SCOTTISH RUGBY

AGE GRADE LAW VARIATION

Girls U16

Our Game: Ethos & Values

Rugby is a game for everyone; all ages, levels of experience and body types. Young people can prosper through rugby in an environment where having fun, learning and building confidence are prioritised.

It is the responsibility of all adults in the game to create an environment that is player-centred, development-driven and competition-supported. This applies to coaches, teachers, parents, volunteers and supporters.

Half Game Rule

To ensure ALL players have the opportunity to develop and enjoy rugby, the 'Half Game Rule' will continue in 2021/22 – encouraging all clubs and schools to give at least HALF GAME to ALL players in a squad. Clubs and Schools are encouraged to:

- Put the players at the heart of everything they do and the decisions they make.
- Encourage enjoyment on the pitch through realistic expectations of the players.
- Build the skills adults in the game to provide a safe, healthy and respectful environment.
- Champion Scottish Rugby's core values of Leadership, Engagement, Achievement, Enjoyment and Respect.

2 Year Age Bandings – U12, U14, U16 & U18

The move to 2 year age bandings is a reflection of the growth of playing numbers in the girls game. Continuing from its introduction in the 2019/20 season, the U12 AGLVs allow girls in primary school to experience contact rugby with entirely female teams. Mixed rugby at mini will still be delivered as an alternative offer to U12 girls only rugby.

Girls Age Grade Law Variation (AGLV) Trials

AGLVs exist to make rugby safe, enjoyable and appropriate for a player's development. The AGLVs for the girls game were introduced in the 2019/20 season to reflect the change in Age Bandings. Analysis will be carried out to measure the impact of the AGLVs on the development of the fundamental skills of the players in line with the Technical Blueprint.

Let's Play

To ensure that girls have as many opportunities to play the game as possible, 'Let's Play has been developed to give flexibility in playing formats. It reflects the need for girls to play more games – and provides coaches with simple guidelines on what game should look like for varying team sizes. In this document, the recommended team size for each age banding is highlighted in blue, whilst the Let's Play variations are highlighted in green.

Managing Mismatches

Sometimes, a game may become one sided due to a disparity in the experience and ability of the players on the respective teams. Should a game have a 50-point lead (5 points for a try) think about ways improve the playing environment and play the remaining game-time as a development match. Options available include but are not limited to:

- Rest stronger players and provide more game-time to less experienced players.
- Play players out of position to help develop different skills.
- Asking individual players to play for the opposition, or mixing teams completely, can provide a different challenge and help develop communication skills.
- Ask the referee to introduce law variations to condition games e.g., minimum number of passes/phases, certain players not allowed to score.

Putting player first

5 steps to player welfare

If in doubt, sit them out!

If a player is suspected of having a concussion, they must be immediately removed from play.

- A concussion is a brain injury.
- All concussions are serious.

Train to prevent injuries

- Nurture players returning from injury - they are at increased risk of injury.
- Undertake high risk training (contact, sprints) at low risk times (when not fatigued).
- Injury prevention: it's in the balance (exercises).

If they are on the deck, think about the neck

- Don't shake them, don't roll them, don't sit them up.
- Think about the spine, keep it in line and take your time.
- Stop the game and ask about pain.
- An unconscious player has a neck injury until proven otherwise.

Be a lifesaver; know your A-B-C

- A: Airway, B: Breathing, C: Circulation
- Saving a life always starts with A
- If you don't have an A you won't have a B or C
- Airway: open it, clear it, maintain it

Kick infection into touch

- Don't share your blood on clothes and towels; blood spreads infection; wash it or dispose of it
- A wound neglected is a wound infected
- The solution to pollution is dilution - wash the wound with large amounts of water

Active, Purposeful, Enjoyable & Safe

How does this look in practice

APES Key Points		Top Tips – Youth
Activity	Keep high levels of activity in the session. Ensure every player is receiving the same opportunity to take part.	**Avoid Queues.** When running skill or technique zone activities, try to minimise the number of people waiting in a queue. Use multiple stations where possible.
Purpose	Have a clear purpose to your session, and stick to the plan. Share this with your players, fellow coaches and parents.	**Core skills at the heart of training.** Use the Technical Blueprint to ensure you develop competence of core skills before progressing.
Enjoyment	Most of all, above anything else, we need to create a rugby experience which is enjoyed by everyone. Set appropriate levels of challenge for players – too much and it won't be enjoyable, too little and they'll be bored.	**Understand your players.** Players may be under pressures out with rugby – remember that this might be their release. Keep training fun to make sure players stick with rugby.
Safe	Safety is paramount. Do everything you can to minimise the risk of injuries. Ensure there is a safe environment within the team to value everyone as an individual.	**ACTIVATE programme.** Use the activate warm-up programme to develop players' physical competence and reduce injury risks.

