

Walking Rugby Guidelines

Ethos

Walking Rugby is a non-contact version of the game aimed at players of all gender, of differing rugby playing experience and physical ability. It aims to be less prescriptive with a manner of play that maintains safety and fun, whilst providing physical and mental wellbeing.

Object of Walking Rugby

The object of Walking Rugby is for two teams of up to seven players to score more tries than the opposing team by passing the ball backwards or laterally and carrying the ball over the opposition's try-line, according to the guidelines of the game, its sporting spirit and fair play. Walking is defined as moving by lifting and setting down each foot in turn, never having both feet off the ground at once.

T – Teamwork : **R** – Respect : **E** – Enjoyment : **D** – Discipline : **S** - Sportsmanship

Guidelines

These are guidelines only; they are not intended to be prescriptive laws or rules. Local and session discretion should apply given the demographic of the playing group. For matches/festivals/tournaments, the host club's guidelines shall apply.

1. **The Pitch** - Pitch size: depends on the number of players per team:
 - a. Suggestion: allow 5 to 7 metres width per player.
 - b. Pitch to be square or even wider than long, depending on mobility and skill of players (maximum width 40 metres and maximum length 30 metres).
 - c. In winter: indoor (e.g. a sports hall) or Astro turf.
2. **Match Ball** - Size 4.
3. **Teams** - Each team shall have no more than 7 players in the playing area during play.
 - a. For playing numbers of 6 or more-a-side, teams may agree to implement uncontested scrums.
 - b. If extra players are available, then substitutes can be employed so that all players can be involved. Substitutes should wear bibs when on the sidelines and substitutions can only be made when play has stopped and the referee informed.
4. **Playing Clothes** - Team members should all wear a sports strip or sports bibs that identify them as one of the team. Watches, jewellery, etc. must be removed or covered. Appropriate footwear for the playing surface should be worn.
5. **Time** - A game consists of:
 - a. Two halves each of seven minutes, unless agreed otherwise beforehand.
 - b. A half time interval of up to two minutes.
6. **Match Officials** - The referee, if present, is the sole judge of both fact and law.
 - a. A neutral referee is highly desirable.
 - b. Otherwise, refereeing by a team member or self-refereeing may be necessary.
 - c. Only the nominated captain of each team on the pitch may converse with the referee.
7. **Advantage** - If a team gains a clear and real advantage following an infringement by an opponent and the ball has not gone to ground, the referee should allow play to continue in an effort to keep the game flowing.
8. **Score** - A try is scored when the ball is carried by an attacking player over the opposition try-line from in-field with both feet on or over the try-line before the player is tackled. A penalty try shall be awarded if an offence by an opposition player prevents a probable try being scored.

9. **Foul Play** - The following are considered foul play and appropriate action shall be taken for any repeat offender or repeat offences. Where a try would otherwise probably have been scored a penalty try should be awarded.
- A deliberate knock-down by a defender.
 - Offside and interfering with play.
 - A defender preventing the ball carrier making a pass after the tackle.
 - Any over-robust, high or low tackle.
 - The ball carrier handing off, leading with the head/shoulder or walking into or backing into a defender.
 - Snatching/ripping the ball from the ball carrier.
 - Repeat offences should be punished with:
 - Temporary exclusion (2 minutes duration) - Yellow Card.
 - Permanent exclusion (for the remainder of the game) - Red Card.
10. **Off-side and On-side in Open Play** - Any tackle, touch, penalty, turnover or scrum sets an offside line - one metre for a tackle and three metres for a touch, penalty, turnover or scrum closer to the offender's try-line and parallel to the try-lines.
- An off-side player must not interfere with play - penalty.
 - An off-side player can only be put on-side by:
 - Retiring behind the off-side line; or
 - An on-side team-mate of that player moving past the off-side player within the playing area.
- Open Play** - All players in open play are on-side until a tackle or an offence occurs. Any on-side player can intercept a pass or tackle a player from any position in open play.
11. **Knock on** - A knock on can occur anywhere in the playing area.
- If the ball is knocked on or dropped – turnover or scrum to the non-offending team.
 - A deliberate knock on and the ball hits the ground – penalty (but a knock up and catch by the same player (interception) is legal, play on unless tackled).
12. **Starts and Restarts** - At the start of a half or after a score, play starts with a tap and pass at the centre of the pitch.
- After a score, the re-start is by the team that did not score.
 - All defenders must be three metres back from the centre line.
 - On-side defenders may advance once the ball has been tapped by the ball carrier.
13. **Player or Ball to Ground** -
- Player going to ground - referee must stop play immediately - restart with tap and pass to the team in possession.
 - Ball hitting the ground:
 - Ball goes backwards to ground – turnover to non-offending team.
 - Ball goes forwards to ground – scrum to non-offending team (if scrums are being played).
14. **Tackle** - A defending player can arrest an attack with a simultaneous two-handed **light** touch to the ball carrier in the area between the shoulders and the waist (including the torso and arms) of the ball carrier; it should be accompanied by a call of "TACKLE" or "TOUCH". The tackler must NOT push the ball carrier in any way.
- A tackle sets an off-side line which is one metre from the point of tackle, parallel to the try-lines.
 - When tackled, the ball carrier must pass the ball correctly within one pace.
 - When tackled, the ball carrier must pass the ball correctly without delay (i.e. within three seconds unless impeded).
 - When tackled, the ball carrier must retreat to the point of tackle if they travel more than one pace (travelling) before passing the ball.

