

Rookie Rugby

How to Play Manual



USA RUGBY

Presented by:



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LETTER FROM USA RUGBY'S NIGEL MELVILLE

Dear Rookie Rugby Participants,

USA Rugby is proud to offer Rookie Rugby as the non-contact game and starting point in our nation's rugby development pathway. The game was invented when a young man at Rugby School in England 'picked up the ball and ran with it' over 150 years ago. Today, over five million people in 120 countries play the game of rugby across six continents!

Rookie Rugby is designed with the American athlete in mind. It is a fun, safe, team game that develops a range of ball handling, running and evasion skills. Participants learn the importance of teamwork and respect for opponents, coaches and referees, which are key elements of all athletic endeavors.

The sport of rugby is simple to understand, organize and teach. USA Rugby has created many tools to help explain the skills, rules and values associated with this special game. Whether you are a former player, long-time supporter or new to the game, you too, can be a part of Rookie Rugby!

All you have to do is **PICK UP THE BALL AND RUN WITH IT!**



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nigel Melville".

Nigel Melville
USA Rugby CEO and President of Rugby Operations

INTRODUCTION TO ROOKIE RUGBY

Rookie Rugby is a safe, non-contact, and easy to play game for boys and girls of all ages. It is played in schools, parks, recreation leagues, and community organizations across the country. The rules are simple, the game is easy to learn, and minimal equipment is required. This guidebook is designed to enable parents, coaches, and teachers to create opportunity for kids to play Rookie Rugby.

ROOKIE RUGBY PROMOTES:

HEALTH AND FITNESS



EXCELLENT SKILL DEVELOPMENT



TEAMWORK



FUN!

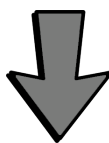


RUGBY vs. ROOKIE RUGBY

All types of rugby are free flowing and continuous. Players will work as a team to move the ball across their opponent's goal line to score a try. A try is much like a touchdown in American football, but in rugby players must actually touch the ball to the ground in the scoring area (try zone).

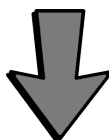
ROOKIE RUGBY

- Non-contact
- Learning environment
- Focuses on skill development
- Smaller team, smaller field



ADVANCED ROOKIE RUGBY

- Addition of scrums and lineouts
- Kicking in open play for conversions
- Focus on game concepts



CONTACT RUGBY

- Contact, open, free flowing game
- Scrums, rucks, mauls, and tackles
- Focus on player advancement



ROOKIE RUGBY HONOR CODE

Rugby is a diverse sport for men and women, boys and girls. It builds teamwork, understanding, cooperation, and respect for fellow athletes. In an era where many traditional sporting qualities are being diluted or even challenged, rugby is proud of its ability to retain high standards of sportsmanship, ethical behavior, and fair play. The Rookie Rugby Honor Code was created to uphold the cherished values that rugby has build itself on since its creation.

As a SUPPORTER/PARENT, I will ...

1. Honor the game in action and language.
2. Use praise and positive recognition with all who are involved.
3. Allow coaches or officials to correct player mistakes. Resist the urge to give instructions.
4. Cheer on good play from both teams.
5. Acknowledge that all referees perform a difficult task.
6. Appreciate coaches for their commitment and effort.
7. Set a good example - think before I act.
8. Have Fun!

As a COACH, I will ...

1. Honor the game by adopting a culture that rewards effort, not only outcome.
2. Emphasize both the spirit and letter of the rules.
3. Appreciate that a worthy opponent brings out the best in any team.
4. Aim for strong competition when the game is on, and friendly interaction when time is out.
5. Respect the officials even when you disagree.
6. Never do anything, on or off the field, that compromises the player efforts to be the best they can be. Think before I act!
7. Have fun!

As a PLAYER, I will ...

1. Honor the game and try my best.
2. Put effort into learning both individual AND team skills.
3. Play according to the laws of the game.
4. Commit to your team with high attendance, effort, and energy levels.
5. Show respect for all.
6. Appreciate good play from both sides.
7. Be an ambassador of the sport - think before I act!
8. Have fun!

PLAYING WITH FLAGS

The game of Rookie Rugby is played with flags to replace the action of tackling. Flag rugby is the preferred method to introduce rugby. If no flags are available, the game can be played as two hand touch; however, flags are always the better option. Rookie Rugby is played with flags for several reasons:

- 1 Flag Rugby Keeps it Safe**
Flag rugby eliminates the opportunity for players to push or shove. Flag rugby increases the safety of the game for kids, especially when playing indoors.
- 2 Flag Rugby Keeps it Simple**
Ball carriers will clearly know when their flag is pulled, creating continuity. This free flowing part of the game is vitally important for new players to learn the basic skills of rugby.
- 3 Flag Rugby is Easier to Referee**
Athletes will proclaim “FLAG” as they pull each flag, making a clear indicator for the referee. Determining if a two-handed touch has been made can be more difficult.
- 4 Flag Rugby Encourages Co-Ed Play**
Flag rugby virtually eliminates body-to-body contact, which allows for less issues with co-ed play.
- 5 Flag Rugby Correctly Simulates Rugby During the ‘Tackle’**
Using flags more closely reflect a tackle situation in rugby by taking both players out of the game temporarily. Similar to tackle rugby, both the ball carrier and defensive player must perform a task before returning to play. The ball carrier must pass the ball and replace their flag, and the defensive player must return the pulled flag to the ball carrier.