Remember – If in doubt, sit them out!

Overview

U16 Rugby sees the introduction of competitive scrums and lineouts. Size 4 Balls will be trialled to encourage a range of passing and offloading techniques.

*The Rules of Play in this document are VARIATIONS to the World Rugby Laws of the Game. All other Laws not specified follow the World Rugby Law Book.

Let's Play

- The recommended team size for U16 Rugby is 10 a-side (highlighted in blue) and Scottish Rugby competition will operate under the 10 a-side Rules of Play.
- The 'Let's Play' guidelines, provide playing options for teams who can put out teams up to 13 players, down to teams who can put out 7.

Players	10	13	12	11	9	8	7
Pitch Size	80m x 60m	Full Pitch		80m x 60m		Half Pitch	
Ball Size	4						
Game Length (Recommended)	30mins	60mins		30mins	20mins		
Max Playing Time	No more than 90mins in a 48-hour period						
Scoring	5 point for a try – no kicks at goal	5 points for Try, 2 for conversion, 3 for penalty/ drop goal		5 point for a try – no kicks at goal			
Tackle	All tackles below the line of the armpit						
Handoff	Permitted – Not to head or neck						
Breakdown	Up to 2 supporting players per team				Up to 1 supporting players per team		
Scrum	5 players, Contested, 1.5m push, 9 must pass	6 players, Contested, 1.5m push, 9 must pass		5 players, Contested, 1.5m push	3 players, Contested, 1.5m push, 9 must pass		
Lineout	Hooker + up to 4, no lift, contested	Hooker + up to 5, no lift, contested		Hooker + up to 4, no lift, contested	Hooker + up to 3, no lift, contested		
Kick Off/ Restarts	Team that scored restarts play with a drop kick					Team that conceded start with a tap and pass	
Open Play Kicking	Allowed						

Tackle

- All tackles should be below the armpits of the Ball Carrier.
    - **Sanction: Penalty to the non-offending team.**
- High Tackles will be refereed in accordance with World Rugby Laws. There are degrees of severity, for example the use of a swinging arm or the shoulder making contact with the head. The sanction for a high tackle is a penalty but may require further sanction. Guidance on high tackles can be found in the World Rugby Law Book.

Handoff

- Handoff Permitted – no contact to be made to the head or neck of the defending player.
    - **Sanction: Free Kick to the non-offending team.**

Coaching Guidance:

- Encourage the Ball Carrier to hold the ball in two hands in and near contact situations – this will allow them to have greater control of the ball to pass and offload.
- Encourage the Ball Carrier to use evasive footwork prior to using a handoff.

Breakdown

The rationale for limiting the number of players at the breakdown is to provide players with the best chance to develop safe and correct technique. This allows coaches and referees to clearly identify where and when laws are being broken and to help develop players' abilities to perform the correct techniques.

9-13 a-side

Numbers of Players

- Up to 2 supporting players per team can enter the breakdown.
    - **Sanction: Free Kick to the non-offending team**
- Tackler: If the tackler, on completion of the tackle, releases the Ball Carrier, returns to their feet and is the first to enter the breakdown from that team – then the defending team can still put up 2 supporting players to assist in the competition for the ball.

When is the breakdown over?

- As per full World Rugby Laws.

7 & 8 a-side

Numbers of Players

- Up to 1 supporting player per team can enter the breakdown.
    - **Sanction: Free Kick to non-offending team**
- Tackler: If the tackler, on completion of the tackle, releases the ball player, returns to their feet and is the first to enter the breakdown from that team – then the defending team can still put 1 supporting player 1 to assist in the competition for the ball.

When is the breakdown over?

