

Rugby



A SMALL HANDBOOK OF GROUND RULES

Impressum

„RUGBY 1x1 —
a small handbook of ground rules“

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Sources & Image Credits:

- Die Regeln des Spiels Rugby Union, World Rugby, 2023
- wikipedia.org
- „The France (white) v Germany (dark and striped) match at the Summer Olympics (at right: F. Reichel)“, Revue Sportive Illustrée, unbekannt, 14.10.1900
- „Orangerie, Karlsaue, Wilhelmshöhe, Cassel (i.e., Kassel), Hesse-Nassau, Germany“, Library of Congress, Detroit Photographic Company, 1905

With special thanks to Rugby Cassel e.V.
and F.T. Adler Kiel

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Introduction

This handbook is intended as an introduction to 15s and olympic 7s rugby and explain the basic rugby union rules.

All sport-specific terms in this manual are given in both the English and German language. Both language variants are commonly used in Germany on the rugby pitch, often at the same time. Accordingly, terms from both languages appear side by side in this handbook.



The German Rugby Association (Deutscher Rugby-Verband, or DRV) was founded on November 4, 1900 in the Kassel in Kassel. The two oldest rugby clubs in Germany are the Heidelberger Ruderklub (1872) and Hannover 78 (1878).



At the 1900 Olympic games, Germany (striped) lost to France (white) in the final and won second place together with Great Britain.

History

According to legend, rugby was invented in 1823 by schoolboy William Webb Ellis, who took the ball in his hand during a football match and ran towards the goal line.

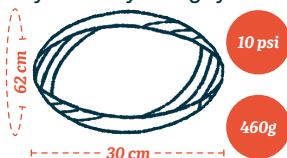
Almost 10 million people now play rugby in over 100 countries on 6 continents. The Rugby World Cup, which is held every four years, is the third largest international sporting event in the world after the Olympic Games and the Football World Cup.

15-a-side ("15s") Basics Grundprinzip 15er



2 Teams
with
15
players each

try to carry 1 Rugbyball

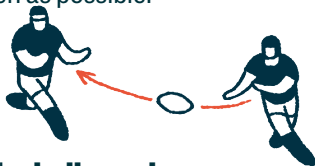


10 psi

460g

inside of
80
Minutes
(2 x 40, Pause 15)

into the opposing team's
TRYZONE
as often as possible.



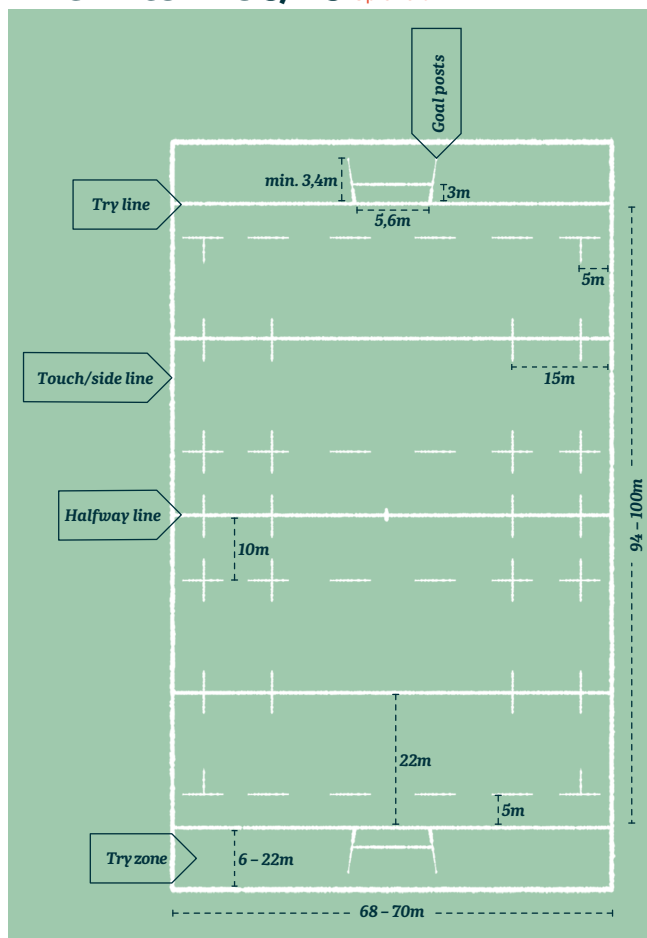
The ball may only be
passed **backwards**.