PLAYING THE GAME

GAME SET-UP

The Field

Rookie Rugby can be played in any open space of any size. You can play outside on grass, in a parking lot, and even inside of a gym! A field no larger than 60 yards in length and 40 yards in width is recommended. The size of the field can be adapted to suit the age and ability of the teams participating. The try zone should be 5 yards deep from the try line and clearly marked with cones.

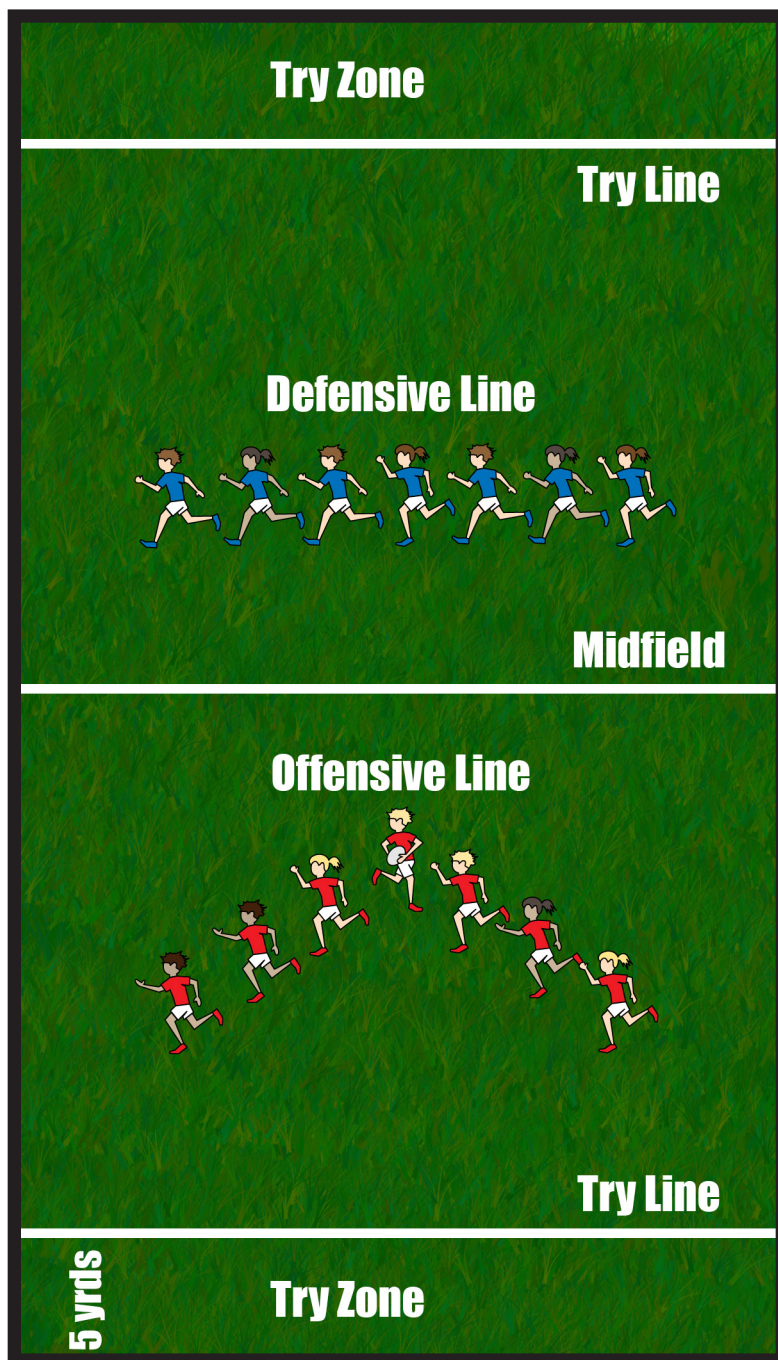
Time of Play

A game is made up of two halves. It is recommended that each half last between 5 and 20 minutes, depending on player's age and ability. Halftime should be 2 minutes in length.