- When the one team wins the space (e.g. pushes the opposition past the ball) that team wins possession; AND
- When the ball is played (passed or ran) by the player acting as scrum half; OR
- If the ball carrier loses control of the ball and it spills out of the breakdown
- Referee Guidance: In the above circumstances, the defending team must remain onside (behind the hindmost point of the breakdown) until the ball has been played
    - **Sanction – Free kick to the non-offending team**

Referee Guidance:

- Ball Carrier
    - To look for an offload but if the tackle is complete, to present the ball back as far as possible
- Players entering the breakdown
    - To arrive through the 'gate'
        - **Sanction: Free Kick to the non-offending team**
    - To arrive on their feet, supporting their own bodyweight (no hands on the ground)
        - **Sanction: Free Kick to the non-offending team**
    - To not play the ball with hands or to kick the ball out of the breakdown
        - **Sanction: Free kick to the non-offending team**

Players	10	13	12	11	9	8	7
Breakdown	Up to 2 supporting players per team				Up to 1 supporting players per team		

Scrum

12 & 13 a-side

- 6 players from each team should form the scrum (3-2-1 formation).
- Scrum is CONTESTED:
    - The ball must be hooked backwards.
    - Each front row can push a maximum of 1.5m and must not push until the ball leaves the scrum half's hands.
        - **Sanction: Free kick to the non-offending team.**
- Scrum half can stand with their left shoulder in line with the midpoint of the scrum before feeding the ball in. Ball must be fed in straight.
    - **Sanction: Free kick to the non-offending team.**
- Scrum half must pass. Defending Scrum Half can follow but cannot go past the back feet of the second rows.
    - **Sanction: If the defending scrum half interferes with the attacking scrum half from an offside position.**

- No no.8 pick up.
- Each team must be 5m back from the hindmost point of the scrum.
- Defending team can move forward once the ball has been passed by the scrumhalf.
    - **Sanction: Penalty to attacking team at point where the defence were offside.**

10 & 11 a-side

- 5 players from each team should form the scrum (3-2-formation).
- Scrum is CONTESTED:
    - The ball must be hooked backwards.
    - Each front row can push a maximum of 1.5m and must not push until the ball leaves the scrum half's hands.
        - **Sanction: Free kick to the non-offending team.**
- Scrum half can stand with their left shoulder in line with the midpoint of the scrum before feeding the ball in. Ball must be fed in straight.
    - **Sanction: Free kick to the non-offending team.**
- Scrum half must pass. Defending Scrum Half must remain at the mid-point of the scrum.
- Each team must be 5m back from the hindmost point of the scrum.
- Defending team can move forward once the ball has been passed by the scrumhalf.
    - **Sanction: Penalty to attacking team at point where the defence were offside.**

7-9 a-side

- Nearest 3 players from each team should form the scrum
- Scrum is CONTESTED
    - Both hookers can strike for the ball;
    - Each team can push a maximum of 1.5m and must not push until the ball leaves the scrum half's hands
        - **Sanction: Free Kick to non-offending team**
- Scrum half must pass. Defending Scrum Half must remain at the mid-point of the scrum
- Each team must be 5m back from the hindmost point of the scrum
- Defending team can move forward once the ball has been passed by the scrumhalf
    - **Sanction: Free Kick to attacking team at point where the defence were offside**

Players	10	13	12	11	9	8	7
Scrum	5 players, Contested, 1.5m push, 9 must pass	6 players, Contested, 1.5m push, 9 must pass		5 players, Contested, 1.5m push	3 players, Contested, 1.5m push, 9 must pass		

Lineout

The lifting of players is permitted at U18 which also opens up the full range of 'play from' options such as using mauls, box kicks etc.

Full World Rugby Law Variations govern the lineout with the exception of maximum numbers which are set out below.

12 & 13 a-side

Numbers in the Lineout

- Attacking team can place up to 6 players in the lineout (Hooker + Up to 5 others)
- Defending team cannot have more than the attacking team, but can have less if they choose

When is the lineout over?

- If the ball is thrown by the hooker over the 15m line
- If the ball is knocked from the lineout back over the 5m line
- Once the ball is in the hands of the scrum half

Players not in the lineout

- All players, attacking and defending, not involved in the lineout must be at least 10m back from the midpoint of the lineout
- Players can move forward once the lineout is over (see 'When is the lineout over?')
    - **Sanction: Free Kick to the non-offending team at the place where the offside offence was committed**

10 & 11 a-side

Numbers in the Lineout

- Attacking team can place up to 5 players in the lineout (Hooker + Up to 4 others)
- Defending team cannot have more than the attacking team, but can have less if they choose

When is the lineout over?