Only the **ball carrier**
may be obstructed or
brought down



by grabbing, wrapping, or
tackling **below the
shoulder**.

The Pitch 15s/7s Spielfeld



Team 15s Team 15er

The Forwards

8 Tall, heavy players form the **Forwards**. These players engage in the scrums, rucks and mauls to win the ball for their team.

Specialization

1&3 Props *Scrum*, Ruck*, Line-out*, Maul**

2 Hooker *Scrum, Throw-in, Jackler**

4&5 Locks *Ruck, Line-out, Maul*

6&7 Flanker *Ruck, Maul, Jackler*

Nr. 8 *Line-out, Maul, Ball carrier**

**see p. 11-14 and p. 23*



Forwards are typically the heaviest players on the team.

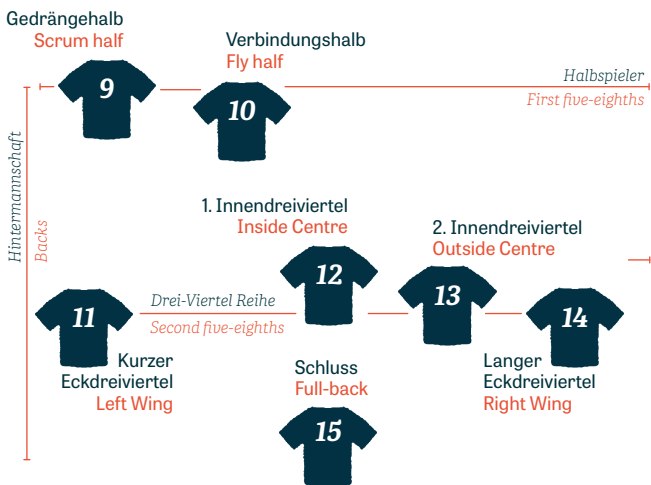
In professional men's rugby, a full forward pack can weigh around 900 kg on average and generate forces of up to 8000 N [Source: biomedcentral.com]. These forces are especially striking in the rain or cold—when a scrum starts to steam.

The Backs

7 fast, nimble players form the halfbacks and three-quarters, known collectively as the **Backline**. With quick runs, kicks, and set plays they try to score points for the team.

Specialization

- 9 Scrum half *Link between forwards and backs*
- 10 Fly half *Tactician, Kicks*
- 12 & 13 Centre *Playmaker*
- 11 & 14 Wing *Try scorers*
- 15 Full-back *Kicks, Counterattack*



Will Skelton
Australia
Lock
2,03 m

Yutaka Nagare
Japan
Scrum half
1,66 m

Cheslin Kolbe
South Africa
Wing
80 kg

Uini Atonio
France
Prop
155 kg

Rugby is a sport for everyone! Whether big or small, strong or fast, everyone has a role to play

Points Punkte

Try

Versuch

The most point are scored by grounding the ball in the opponent's in-goal area (try zone).

+5

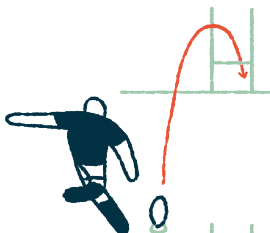


Conversion

Erhöhung

After scoring a try, the team earns the right to "convert" it with a kick at the posts.

+2



Penalty Goal

Strafftritt

After serious rule violations, the fouled team may attempt a penalty kick "at the posts."

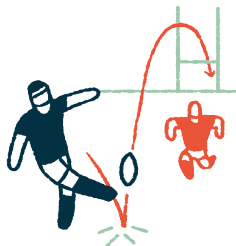
+3



Dropkick

In open play, a dropkick can be taken at any time. But the ball must hit the ground before being kicked.

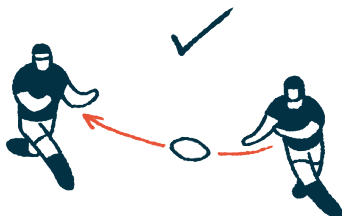
+3



During conversions and penalty goals, the opposing team is not allowed to yell.