Team Composition

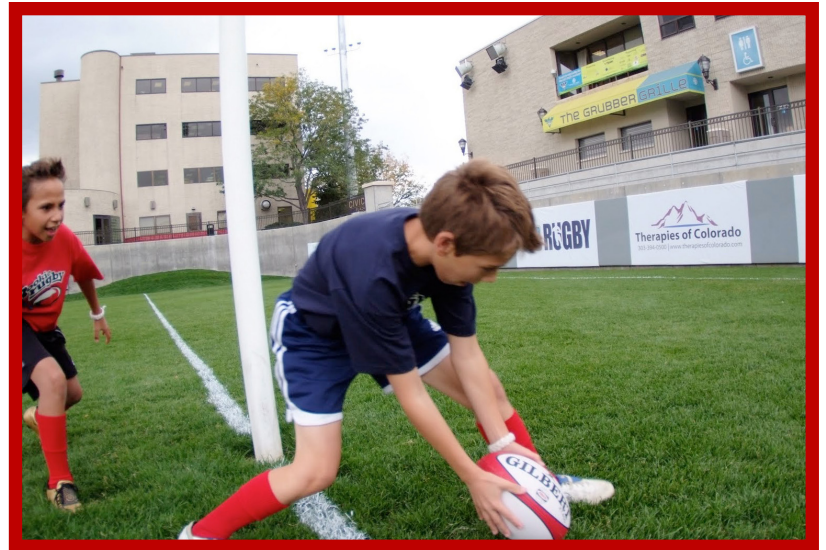
Rookie Rugby is played between two teams with equal numbers of players on each team. Each team contains no more than seven players and no less than four. Each team may have an agreed number of substitutions. Substituted players may return to play, but only when play has stopped. Each player is encouraged to play every position on the field.

Remember, keep team numbers at or below 7v7!
Rookie Rugby is about learning and participation. More players on the field means less opportunity for each player to pass, run, catch, defend, and score.



OBJECTIVE OF THE GAME AND SCORING

The objective of the game is to score more points than the opposing team. To earn points, the offensive team will work to move the ball forward until one player can run over the goal line and touch the ball to the ground with two hands. This action is called grounding the ball and will result in a score, which is called a 'try' in rugby, worth 5 points.



MOVING THE BALL

Players move the ball forward by running the ball towards the opposition's try zone. Players run forward, passing the ball from one player to another. All passes in rugby must be thrown sideways or backwards, much like a lateral pass in football.



OPEN PLAY

The Game of Rugby

Being successful in rugby is a combination of offensive and defensive play. Ensuring success on the field means teaching your athletes the basics of both.

Offense

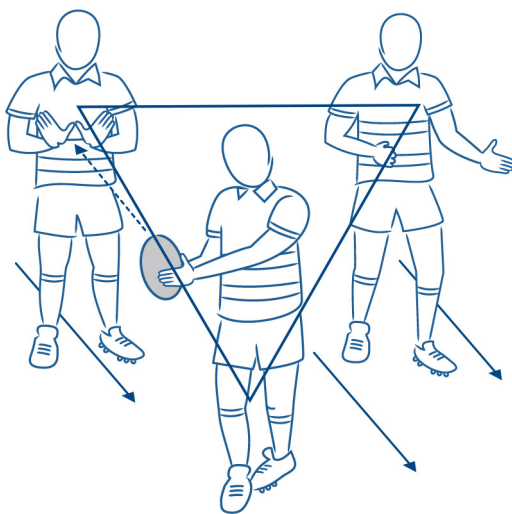


Offense in rugby is centered on two main principles: Go Forward and Support.

Go Forward means that in order to score, all offensive players, including support players, should be moving toward their opponent's try line. The easiest way to teach this concept is by using shapes, specifically triangles. Players will naturally run from sideline to sideline in order to avoid a flag pull. Get them moving forward by placing them in an offensive shape.

Support in rugby means that players are 'following' the ball carrier in the proper position to receive a pass. Players should work to support their teammates and always be ready to receive a pass.

The most effective shape in rugby is a 'triangle' because it provides the ball carrier multiple options. Since ball carriers can only pass laterally or backwards, these players will be to the right and left, and a step behind, creating a triangle.

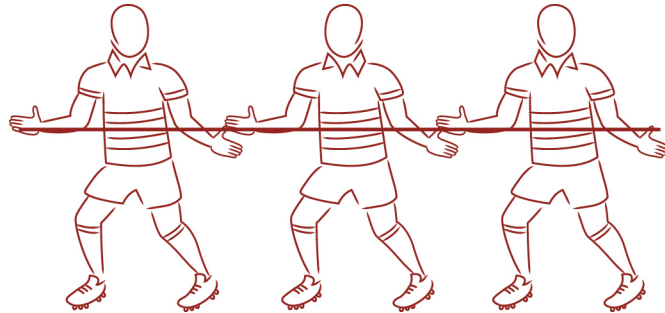


When a defensive player removes the ball carrier's flag, the defensive player is 'removed' from play until they return the flag. This creates a large open space in the defense, which is vulnerable for attack. Positioning players in support positions will enable them to take advantage of this situation. In order to be successful, support players must move forward into these open spaces.

Defense

Defense prevents the opposing team from scoring. Similar to offense, defense is also taught in a basic shape, in this case a flat line.

A flat line defense is similar to a solid wall without space or gaps. Space in a defensive line will create places for the offense to run through and score.



