20 – SCRUM

There are no scrums in Beach Touch Rugby.

LAW 21 – FREE PASSES

Match organisers may permit the use of ground touch instead of free passes, the Laws remain the same save for the free pass being taken as a ground touch.

- 21.1 Free passes are awarded to the non-offending team for infringements by their opponents.
- 21.2 When a free pass is awarded for an infringement in in-goal, the mark for the pass is in the field of play, five metres from the goal line.
- 21.3 The opposing team must immediately run towards their own goal line until they are at least five metres away from the mark for the free pass or until they have reached their goal line if that is nearer the mark. If the free pass is in a defending teams in-goal area, the opposing team must immediately run towards their own goal line until they are at least five metres away from the mark and not nearer than five metres from the goal line.
Sanction: Any further infringement by the opposing team results in a second free pass, five metres ahead of the mark for the first kick. This mark must not be within five metres of the goal line. If the referee awards a free pass, the second free pass is not taken before the referee has made the mark indicating the place of the sanction.
- 21.4 Even if the free pass is taken and the kicker's team is playing the ball, opposing players must keep running until they have retired the necessary distance. They must not take part in the game until they have done so.
- 21.5 If the free pass is taken so quickly that opponents have no opportunity to retire, they will not be penalised for this. However, they must continue to retire or until a team mate who was onside at the free pass has run in front of them, before they take part in the game.
- 21.6 The opposing team must not do anything to delay the free pass or obstruct the kicker. They must not intentionally take, throw or kick the ball out of reach of the kicker or the kicker's team mates.

LAW 22 – IN-GOAL

In-goal areas may not always be marked on the playing area.

- 22.1** A player grounds the ball by holding the ball and touching the ground with it, in in-goal. 'Holding' means holding in the hand or hands. No downward pressure is required.
- 22.2** A player grounds the ball when it is on the ground in the in-goal and the player presses down on it with a hand or hands, arm or arms, or the front of the player's body from waist to neck inclusive.
- 22.3** When an attacking player who is onside is first to ground the ball in the opponents' in-goal, the player scores a try. This applies whether an attacking or a defending player is responsible for the ball being in the in-goal.
- 22.4** The goal line is part of the in-goal. If an attacking player is first to ground the ball on the opponents' goal line, a try is scored.
- 22.5** A penalty try is awarded if a try would probably have been scored but for foul play by the defending team.
- 22.6** When defending players are first to ground the ball in their in-goal, it results in a touch down.
- 22.7** When an attacking player carries the ball into the opponents' in-goal and it becomes dead there, either because it went into touch-in-goal or on or over the dead ball line, a free pass is awarded to the defending team five metres from the goal line.
- 22.8** If an attacking player knocks-on or throws-forward in the field of play and the ball goes into the opponents' in-goal and it is made dead there, a free pass is awarded where the knock on or throw forward happened.



- 22.9** If a defending player threw or took the ball into the in-goal, and a defending player grounded it, and there has been no infringement, play is restarted by a free pass, 5 metres from the goal line in line with where the ball has been touched down.
- 22.10** When a defending player carries the ball into their own in-goal and it becomes dead there, either because it went into touch-in-goal or on or over the dead ball line, a free pass is awarded to the attacking team 5 metres from the goal line.
- 22.11** If an attacking player commits an infringement in in-goal, play is restarted with a free pass to the defending team 5 metres from the goal line in line with the place of infringement.
- 22.12** When a player commits any other foul play in the in-goal while the ball is out of play, the sanction is awarded at the place where the game would otherwise have re-started.
Sanction: Free pass