



# **WALKING RUGBY** PLAYING LAWS

2022

Written in collaboration with the  
walking rugby teams of Wales



---

Walking Rugby matches are friendly matches played by teams which can be of any gender (including mixed teams). This is an inclusive sport which welcomes players of all abilities and disabilities.

These rules are drafted to allow flexibility when required. To accommodate the inclusive nature of the game, teams /festival organisers may agree rule changes to suit local conditions and player abilities.

## **MAJOR CHANGES FROM 15 A SIDE GAME**

The spirit and laws of the 15 a side game will apply unless detailed below.

- There will be no scrums, lineouts, mauls, and rucks.
- Tackling, barging, hand-offs and kicking the ball are not allowed.
- Players must not run or jog whilst game is in play.

## **FESTIVAL LOGISTICS**

- Matches are played with a size 4/5 ball.
- 7 players on the pitch at a time per team.
- Unlimited in game substitutions can be made. A substituted player may return.
- Matches are typically 8-12 minutes long and could include a half time.
- All teams should wear a sports kit or bib to identify players. If possible, watches and jewellery should not be worn.
- For 7 a side matches, we advise a pitch size of about a quarter of a full-size rugby pitch. However, pitch size can be varied based on available space and player numbers.

---

## REFEREES

The referee is the sole judge of fact and law. They are encouraged to try and make the game flow freely and can make allowances for the abilities and skills of players.

- Advantage should be used where possible.
- Touches made by players infringing the rules can be discounted from the 6 touches rule, or referee may reset the 6 touches and let game flow or award a penalty.
- Referees may also ignore infringements which do not materially affect play.
- A neutral referee is preferred, and teams attending festival may be requested to provide a person(s) who can act as referee for matches involving other teams.

## THE GAME

- With the aim of the game to maximise accessibility, team captains and referee can agree adjustments that are to apply for that match to take account of disability, age, or infirmity.
- Starting play:
  - At the start and after a try, free pass from the middle of the pitch.
  - If ball goes into touch, restart with a throw from where line crossed.
  - In all other instances, tap the ball with foot or knee and then walk or pass.
- The ball must be passed backwards or transverse.
- The defending team aim to touch the player with the ball. A touch should be two handed from shoulders down to shorts, including arms.
- If attacking team has not scored within 6 touches - ball is turned over to opposition who restart where the 6th touch happened.
- A player scores tries when at least 1 foot is placed on or after the try line.
- If a player is touched whilst crossing the line, a try is scored provided, the line is reached or crossed by completing the step being made when touched.
- A penalty try will be awarded if an infringement stops a try being scored.
- If the ball goes backwards and goes to ground, the team that made the pass can collect the ball without pressure from the opposition. This acts as a touch and they must restart with a pass from the spot the ball hit the ground. The defending side has an offside line one pace from where the ball hit the ground.

# TOUCH TACKLES

- Touches should not be robust and consider the strengths/frailties of the player being touched.
- Touched player may complete the pace they were in the process of making whilst touched and then must pass the ball within 3 seconds, without further movement.
  - If a player carrying the ball is touched and then travels more than this the referee should call play back to where the touch was. Play restarts with same player in possession – touches are not reset.
- The player making the touch must retire 1 pace, setting the offside line for their team.
  - If the defender making the touch interferes with the pass from the touched player, the attacking team have 6 fresh touches.



---

# INFRINGEMENTS

- In the event of Offside, foul play, forward pass or knock on the non-offending team restarts where the incident occurred and/or the 6-touch count is reset.
- Foul play. Normal 15-a-side rules apply plus:
  - Walking rugby is played at walking pace, with players not allowed to run or jog. This includes with or off the ball. You can 'walk' as fast as you want and walking is defined as "one foot must be in contact with the ground at all times".
  - No pushing, barging, or making a touch in a dangerous way. Including hand offs, walking straight into, or backing into an opposition player.
  - Tackler/Defender interfering with pass after a touch or not retreating.
  - Grabbing another player, trying to wrestle ball away from them (by hitting ball, snatching, or ripping).
  - Referee may ask that players who are deliberately and repeatedly infringing be substituted by their team.
- The referee has discretion to allow advantage and:
  - For minor infringements they could just exclude touches made by infringing players from the 6 touches count or deduct 1 from existing touch count.
  - For more material infringements where referee is still not stopping play the 6-touch count can be reset from where the advantage occurs.

# OFFSIDE

- When an Offside line is created all players in a team must try and retire into an onside position.
- An Offside line is created as follows:
  - If a touch occurs the player making the touch must step back 1 metre and this sets the offside line for their team (or on their try line if closer).
  - At all restarts the attacking team have an offside line where the restart is; the defending team have an offside line 2m nearer to their try line (or on their try line if closer).
- If a player, who is offside, makes a touch it is excluded from the 6 touches count. If they also obstruct play the referee can reset play where the obstruction took place or play advantage resetting the touch count.
- Onside defenders may advance once ball has been tapped or passed.
- The Offside line lasts until the team with the ball have completed a pass or moved 2m with it.
- In open play all players are onside.



**DIOLCH**

THANK YOU