A great way to practice defense is having your team work together as a moving unit. When adding in an offensive team, move the ball up and down the field, as well as around to different players. Your defensive team will have to react and continue to get into position to maintain their flat line. Once players can understand the basics of defensive movement, you can introduce more advanced defensive concepts to defend more advanced offensive movements.



Before teaching defense to players, it is helpful to inform them of how defense moves with the offensive team. We have outlined some key questions that your players may ask, an explanatory answer, and a defensive command that can be used to help players get into position.

Defensive Questions

Defensive Questions	Defensive Explanation	Defensive Command
Where should I stand on defense?	All players are encouraged to “cross the street” in defense, making sure to look to their left and right. Players should be in line and “flat” with their teammates. This will help make them be in the right position and ready to pull a flag.	Although there is no set command for being in the correct position, players tend to understand the command, “FLAT.” Both teammates and coaches can communicate this during games.
Do I have an opposite player that I guard?	Sort of. When positioning yourself on defense, it is smart to line yourself opposite from another player on the opposing team. This will help ensure that all offensive players are covered. Defense in rugby is a combination of man-to-man and zone defense.	There are no main commands for finding an opposing player while on defense. The best thing a player can do is count the offensive players and find the one open person who has a clear path in front of them.
When do we move forward as a defensive line?	Remaining in a flat line is just one part of defense; moving as a team in the same direction is the other part. A defensive line will move forward or “up” towards the offense when the first pass is made after a penalty.	A common command that is used for moving forward on defense is “UP.” This can be signaled by teammates and coaches.
When do we move back as a defensive line?	Similar to other movements, moving backwards as a team is important for maintaining a flat line. Players will need to move back when a penalty takes place and a free pass is awarded.	A simple command of “BACK” will help all players know that they need to back up to get in position.
Will the defense move left and right?	Yes! The defense will move in conjunction with the offensive team in order to contest possession. As play moves across the field, the defense will need to react and move as a team in their flat line.	The most common commands for moving across the field are “SLIDE RIGHT” and “SLIDE LEFT.” Whenever a player recognizes that the offensive play is moving in one direction, they can call out for their teammates to slide.

Advantage Rule

The rules of rugby were invented to keep play fair and continuous. An advanced concept of rugby, which features both ideas, is called Advantage. This rule comes into play after an infringement of the rules occurs. Although advantage can be found in many places during a regular game of rugby, we keep it simple in Rookie Rugby. The chart below outlines a few advancements for players to progress.

Game Scenario	Rookie Rugby Rule	Advantage Progression
A pass is dropped and fumbles forward and picked up by the defense.	Turnover to the other team.	Allow the defense to pick up the ball and play on without blowing the whistle.
A pass is dropped and fumbles forward and picked up by the offense.	Turnover to the other team.	Turnover to the other team. Restart play with a free pass or an uncontested scrum.
A pass is dropped and fumbles backwards	Play on.	In this case, the ball was not advanced forward. Either team can pick up the ball and play on without blowing the whistle.



Flag Etiquette

While the offensive team attempts to move the ball forward, the defensive team will attempt to slow them down by pulling the ball carrier's flag, simulating a tackle. Once the ball carrier's flag is removed the game will continue by using the following flag etiquette:



- Step 1:** Defender removes the flag, holds it up in the air and yells, "FLAG!" The defender is now out of play and should stand still.
- Step 2:** The ball carrier must pass the ball to a teammate within three steps or three seconds. After the pass, the player with a flag missing is out of play.
- Step 3:** While play continues the defender must return the flag to the offensive player before they can return to play.
- Step 4:** The player whose flag was removed must replace their flag on their belt before returning to play.



PENALTIES AND RESTARTS

Starting the Game and Restarts:

At the start of the game or after each score, the team who did not score or is starting the game takes a free pass from the center of the playing field. A free pass is an uncontested pass allowed from one player to a teammate. Remember it must be lateral or backwards.

Lineouts:

If the ball is passed or carried out of bounds a free pass is used to restart play. In Rookie Rugby, the free pass should be one yard in field from the sideline.

Penalties:

Penalty	Definition	Result
Forward Pass	In rugby, passes can only be made laterally or backwards. If a player passes the ball forward to a teammate it will result in a penalty.	A turnover will occur with the opposing team being awarded a free pass at the spot of the penalty.
Knock-On	A knock-on occurs when a player fumbles the ball forward.	A turnover will occur with the opposing team being awarded a free pass at the spot of the penalty.
Obstruction, Blocking, or Fending Off	Players must not obstruct a defender from making a flag pull.	A turnover will occur with the opposing team being awarded a free pass at the spot of the penalty.
Diving	Players must not dive when attempting to score a try. They must remain on their feet at all times.	The Try will not be awarded and a free pass will be given five yards from the try line.
Deliberate Contact	Rookie Rugby is a non-contact game, if a player pushes or hits another player it will result in a penalty.	A turnover will occur with the opposing team being awarded a free pass at the spot of the penalty.
Failure to Release the Ball	If a player fails to pass the ball within three seconds/three steps of getting their flag pulled it will result in a penalty.	A turnover will occur with the opposing team being awarded a free pass at the spot of the penalty.

