

TOUCH FOOTBALL/FOOTBALL RULES & STUDY GUIDE



HISTORY OF TOUCH FOOTBALL: The game of Touch had very humble beginnings indeed. Used as a training technique for Rugby League teams during the 1950s and 60s it was never seen as a sport in its own right. Eventually more and more people turned to touch for a safe social game to play and it soon became inevitable that an official competition would be held. It was in 1968 that the first recognized competition took place with the formation of the South Sydney Touch Football Association at Pioneer Park, Malabar. The sport quickly took hold in a number of inner-city areas of Sydney and the New South Wales Touch Association was formed in 1972, catering for six affiliated associations and approximately 1500 registered players. The first country association was in Wagga Wagga, which was formed in 1973, and women's touch was first played at a representative level in 1979.

OBJECTIVE: Carrying the football over the opponent's goal line by throwing or passing the ball.

DEFENSE: The team **without** possession of the ball.

OFFENSE: The team **with** possession of the ball.

SCORING:

- **Six** points are awarded each time a "touchdown" is made. A touchdown occurs when the football is legally carried over the opponent's goal line.
- After a touch down, **two** points will be awarded to the offensive team if they can successfully complete an extra point/goal line conversion.
- **Two** points "safety", are awarded to the defensive team when they down an offensive player who has the ball and the offensive player is behind their offensive team's goal line.

LINE OF SCRIMMAGE: An imaginary line that divides the defensive and offensive teams before the ball is put in play.

RUSHERS:

- Rushers are members of the defensive team. The rushers are the only defensive players allowed to cross the line of scrimmage once the ball is put in play.
- The rusher has a **five** second count (*must count out loud*) before crossing the line. There may be only one rusher per down.
- **The defensive team has one "blitz" every four downs.** A "blitz" is an immediate rush at the offensive team and must be stated out loud.

BLOCKERS: Blockers are the members of the offensive team. Line blocking must be done with the blocker in an upright body position, without the use of hands, elbows, or extended arms. Blocking is only allowed on rushers at the line of scrimmage. Any tactics will be penalized as unnecessary roughness (15 yards) and removal from the game.

TOUCHBACK: When the ball is punted over the receiving team's goal line, the receiving team has the option to "down" the ball in the end zone. If the team exercises this option, the ball is placed on the twenty-yard line in their possession.

PASS: A forward pass may be thrown from any point behind the line of scrimmage. The passer (**quarterback**) is declared down if he/she is touched before their arm is in a forward motion in throwing the ball. Anyone on either team may catch a forward pass. When a forward pass hits the ground, it is called **incomplete** and the ball is put back where the play started. In touch football, a first down is awarded after **two "pass"** completions.

INTERCEPTION: A forward pass caught by the opposite team.

DOWN: A **down** is an attempt to move the ball forward. A team has **four (4) downs** in which to score after they take possession of the ball. If they fail to score in four downs, their opponent will take possession of the ball at the spot where the ball is declared dead after the fourth down. However, on the fourth down, the offense has the choice of going for the touchdown or punting the ball to their opponent. **Reminder**, a first down is awarded after two pass completions in a four down scoring drive. In other words, the offense has earned four new downs.

PENALTIES: All penalties are **five (5) yards**, except for unnecessary roughness (**15 yards**), against the team that commits the foul. If the offense is offsides they are penalized (moved back) five yards plus loss of down. If the defense is offsides, the offense has the choice of taking the five yards (move forward) without the loss of down or keep the play – whichever will gain more yardage.

OFFSIDES: A team is offsides when one of its players move across the line of scrimmage and remains there while the ball is snapped. If the player returns to their side of the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped there is no offsides.

FUMBLE: The dropping of the ball while it is in play. The ball belongs to the team that recovers the fumble.

GAME:

- Each team is on their half of the field and a punt (kick-off) is used to start the game.
- After a touchdown is made, an extra two point conversion is attempted by the team that scored the touchdown. After that play is completed the offensive team kicks off to their opponent. If anyone from the kicking team touches the ball before the receiving team does, the ball is dead and will belong to the receiving team. If a member of the receiving team touches the ball and drops it, the ball is dead.
- During the game, the only way to stop a player, who is carrying the football, is to touch them with one hand. The person, who is touched, must stop at the spot and place the ball on the ground and that will be the new line of scrimmage.
- The quarterback may only rush with the ball one time per set of four downs.
- The defense may only blitz one time per set of four downs.
- In a regulation game, there are eleven (11) players per team on the field at one time.