Passing Passen

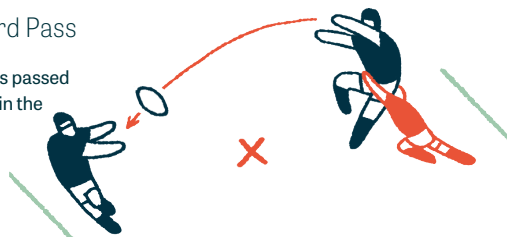
A key difference in rugby compared to other ball sports is that the ball may only be passed backwards or sideways at the same height. The ball may, however, be kicked forward. Accordingly, the following actions are *not allowed*:



Forward Pass

Vorwurf

The Ball is passed forward in the direction of play



Knock-on

Vorball

The ball is dropped or propelled forward by the hand or arm after contact.



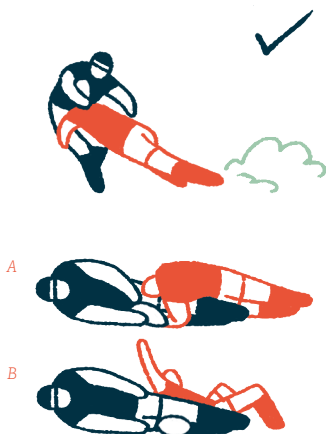
In both cases, a scrum is awarded to the opposing team. If the ball was deliberately knocked forward, a penalty kick is given instead.*

**see p. 13 and p. 8*

Tackle Tiefhalten

A tackle is an attempt to stop the ball carrier* by wrapping or holding them below the shoulders and bringing them to the ground. The tackler and ball carrier must allow for a fair contest for the ball and ensure play can continue. If both tackler and ball carrier go to ground (A), meaning at least one knee is on the ground or on another player, the tackler must actively release the ball carrier, and the ball carrier must release the ball (B).

*see p. 23



Responsibility

Players must not act in a reckless or dangerous way—this applies to tackling too. For example, a tackler may not:

... lift and drop a player or drive their upper body or head into the ground.



... charge or knock down a player without attempting to wrap them



... tackle too late or dangerously, especially not above the shoulders.



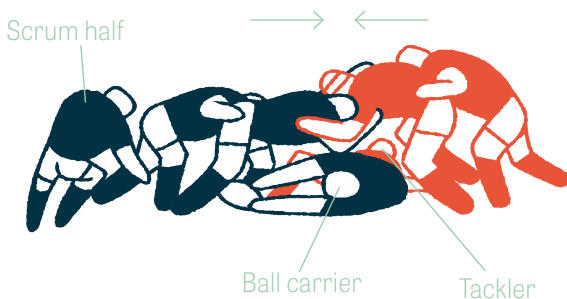
Ruck

Offenes Gedränge

The purpose of a ruck is to give players the chance to compete for the ball on the ground—e.g. after a tackle—and either retain or regain possession for their team.

A ruck is formed when at least one player from each team is **on their feet*** and in contact over the ball on the ground.

**see p. 23*



Support

Players arriving at the ruck must also stay on their feet and can only join from behind the offside line.*

They must support their own body weight and are not allowed to: play the ball with their hands, kick the ball out of the ruck, fall on the ball

or otherwise collapse the ruck, or step on other players. Additionally, players may not feed the ball back into the ruck. The ball can only be played by driving over it or by cleanly winning it through rucking.*

**see p. 15 and p. 23*

RUGBY IS PLAYED EXCLUSIVELY ON YOUR FEET!

If any part of a player's body other than the feet touches the ground, they are "off their feet" and may not participate in play.

Maul Paket

A maul is a contest for the ball, similar to a ruck*, with the difference that the ball carrier stays on their feet. It's essentially an upright ruck.

A maul is formed when the ball carrier is held by at least one player from each team and is pushed toward the opponent's in-goal area.*

**see p. 11 and p. 5*



Tactics

In theory, a maul can form at any time during play. In practice, it's often used directly after a line-out* near the opposing goal line.* An attacking team may try to bind as many defenders as possible, using the maul to push over the try line and

ground the ball. Alternatively, they might keep the maul moving forward, then pass the ball backward to a teammate who breaks off and scores. Once a maul is in motion, it's very hard to stop.