ROOKIE RUGBY PROGRESSION

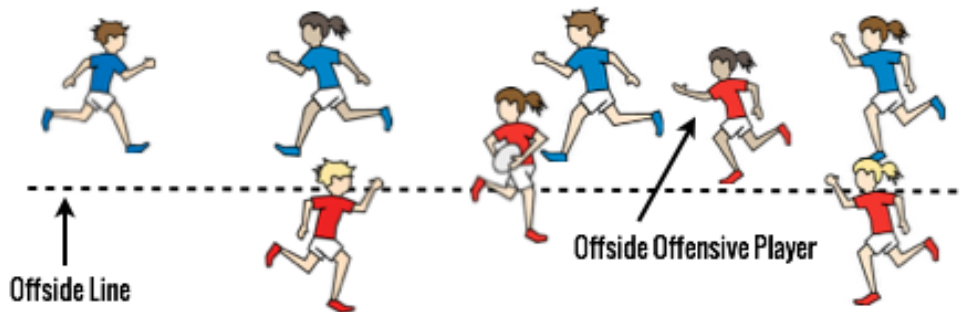
Once players are comfortable with the basic play of Rookie Rugby, progressions of the game can be added. These progressions should only be introduced after players have mastered the intro game. They can be very useful for preparing players to move into higher-level rugby leagues.

Offside

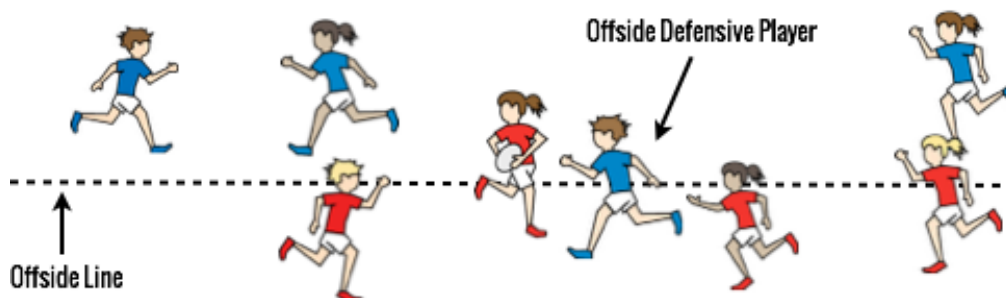
Offside is one of the most difficult sporting concepts for players to understand. Rookie Rugby begins without an offside line as a simple way to introduce the game. Players are encouraged to take their three steps after their flag is pulled so that they create open space for passing to a support player. Support players are encouraged to always move forward.

Once players are advanced enough with the game, you can introduce an offside concept that resembles offside in rugby. It is split up into both offensive and defensive offside.

Offensive Offside: In Rookie Rugby, passes can only be made laterally or backwards. Because of this, offensive offside occurs when teammates are in front of the ball carrier. Keep in mind that a penalty will only occur if the offside offensive player receives a pass



Defensive Offside: Defensive offside is in place to ensure fairness in play. There is an imaginary line drawn through the ball once a flag is pulled which indicates where the defense must be in order to play the ball. As indicated in the image below, all defensive players must be in front of the ball and must not prevent the first pass from being made after a restart.



Kicking

It should be noted that kicking should not be added into Rookie Rugby until the players are of the appropriate age and ability. The safety and development of players is at the forefront of the game, and the focus of the intro games is playing with the ball in hand.

In advanced versions of rugby, kicking is allowed at any time during open play, as well as for starts of the game. The following is a recommended plan for introducing kicking into the game.

There are two main types of kicking in rugby:

Punting: When a player kicks the ball with their foot while it is in the air.

Drop Kick: A drop kick is a rugby-specific kick where players will drop the ball and allow it to hit the ground and bounce up before kicking it.

Introduction to Kicking

Starting the Game: The first time to introduce kicking in Rookie Rugby is the start of the game. This allows kicking to be introduced slowly and allows all players to have the chance to practice their skills. Drop kicks can be more difficult for younger players. Start kick-offs with punting until players are ready to advance to drop kick starts.

Kick-offs after Scoring: Similar to the start of a game, a kick-off is used to restart play after a try is scored. After introducing kicking at the start of a game this is the next progression for kids in Rookie Rugby. After a try is scored the team that scored the try will kick off to the opposing team.

Penalty Kicks: When penalties are committed during open play in Rookie Rugby a free pass is awarded. An advancement to add once players are ready is penalty kicks. A penalty kick in rugby is when the non-infringing team kicks the ball down the field and out of bounds in order to restart play with a lineout where the ball went out.

Kicking during Open Play: The last progression for kicking is to add it during open play. Players will be permitted to punt the ball at any time during the game as a strategic move. It is recommended that teams are limited to the number of kicks they can perform until they are ready to strategically make kicking decisions.