- If the ball is thrown by the hooker over the 15m line
- If the ball is knocked from the lineout back over the 5m line
- Once the ball is in the hands of the scrum half

Players not in the lineout

- All players, attacking and defending, not involved in the lineout must be at least 10m back from the midpoint of the lineout
- Players can move forward once the lineout is over (see 'When is the lineout over?')
    - **Sanction: Free Kick to the non-offending team at the place where the offside offence was committed**

7-9 a-side

Numbers in the Lineout

- Attacking team can place up to 3 players in the lineout (Hooker + Up to 2others)
- Defending team must match the attacking team's numbers

When is the lineout over?

- If the ball is thrown by the hooker over the 15m line
- If the ball is knocked from the lineout back over the 5m line
- Once the ball is in the hands of the scrum half

Players not in the lineout

- All players, attacking and defending, not involved in the lineout must be at least 10m back from the midpoint of the lineout
- Players can move forward once the lineout is over (see 'When is the lineout over?')
    - **Sanction: Free Kick to the non-offending team at the place where the offside offence was committed**

Players	10	13	12	11	9	8	7
Lineout	Hooker + up to 4, no lift, contested	Hooker + up to 5, no lift, contested		Hooker + up to 4, no lift, contested	Hooker + up to 3, no lift, contested		

Restarting the Game

9-13 a-side

Kick Offs/ Restarting After a Try

- The team that SCORED restarts play with a drop kick
- The Kick must go 10m before being played by an attacking player – if the opposition touch it first, regardless of how far the kick goes, play on
    - **Sanction – Scrum to non-kicking team on the midpoint of the halfway line**
- All players chasing the kick must start be level or behind the kicker at the moment the ball is kicked
    - **Sanction – Free Kick to the non- offending team on the midpoint of the half-way line**

Free Kicks

- Defending team
    - must be back 10m from where the free kick was taken before making a tackle
- Attacking team
    - Ball must leave hands when tapped
    - Players can take a quick tap on or behind the referee's mark

7 & 8 a-side

Kick Offs

- The game starts with a Tap and Pass from the centre of the pitch
- Defending team:
    - must be at least 5m back
    - can move once the first receiver touches the ball
- Attacking team

o No Cavalry Charge – encourage the first receiver to look for another pass

Restarting After a Try

- After a try is scored, the team that conceded restarts the game.

Free Kicks

- Defending team
  - Must be back 5m from where the free kick was taken before making a tackle
- Attacking team
  - Ball must leave hands when tapped
  - Players can take a quick tap on or behind the referee's mark

Open Play Kicking - is permitted in all U16 Rugby

12 & 13 a-side (Full size pitch – 100m x 70m)

Kicking to Touch

- As per World Rugby Laws
- WORLD RUGBY GLOBAL LAW TRIAL - 50:22 Rule is applicable as this version of Girls U16 rugby is played on a full pitch – if a player kicks the ball from within their own half and it bounces out in the opposition 22, the kicking team will receive the following lineout.

In-Goal and Dead Ball Area

- As per World Rugby Laws
- WORLD RUGBY GLOBAL LAW TRIAL – If ball carrier held up in-goal, attacking kick grounded in-goal by defence or knock on by attacking team in-goal – Goal line drop out to defending team – ball must go at least 5m

9-11 a-side (80m x 60m Pitch)

Kicking to Touch

- Players can kick the ball straight into touch (without bouncing) if they are within 22m of their own try line (if the pitch is marked out on a full-size pitch, the 22m line [A] and 10m [B] represent these lines – see pitch diagram on next page)
- Players can kick the ball into touch outside of their own 22m, so long as the ball bounces before leaving the pitch
  - **Sanction: Pass from touch to the non- offending team, level with the point where the kick was taken**
- WORLD RUGBY GLOBAL LAW TRIAL – 50:22 Not Applicable (game isn't played on full size pitch)

In-Goal and Dead Ball Area

- If the ball is kicked and it goes over the Dead Ball Line, the non-kicking team will have a the put in at a SCRUM at the place where the ball was kicked
- WORLD RUGBY GLOBAL LAW TRIAL – If ball carrier held up in-goal, attacking kick grounded in-goal by defence or knock on by attacking team in-goal – Goal line drop out to defending team – ball must go at least 5m

7 & 8 a-side (Half Pitch)