**see p. 14 and p. 5*

Scrum Gedränge

All the forwards* from both teams, along with the scrum halves, take part in a scrum. Scrums are used to restart play after minor infractions such as a forward* pass or knock-on.*

*see p. 6 and p. 9

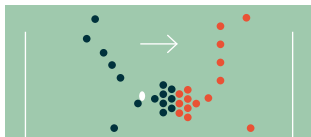
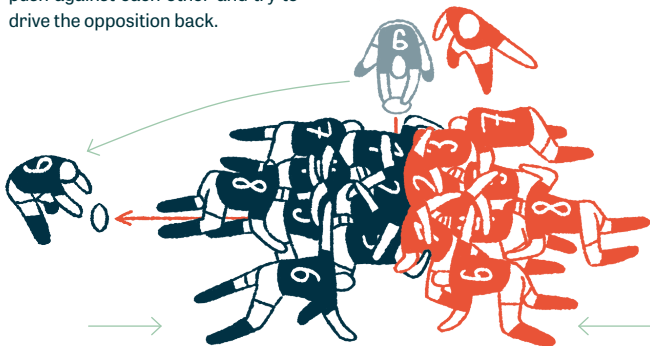


Crouch! Bind! Set!

At the referee's command "**Crouch!** **Bind! Set!**", the forwards from both teams bind together. Once the scrum is stable, the scrum half puts the ball into the middle. Both teams push against each other and try to drive the opposition back.

The hookers* (middle front row players) use their feet to try to hook the ball backward. Once the ball exits the back of the scrum, the scrum half picks it up and continues play.

*see p. 6



A possible formation during a scrum. Here, the blue team has possession and is on attack, while the red team is on defense. The scrum is engaged, and the backlines (blue for attack, red for defense) are positioned accordingly.

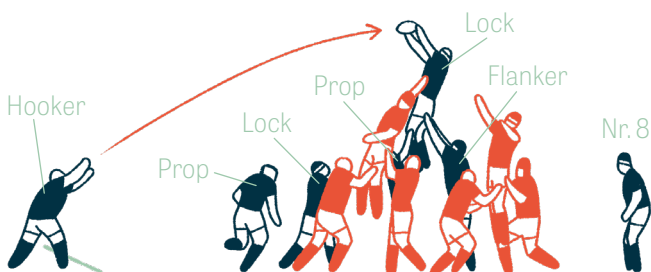
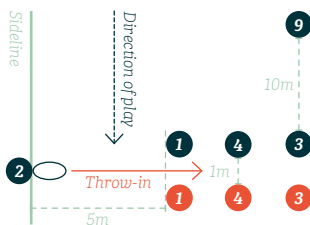
Line-out Gasse

A line-out is used to restart play after the ball carrier or ball touches the sideline* and is out of bounds. The opposing team is awarded the throw-in. At least two players from each team—usually forwards*—form a line parallel to the touchline at the point where the ball went out. From there, the ball is thrown into the space between the two lines. The hooker* (2) usually throws the ball in, while the locks* (4) try to jump and catch it.

*see p. 5 and pS. 6

Players may be lifted (e.g. by the Props* (1 & 3), but must not obstruct the opposing team. All players not participating in the line-out must stay at least 10 meters away. Usually, the scrum half* (9) receives the ball from the lock and passes it to the fly half.*

*see p. 6 and p. 7



Typical formation for a line-out: Hooker – Prop – Lock – Prop – Lock – Flanker – No. 8
Each team has its own codes, tactics, and signals to hide when and where they will jump in the line-out.

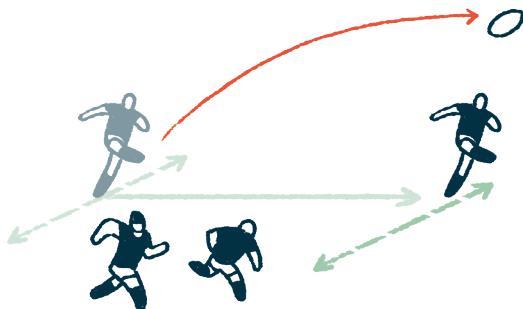
Offside Abseits

In Open Play*

Instead of running with the ball or passing it, a player may choose to kick it forward. However, any teammates who are in front of the kicker at the moment the ball is kicked are **offside** and may not play the ball.

They only become **onside** again if they move behind the kicker, or are passed by a teammate who was behind the kicker at the time of the kick.

**see p. 23*



In the Ruck*

In a ruck, the offside line runs parallel to the try line* through the hindmost foot of the last player bound into the ruck. Players who are in front of this line must either join the ruck from an onside position, or retreat behind their offside line. Otherwise, they may not participate in play.

**see p. 11 and p. 5*



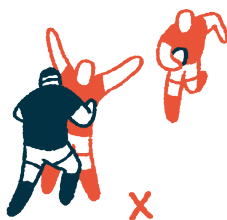
Foul-play Foulspiel

Rugby, despite (or precisely because of) its rough and intense nature, is a very fair sport where unsportsmanlike behavior is not tolerated. No player may physically abuse or insult another. Players who commit foul play or behave inappropriately may be warned, sent off, or receive a time penalty.