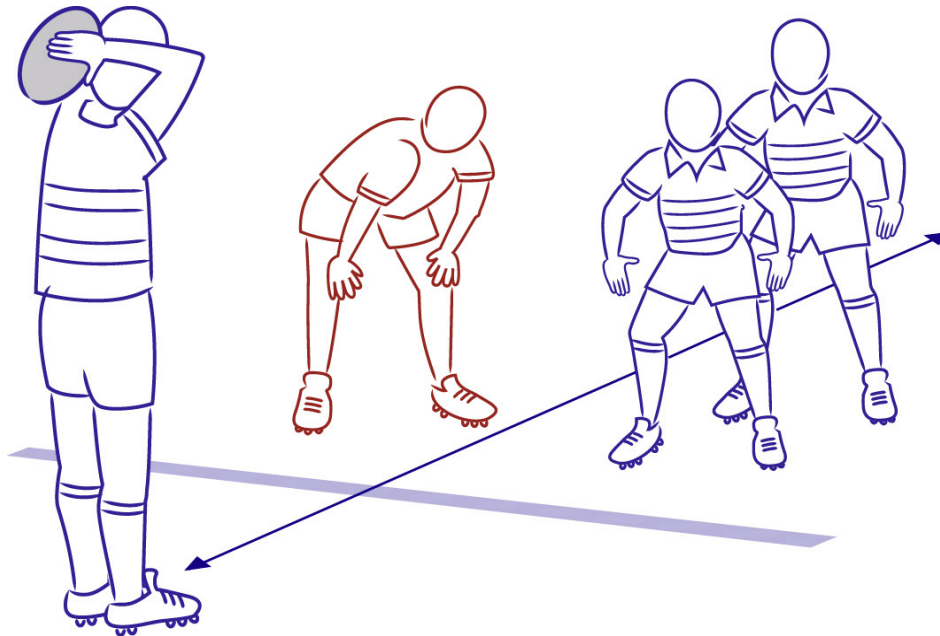
Uncontested Lineouts

Another great advancement to the game of Rookie Rugby is a lineout. A lineout occurs when the ball goes out or is carried out of bounds during play. The lineout will occur at the point where the ball went out of bounds.

Three to four players from each team will make up a lineout. For the team in possession of the ball, there will be one player throwing the ball in, one or two players receiving, and one player who will receive the ball from the lineout.

Players should not lift in lineouts until they have developed the necessary skills and strength.

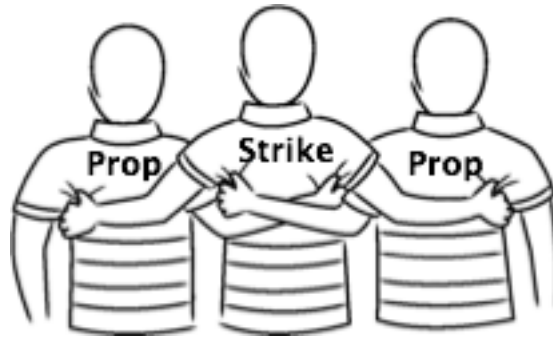
In Rookie Rugby there are no contested lineouts. The team that throws the ball in must be allowed to win possession of the ball.



Uncontested Scrums

When kids participating in Rookie Rugby have advanced their skills to a point where they are ready for the next step, try adding scrums. A scrum is a unique part of this game. It should be noted that scrums in Rookie Rugby should only be added when participants are of the appropriate age and ability.

Following a forward pass, or if the ball is fumbled forward with a knock-on, a scrum will be awarded to the non-infringing team. A scrum is formed from two units: one from each team made up of three players each (Front Row). In each Front Row there are two 'Props' with a 'Strike' in the middle.



Before allowing a scrum make sure all players have proper body position throughout the scrum: Back flat, feet and body square, shoulders above hips, head neutral, and eyes forward.

In Rookie Rugby all scrums start as uncontested and players should not be allowed to push or drive. The team that was awarded the scrum will roll the ball into the scrum and their 'strike' should be allowed to win possession by pulling the ball back toward their own team with their foot. When players are ready to progress, allow them to contest for the ball by the props pushing against the opposition and the strike contesting for the ball with one foot against the other strike.

Coaches and players must know the engagement sequence and cadence the referee uses. The referee will call out the engagement sequence: "Crouch...Bind...Scrum!"

Crouch: Bound front rows lower into position, close enough so the ears of all 6 players lined up.

Bind: Props will grasp on to opposing players' jerseys just below their armpits.

Scrum: The two front rows come together, placing their heads to the left of the player across to form a scrum. The team in possession will roll the ball into the scrum. from the side. The strike from the team rolling the ball in moves the ball backwards with one foot.

Safety First!

Before any engagement make sure that all players are bound together properly.

At any time before engagement if a front row player is not ready for the scrum they should inform the referee.

GET INVOLVED

COACHING ROOKIE RUGBY

While there is no fast track to becoming a good coach, the experience can be very rewarding and worth all of the time and effort put in. By taking the time to read the right resources and take coaching courses, you will be on your way to becoming a successful coach.