Kicking to Touch

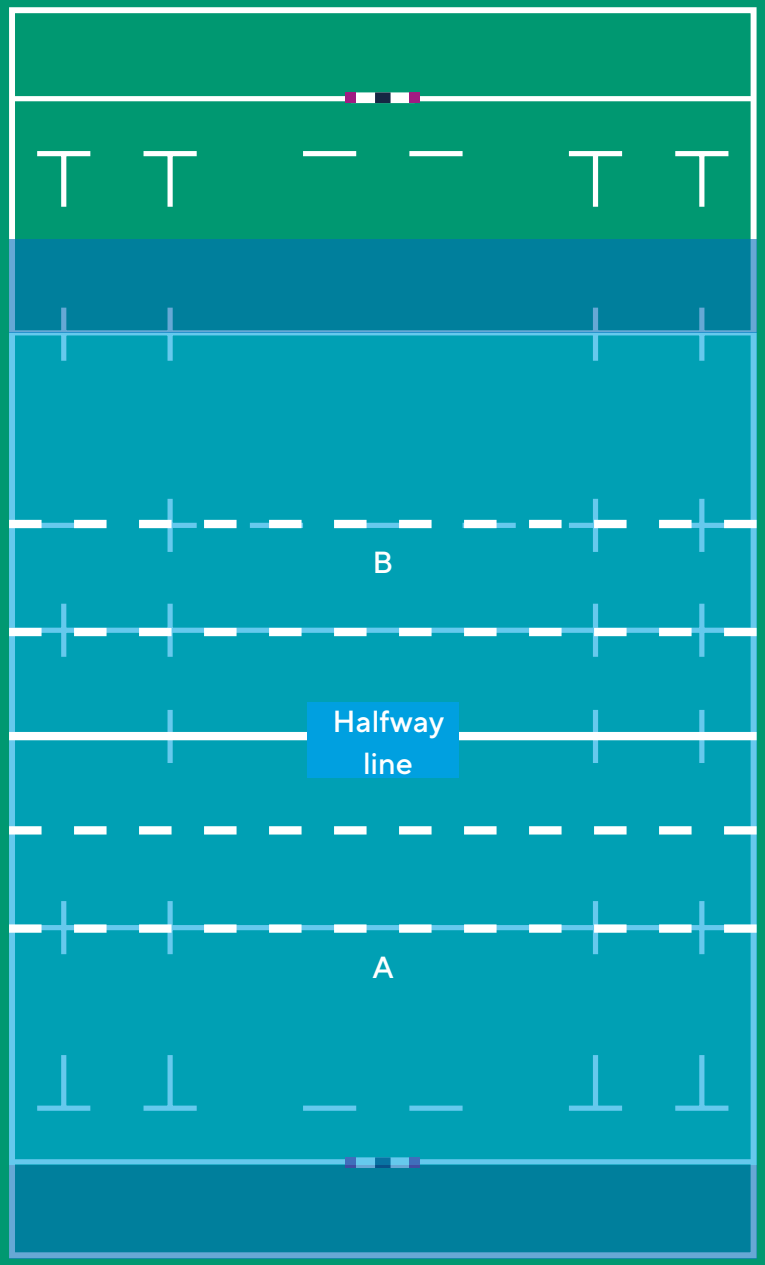
- Players can kick the ball straight into touch (without bouncing) if they are within their own 15m (marked by the 15m lines on the pitch)
- Players can kick the ball into touch outside of their own 15m, so long as the ball bounces before leaving the pitch
  - **Sanction: Pass from touch to the non- offending team, level with the point where the kick was taken**
- WORLD RUGBY GLOBAL LAW TRIAL – 50:22 Not Applicable (game isn't played on full size pitch)

In-Goal and Dead Ball Area

- If the ball is kicked and it goes over the Dead Ball Line, the non-kicking team will have a the put in at a SCRUM at the place where the ball was kicked
- WORLD RUGBY GLOBAL LAW TRIAL – If ball carrier held up in-goal, attacking kick grounded in-goal by defence or knock on by attacking team in-goal – Goal line drop out to defending team – ball must go at least 5m

Players	10	13	12	11	9	8	7
Kick Off/ Restarts	Team that scored restarts play with a drop kick					Team that conceded start with a tap and pass	

80m x 60m
Set Up for 9-11 a-side games



Concussion Management

Any player with a suspected head knock or concussion should be immediately removed from play in a safe manner.

They must not return to activity that day. If a neck injury is suspected, players should be removed under the direction of a healthcare professional.

In all cases of suspected concussion, it is recommended that medical advice is sought early. These may include the players' GP or NHS 24 (Dial 111)

Return to sport, once symptom free, should be graduated. Please refer to Scottish Sports Concussion Guidance for more information or visit **sportscotland.org.uk**

IF IN DOUBT, SIT THEM OUT.