Dangerous play

Examples: biting, punching, contact with the eyes or eye area, hitting, stomping, trampling, tripping, or kicking an opponent.



Obstruction*

Players may not intentionally prevent opponents from tackling the ball carrier or playing the ball.

**see p. 23*

Yellow Card

For minor or repeated offenses. The player must serve an immediate 10-minute suspension in the "sin bin".

**see p. 23*

Red Card

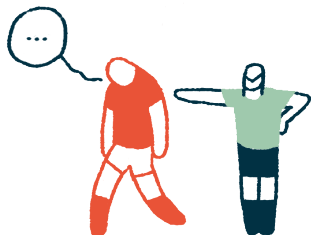
For dangerous, reckless, or deliberate foul play. The player is immediately sent off and may also face a further suspension.

Referee/Match Official

Schiedsrichter

The referee's authority is absolute. They are addressed as "Sir" or "Ma'am". Decisions made during a match are not debated, and typically no comments or complaints are accepted. Only the team captains (or "skippers"*) are allowed to directly communicate with the match officials.

*see p. 23



The referee manages the game and stays in continuous communication with the players. They signal events such as rucks* and mauls*, or warn players about foul play—without unnecessarily stopping the game.

*see p. 11 and p. 12

If the match officials are unsure about a decision, they may request a TMO* (Television Match Official) review on the stadium screen. Since referees are equipped with microphones, decisions and reviews can also be announced over the stadium loudspeakers.

*see p. 23



Infringements Verstöße

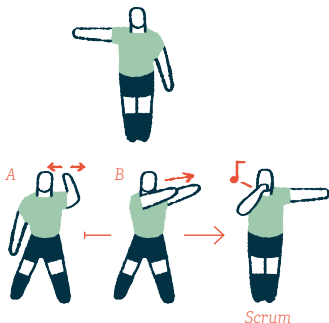
Sometimes it's hard to tell why the referee has stopped play. An attack may suddenly be halted just before the try line, or play might continue despite a foul. This is a short overview of the most common infringements in the game.

Advantage

If no advantage develops, play is stopped and restarted at the spot where the original infringement occurred.

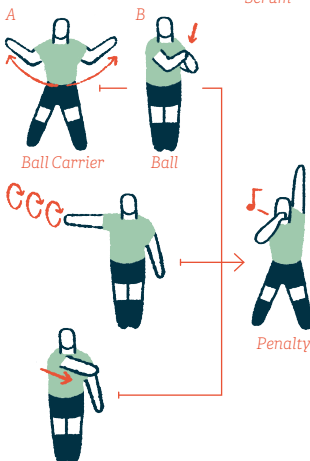
Knock-on^(A) / Forward Pass^(B)

If the ball is passed or lost forward—especially from the hand—it results in a scrum for the non-offending team.



Not Releasing

If the tackler and ball carrier do not separate within a reasonable amount of time (A) or if the ball carrier doesn't release the ball (B), it prevents a fair contest for possession.



Not Rolling Away

Any player who is on the ground after a ruck or maul must immediately roll away from the ball.

From the Side

Players who enter a ruck or maul from the side are offside and infringing.

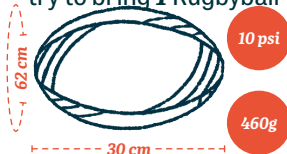
7-a-side ("7s") Basics Grundprinzip 7er



2 Teams
with
7

players each

try to bring 1 Rugbyball



inside of
14
Minutes
(2 x 7, Pause 2)



into the opposing team's
TRYZONE
as often as possible

Key Features

Sevens rugby is played in a tournament format over several days and has been an Olympic sport since 2016. In the **HSBC SVNS Series**, the top national teams compete across 7 months in cities around the world. The Hong Kong tournament is traditionally the highlight of the series. Possession is especially critical in Sevens. This makes the game faster and more running-intensive than 15s, with spectacular offloads* and rapid sprints.

The rules are essentially the same as in 15s, but with a few key differences:

- Only 3 forwards* per team
- The team that scores the try kicks off to restart play
- All conversions must be taken as dropkicks*
- A yellow card leads to a 2-minute suspension

**see p. 23 and p. 6*

Values Werte

At first glance, rugby may seem full of contradictions. Extreme physical pressure is allowed—but never with intentional or malicious harm.