Rookie Rugby Coaching Tips

Plan your practice: Know how your practice will be structured before you arrive; a session should include warm up, activities, cool down, and review. Be sure to have a backup plan for different number of players, as well as, ways to change practice if things are going better or worse than expected.

Look like a coach: Your first impression to players is how you look. If you look and act like a coach, players will view you as one. Wear nice athletic gear to practice and games; avoid old torn up rugby t-shirts and dirty tennis shoes.

Arrive early: Arriving early will help you prepare the area for practice and also help set the tone for a well-run practice. Before practice is also a great time to answer questions that your parents or players may have.

Organize the activities: It is very important to have each skill and game organized. If you are attempting to organize while at practice you will lose the attention of your players.

Let the players play, and only stop to talk sparingly: Understand that players can only retain a small amount of new information at a time. Make your coaching points succinct, and then let the players practice these points. Avoid instructing too much so that your players can learn by doing.

Use questions: Use questions to heighten player's self-awareness. Question players to ensure they understand your instruction.

Provide feedback: Providing feedback lets players know you are listening and watching. Make sure to keep feedback positive. If you are correcting a player make sure they understand how it will help them play better.

Be a role model: Realize that your players look up to you. Act the way you would want your players to act.

Deal with disruptive behavior: Players will occasionally act up. Pull those players aside and take the time to figure out why that behavior is occurring. Punishing disruptive player with running or physical activity is only a quick fix; taking time to understand and deal with the problem will lead to better behavior in the long run.

Coaching Tips for Running Practice

1 Instruction and Explanation

- » Plan what you say before you speak
 - » Gain player's attention before you start
 - » Keep the message simple
 - » Invite questions and check for understanding
-

2 Demonstration

- » Position yourself so all can see and hear
 - » Focus on one or two key points per practice
 - » Repeat the demonstration
 - » Invite questions and check for understanding
-

3 Observation and Analysis

- » Focus on each key point one at a time
 - » Observe action several times and from different positions
 - » Compare observation with correct behavior to find matches and mismatches
 - » Determine action: Build on strengths, correct errors, or do nothing
-

4 Feedback for Players

- » Ask players questions to generate self-feedback
- » Limit information to one or two key points
- » Give specific and simple information
- » Keep it positive



REFEREEING ROOKIE RUGBY

One of the greatest things about Rookie Rugby is how easy it is to administrate, coach, and referee. In many instances, a Rookie Rugby coach can take on the role of a referee during games. When doing so, it should be noted that referees in Rookie Rugby are more like coaches. Refereeing as a coach means using your words more than your whistle. The number one priority as a referee is maintaining the player's safety. If a player makes a mistake, let them know what they are doing wrong and why you are awarding a penalty or blowing your whistle. This will help coach the athlete so that they do not make the same mistake again.

Always keep in mind the following elements while on the field as a referee:

Safety Comes First: Keeping a game safe should be a top priority to the referee. Rookie Rugby players have not learned the proper techniques for contact yet, therefore the referee should be quick to discourage any unsafe actions.

Use a quick whistle for unsafe actions such as:

- » Holding, pushing, or shoving
- » Blocking and obstructions
- » Pulling the ball from the ball carrier
- » Players diving on the ball or going to ground

*Remember to instruct players on why you are blowing the whistle

Communication: Clearly communicating is a key skill for rugby referees. Remember to help coach the players by talking with them during the game rather than always using your whistle.

- » Blow your whistle only when you want to stop play
- » Shout "FLAG" when a flag has been pulled
- » Shout "PLAY" when you want play to resume
- » Signal the team starting play after a penalty by extending your arm toward that team.
- » Coach/educate players on the rules
- » Have a friendly attitude

Maintain Space: Young players will tend to bunch up during play. Establish spacing rules with the players to maintain the continuity of the game.



Encourage Continuity: Rookie Rugby is a free flowing and continuous game. Avoid blowing your whistle too many times so players begin understanding the flow of rugby.

- » Use the advantage rule. Although harder to understand at first, this helps keep play flowing

Be in Position: The key to making good calls is being in a position to see the play. Be sure to keep moving so that you can see the gameplay and ball carrier at all times.

- » Be level with the play
- » Call what you see
- » Blow the whistle only when you want play to stop

Referee Calls



Penalty



Advantage



**Forward
Pass**



Try Scored



Lineout



Knock On

RESOURCES

ROOKIE RUGBY RESOURCES



[WWW.ROOKIERUGBY.COM](http://www.rookierugby.com)

Check out this page for everything that you need related to Rookie Rugby. This site includes lesson plans, game cards, skill cards, local contact information and much more!



USA RUGBY

[WWW.USARUGBY.ORG](http://www.usarugby.org)

Visit USA Rugby's official website to find out more about rugby in the US. Learn how to get involved with coaching or refereeing, keep up to date on our national teams, or even find out about a rugby event in your area!