- e. A defender must not prevent the ball carrier making a pass in any way and must retire at least one metre after a tackle.
 - f. A defender who is off-side and interfering with play should be penalised unless advantage to the non-offending team applies.
 - g. An over-robust, high or low tackle must be penalised.
 - h. The ball carrier handing off, leading with the head/shoulder or walking straight into or backing into a defender must be penalised.
 - i. A defender shall not attempt to take the ball from the ball carrier (snatch/rip).
15. **Turnover** - A turnover shall be awarded for any of the following (and for scrum offences if scrums are not being played):
- i. Ball hitting the ground, but not a knock on. Re-start from the point where the ball hit the ground.
 - ii. Ball or ball carrier going into touch. Re-start from the touchline.
 - iii. Delayed pass after a tackle (unless impeded by a defender).
- a. The turnover must be taken at the point of the offence indicated by the referee.
 - b. A turnover is taken by tapping the ball with the thigh, knee or foot and passing **immediately**. The ball carrier may not move with the ball.
 - c. As soon as the ball carrier has tapped the ball, any on-side defender may advance.
 - d. The turnover may be taken quickly.
 - e. At a turnover, the off-side line is three metres closer to the offender's try-line.
 - f. No turnover shall be taken closer than three metres from a try-line by either attack or defence.
 - g. All defenders in front of the off-side line must retreat behind the off-side line before taking any further part of the game.
 - h. If an off-side defender interferes with the taking of the turnover, then a penalty shall be awarded.
16. **Touch** - If the ball or ball carrier goes into touch, a turnover is awarded.
- a. A touch sets an off-side line three metre closer to the offenders' try-line at the point of touch, parallel to the try-lines.
17. **Scrum** - Uncontested scrums will only be played if there are at least six players in each team AND both teams have agreed. Otherwise, a scrum offence shall be treated as a turnover. A scrum shall be awarded for any of the following:
- i. Forward pass.
 - ii. Ball hitting or touching a player and going forward.
 - iii. Dropped ball or knock on.
 - iv. Ball passed back, hitting the referee.
 - v. Accidental crossing/obstruction.
 - vi. Ball carrier tackled or makes a forward pass behind their try line.
- a. A scrum shall be a minimum of three metres from any boundary of the playing area (i.e. try and touch lines); when the scrum is three metres from the try-line, the defending team's off-side line is the try-line.
 - b. The scrum shall be uncontested, i.e. no pushing by either team and no striking for the ball by the defending team.
 - c. The following apply for scrums:
 - i. The three closest players from each side shall make up the scrum with one of them acting as scrum half.
 - ii. Both teams shall have a scrum half.
 - d. The non-offending team's scrum half will choose which side to feed the ball and the ball shall be fed from the mid-point of the scrum. The scrum half must be the one to make the pick-up from the back of the scrum and then either pass or attack.

- e. At a scrum:
 - i. The non-offending team's off-side line will be behind the rearmost foot of their scrum.
 - ii. The offending team's off-side line will be three metres back from the rearmost foot of their scrum.
- f. Players in the scrum must remain in the scrum and the offending team's scrum half must remain at or behind the mid-point of the scrum until the referee calls "Scrum Over".

18. **Penalty** - A penalty shall be awarded for:

- i. A player running at any time during a game, with or without the ball.
 - ii. Illegal pass, e.g. ball handed on. It must be a clear and obvious pass.
 - iii. Defender preventing the ball carrier making a pass after a tackle.
 - iv. Defender failing to retire one metre after a tackle and influencing play.
 - v. Ball carrier handing off, leading with the head/shoulder, walking into or backing into a defender.
 - vi. Over-robust, high or low tackle.
 - vii. Off-side and interfering with play.
 - viii. Deliberate knock-on and ball hits the ground.
 - ix. Defender failing to retire three metres at a penalty or turnover.
 - x. After a tackle, ball carrier not retreating to the point of tackle before passing if they travel more than one pace (travelling).
 - xi. Pushing by either team or defender striking in the scrum.
 - xii. Defending scrum half moving past the mid-point of the scrum before "Scrum Over" is called.
 - xiii. Deliberate obstruction.
 - xiv. After a tackle, within one metre of the try-line, ball carrier not stepping back a minimum of one metre from the try-line before passing the ball.
 - xv. Any infringement while the ball is dead.
 - xvi. General unsporting conduct.
- a. A penalty shall be taken at the point of the offence indicated by the referee.
 - b. No penalty shall be taken closer than three metres from a try-line by either attack or defence.
 - c. The penalty taker must tap the ball with their thigh, knee or foot and may then walk or pass immediately.
 - d. Once the ball has been tapped, any on-side defender may advance.
 - e. The penalty may be taken quickly.
 - f. At a penalty, the off-side line is three metres closer to the offender's try-line.
 - g. All defenders in front of the off-side line are off-side and must retreat behind the off-side line before taking any further part of the game.
 - h. If an off-side defender interferes with the taking of the penalty, then a further three metre advance should be imposed.

19. **In Goal**

- a. When the ball carrier is tackled before the try-line and travels over the try-line (in goal), the ball carrier must step back into the field of play to at least one metre line from the try-line before passing – Penalty.
- b. When the ball carrier is tackled behind their own try-line (i.e. in goal) or makes a forward pass from behind their own try-line (i.e. in goal) – scrum three metres into the field of play from the try-line in line with the point of the offence.