Humor and teasing go hand in hand with fierce rivalries.

Rugby draws its appeal from the fact that while the game has precise rules, it also allows for a certain degree of interpretation.

The responsibility for maintaining this balance lies with everyone involved—coaches, captains, players, referees, and fans alike.

Since the days of William Webb Ellis, five core values have emerged that help make rugby a physically demanding sport rooted in fairness—values that are essential to its success.

Rugby motto: What happens on the pitch stays on the pitch.

Integrity

Honesty and sportsmanship are the foundation of Rugby.

Passion

Players and fans share a deep, spirited enthusiasm for rugby, making the game exciting.

Solidarity

Rugby builds emotional bonds, lifelong friendships, teamwork, and loyalty that cross cultural, geographic, political, and religious divides.

Discipline

A key part of rugby. It is reflected in training and in respect for rules and values.

Respect

Respect for teammates, opponents, match officials, and everyone involved is fundamental and held in the highest regard.

Links

International

World Rugby

world.rugby

HSBC Sevens Series

svns.com

Rugbypass

rugbypass.org

Green Gazelles Rugby

greengazellesrugbyclub.com

National

Deutscher Rugby Verband DRV

rugbydeutschland.org

Total Rugby

totalrugby.de

Touch Deutschland

touchdeutschland.de

Batallion d'Amour Rugby e.V.

[instagram.com/@bataillondamour_rugby](https://www.instagram.com/@bataillondamour_rugby)

Berlin Bruisers

berlinbruisers.com

Rugby Live und Re:Live

DAZN

dazn.com

More Than Sports TV

morethansports.tv

sky Sports

skysports.com

World Rugby

[youtube.com/@WorldRugby](https://www.youtube.com/@WorldRugby)

RugbypassTV

rugbypass.tv

German Regional Associations

Baden-Württemberg

rbw-rugby.de

Bayern

rbvy.de

Berlin

rugby-berlin.de

Brandenburg

rugby-brandenburg.de

Bremen

bremen1860-rugby.de, union60.de

Hamburg

hamburg-rugby.de

Hessen

[instagram.com/hessenrugby](https://www.instagram.com/hessenrugby)

Mecklenburg-Vorpommern

dierkower-elche.de, rugby-wismar.de

Niedersachsen

nrv-rugby.de

Nordrhein-Westfalen

rugby.nrw

Rheinland-Pfalz

rugbyrlp.de

Saarland

stade-sarrois.de

Sachsen

sachsen-rugby.de

Schleswig-Holstein

ft-adler-kiel.com, tus-luebeck.de,
rotersternflensburg.de

Thüringen

rugby-thueringen.de

Luxemburg

walferdange-rugby.lu, rcl.lu

Concepts in German

0-9

22 S. 5

Der Bereich zwischen Mallinie, 22m-Linie und dem Seitenaus

A

Abseits **Offside** S. 15

Spielende befinden sich vor der Abseitslinie

Antritt **Kick-off**

Spielbeginn mittels Dropkick

B

Ballträger **Ball-carrier** S. 4

Spieler bzw. Spielerin im Ballbesitz

Behinderung **Obstruction** S. 16

Blockieren eines Gegners bzw. einer Gegnerin

Binden **Binding**

Greifen oder Umklammern eines Gegners bzw. einer Gegnerin zwischen Schulter und Hüfte

D

Dropkick S. 8

Kicken aufs Tor, nachdem der Ball einmalig vom Boden aufgesprungen ist

E

Erhöhung **Conversion** S. 8

Kick aufs Tor aus der Spielfläche auf der Längsachse des zuvor gelegten Versuchs

F

Freitritt **Free-kick**

Wird einem Team an der Stelle eines Regelverstoßes oder einer Mark gegen das schuldische bzw. gegnerische Team zugesprochen

G

Gasse **Lineout** S. 14

Standardsituation nachdem Ball und/oder Ballträger das Seitenaus berührt haben

Gedränge **Scrum** S. 13

Koordinierter Kampf um den Ball z.B. nach einem Vorball oder Vorwurf

Gelbe Karte **Yellow card** S. 16

Verwarnung und temporärer Ausschluss vom Spiel, in der Regel für 10 Minuten (15er) bzw. 2 Minuten (7er)