USA RUGBY ONLINE RESOURCES

Information on coaching rugby: <http://usarugby.org/coaching>

Information on refereeing rugby: <http://usarugby.org/referee>

Information on youth rugby: <http://usarugby.org/youth>

Information on USA Rugby events: <http://usarugby.org/events1/usa-rugby-events/calendar>

ROOKIE RUGBY VOCABULARY

Advantage: The purpose of this rule is to let the game flow and avoid unnecessary stoppages. If an infringement occurs that results in the benefit of the non-infringing team, the referee will let play continue. For example, if a knock-on occurs and the non-infringing team gains possession from this knock-on, the referee will call advantage and allow play to continue. To help play, the referee will call 'Advantage' when this occurs.

Bind: For an uncontested scrum, referees will call out "crouch, bind, set" to start the play. On the "bind" command the prop players will grasp on to opposing players' jerseys in the proper location.

Crouch: When calling out the cadence to an uncontested scrum, referees will start with the word "crouch." This signals players to get into the proper scrum positions, with backs flat and a low athletic position.

Drawing a Defender: Drawing a defender is an act done by the ball carrier to make a defensive player commit to an attempted tag. Drawing the defender is an important skill in rugby because once a defender is drawn in; it becomes more difficult for them to defend against other offensive players.

Drop Kick: A drop kick in rugby is used to restart play and score points. A ball is drop kicked by dropping the ball and then kicking it when it bounces off the ground.

Evade: The act of evading is done by a ball carrier to avoid being tagged by defenders. To evade, players can fake a run one direction and then run the other way, make a quick cut in one direction, or fake a pass.

Flat Line Defense: The flat line defense is a common term used in rugby. If the defense team covers the field in a flat line it makes it much harder for the offense to get through because there are no holes. Learning to stay in a flat line with teammates is an important skill for every rugby player to gain.

Forward Pass: Passes that are thrown forward (towards the try zone in which a team is trying to score) are not allowed. All passes in rugby must be thrown sideways or backwards.

Free Pass: A free pass is an uncontested pass allowed from one player to a teammate. A free pass is used to start the following:

- A. Each half of the match at the center of the field
- B. After an infringement to restart the match at the place of infringement

Grounding: In rugby grounding is when a player touches the rugby ball down to the ground in order to score a try. In order to properly ground the ball a player must stay on their feet and touch the ball down with 2 hands.

Kick-off: A kick off in rugby is used to start a half, or restart the game after points have been scored. Kick offs are made by players drop kicking the ball at the center line. Rookie Rugby typically does not include kicking to restart play but it can be incorporated if players have practiced it sufficiently.

Knock-on: A knock-on occurs when a player, while carrying the ball or trying to receive a pass, fumbles or fails to catch the ball, and the ball then goes forward and hits the ground or another player.

Lift: A lift in rugby is used for true lineouts when players physically lift one of the players into the air to compete for possession of the ball. Lifts should never be used in Rookie Rugby.

Lineout: A lineout is used to restart play after the ball goes out of bounds.

Offside: Any time that a player is in front of teammates who is carrying the ball, that player is offside and must not become involved or interfere in play in any way until he/she becomes onside again.

Olympic Rugby Sevens: Olympic Rugby Sevens is the seven-a-side version of rugby that is played in the Olympics. Younger players can start playing rugby sevens as early as middle school have the possibility to work all the way up to making the USA Olympic Rugby team.

Pass: A pass is when a rugby ball is thrown from one player to another. All passes in rugby must be thrown sideways or backward.

Punting: In rugby punting is typically used to gain field possession by kicking the ball up the field and out of bounds. Punting the ball can be done at any time during free play but is typically used sparingly because of the risk of losing possession. Rookie Rugby typically does not include punting but it can be incorporated if players have practiced it sufficiently.

Rugby World Cup: The Rugby World Cup is an international rugby competition organized by the International Rugby Board and held every four years since 1987. The winners are awarded the William Web Ellis Cup, named after William Webb Ellis, the Rugby Student who, “according to a popular myth”, invented rugby by picking up the ball during a soccer game.

Set: When calling out the cadence to an uncontested scrum, referees will call out “crouch, bind, set” to start the play. On the “set” signal players will bind with the opposing team in the scrum in order for the ball to be rolled in to the center.

Support: Support is a common term in rugby and refers to offensively being a position to receive a pass from a teammate with the ball. Support players should never be ahead of the ball carrier and should be close enough to receive a pass.

Triangle Shaped Offense: This offensive is always forming triangles so players are always in support of the ball carrier.

Try: Scoring in rugby is called a 'try.' Scoring a try is done by crossing over the goal line, into the try zone, and touching the ball down to the ground. A try is worth five points.

Try Zone: The try zone in rugby is the end zone where players can score a try.

Uncontested Scrum: An uncontested scrum is a scrum where one team is required to win the ball unopposed by the other team. No pushing is allowed.

USA Eagles: The USA Eagles are the men's and women's national teams who compete at the international level and represent the United States in the sport of rugby.