H

Handabwehr **Hand-off**

Legales Mittel des Balltragenden, um Gegner/-innen mit der Handfläche abzuwehren

J

Jackler S. 6

Zuerst am Tackle ankommende Mitspielerin bzw. ankommender Mitspieler des Tacklers

K

Kicker S. 17

Spieler/-in, der bzw. die den Ball mit einem gezielten strategischen Kick hinter die Verteidigung platziert

M

Malfeld **Ingoal** S. 5

Endzone des Spielfeldes, in die versucht wird den Ball kontrolliert abzulegen, um Punkte zu erzielen

Mallinie **Goal line** S. 5

Trennlinie zwischen Malfeld und Spielfläche

Mark

Unterbrechung des Spiels durch das direkte Fangen eines gegnerischen Kicks in der eigenen 22 oder im Malfeld

O

Off-feet **Nicht auf den Füßen** S. 11

Ein anderes Körperteil als die Füße wird vom Boden oder von Spielenden am Boden gestützt

On-feet **Auf den Füßen** S. 11

Kein anderes Körperteil wird vom Boden oder von Spielenden am Boden gestützt

Offenes Gedränge **Ruck** S. 11

Kampf um den Ball am Boden durch min. einen Spieler bzw. eine Spielerin beider Teams

Offenens Spiel **Open play** S. 15

Ein Spielabschnitt nach An-, Wiederan-, Frei- oder Straftritt vor der nächsten oder zwischen zwei Phasen

Offload S. 19

Pass oder Übergabe des Balls im Tackle

P

Paket **Maul** S. 12

Ballträger und mindestens ein Spieler bzw. eine Spielerin aus beiden Teams sind auf den Füßen gebunden

Pass S. 9

Übergeben des Balls an Mitspielende

Phase

Gedränge, Gasse, Ruck oder Paket

R

Rote Karte **Red card** S. 16

Spieler/-in wird dauerhaft vom Spiel ausgeschlossen

Rucking S. 11

Legales Mittel in einem Ruck mit dem Fuß den Ball zu erobern oder in Besitz zu halten

S

Schiedsrichter **Match officials** S. 17

Spielleitung bestehend aus Schiedsrichter/-in (referee) und zwei Assistenten bzw. Assistentinnen oder Seitenrichtern bzw. Seitenrichterinnen

Seitenaus **Touch** S. 5

Bereich außerhalb des Spielfeldes inkl. Seitenauslinien

Skipper S. 17

Teamkapitän/-in

Spielfeld **Playing area/Infield** S. 5

Bereich zuzüglich der Malfelder unter Ausschluss aller Seitenauslinien

Spielfläche **Field of play** S. 5

Bereiche zwischen den Mal- und Seitenauslinien

Strafbank **Sin-bin** S. 16

Ort, an dem sich Spielende während einer Zeitstrafe aufhalten müssen

Straftritt **Penalty** S. 8

Wird gegen ein Team wegen eines schwerwiegenden Regelverstößes ausgesprochen

Strafversuch **Penalty try**

+7 Pkt., wird zugesprochen, wenn durch ein Foulspiel ein Versuch verhindert wurde

T

Tiefhalten **Tackle** S. 10

Halten und zu Boden bringen des Ballträgers

Tackler S. 10

Den Ballträger tackelnder Spieler bzw. tackelnde Spielerin

TMO **Television match official** S. 17

Videoschiedsrichter/-in

Tritt ins Seitenaus **Kick into touch**

Ohne, dass der Ball vorher im Spielfeld landet und die Match Officials oder Spieler/-innen berührt

V

Versuch **Try** S. 8

Ablegen des Balls im gegnerischen Malfeld

Vorball **Knock-on** S. 9

Der Ball wurde nach dessen Berührung mit der Hand oder dem Arm nach vorne verloren

Vorteil **Advantage** S. 18

Ein klarer und realer taktischer oder territorialer Nutzen, der sich nach einem Verstoß des gegnerischen Teams ergibt

Vorwurf **Forward pass** S. 9

Der Ball wird nach vorne geworfen oder gepasst

This is only a rough summary. The full and current rulebook in German can be downloaded from world.rugby or accessed via the official World Rugby app in the App Store or Play Store.



**RUGBY
CASSEL**
rugbycassel.de

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kontakt@rugbycasse.de

TRAINING

Montag & Donnerstag
19 – 21 Uhr

Sportplatz Fasanenhof
Mörikestr. 38
34125 Kassel



@rugbycassel