

Rugby Texas Policies & Guidelines for Youth Competitions

PROGRESSION OF PLAY = (PoP) – Updated Sept. 2024

Safety continues to be the top and ongoing priority of Rugby Texas with the updated Progression of Play. We look forward to working within our community to ensure that the Progression of Play (PoP) is not only understood and implemented, but also reviewed and revised (as needed) on a regular basis to provide the safest and most enjoyable experience for our stakeholders.

The Competitions Committee and the Board of Directors for Rugby Texas look forward to and encourage meaningful dialogue on improving our sport.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Facilities & Equipment

..... p. 4

Field size

Ball size

Barriers

Uniform & Apparel

..... p. 4

Cold & Hot Weather Considerations

..... p. 4 - 5

Maximum Playing Time

..... p. 5

Playing Time

Match times

Total play time per day

Version of Play

..... p. 5

Standard Numbers of players on the field

Substitutions

Coach Placement

Contact/Set-Play Play

..... p. 5 - 7

Tackling

Rucks

Mauls

Scrum

Lineout

Scoring

Kicking

..... p. 8

Start / Restart

Open Field Kicking

Conversions

Penalty Kick at Goal

Referees & Penalties

..... p. 8

- Center Referee
- Assistant Referee (touch judge)
- Yellow Cards
- Red Cards

Off-Field Conduct

..... p. 9

Resources

..... p. 9 - 10

Age Based Exception

..... p. 10

Rugby Texas Policies & Guidelines on Youth Competitions

PROGRESSION OF PLAY = PoP

FACILITIES & EQUIPMENT

Grouping (level)	U14	U12	U10	U8	U6
Field of Play (meters)	Full field L:100m- W:70m	L:60m-W:45m Full field is an option if temps not over 85F	L:60m- W:35m	L:45m- W:22m	L:22m- W:22m
Ball Size	4 or 5	4	4	3	3
Barriers	5m (5.5yds) spectator Buffer marked by ROPE or cones if necessary (No spectators on touchline, ever)				

- Coaches/Players on one side of pitch and parents/spectators on opposite side of pitch. No one is allowed on the Touch Line.

UNIFORM & APPAREL

Grouping (level)	U14	U12	U10	U8	U6
Jersey	Rugby Jersey or similar		Rugby Jersey or Durable shirt		
Shorts	Rugby shorts	Rugby shorts, Athletic shorts (not Basketball type)			
Socks / Shoes	Knee high socks/Rugby or soccer cleats		Crew or knee-high socks / soccer cleats or cross trainers		
Padding	World Rugby approved items ONLY (no padded shorts)		Scrum cap only		
Under Garments	Full length leggings are ok.				
Eyewear	World Rugby approved athletic Goggles that are secured to the head by an elastic band				
Head/Hair items	No hair Caps, Beads or Bandanas. No headbands. WR approved Scrum Caps permitted.				

Jewelry	No jewelry, for safety reasons, jewelry must be removed.
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COLD & HOT WEATHER CONDITIONS	Temperatures <i>DO NOT</i> have to be <i>FREEZING</i> for Hypothermia to occur or 100 degrees to overheat.
	Youth are at a GREATER risk of HYPOTHERMIA & over Heating than Adults due to a greater surface-to mass ratio and less subcutaneous fat.
	When temperatures are below 45°F, or below 50°F with windy or wet conditions, players <i>MUST</i> be allowed to layer clothing and minimize skin exposure. Temps over 85 degrees require multiple water breaks.
	Time of play may also need to be reduced or competition canceled when ambient or wind-chill temperatures are near or at freezing &/or when temps w/ humidity create “feels like” over 95 degrees.

MAXIMAL PLAYING TIME

Grouping (level)	U14	U12	U10	U8	U6
Playing Time / Match	50 mins	40 mins	20 mins 14 mins 14 mins		
Playing Time / Day	90 mins	80 mins		70 mins	

VERSION OF PLAY

Grouping (level)	U14	U12	U10	U8	U6
STANDARD Version (# of players on field)	15 a-side Standard/Encouraged		10 a-side Standard/Encouraged	7 a-side Standard / Encouraged	
				5 touches, then turnover	
Player Numbers	Need Equal # of players per side, if one team is short, teams <i>SHOULD</i> share players to reach “ standard ” whenever possible.				

Player # Standards	The Standard #'s per side (w/ in an age group) needs to be met not only for proper <u>Player Progression</u> but also for Referee Development.				
Substitutions	FREE Substitutions / Rolling subs				
Coach Field Placement	Sideline- between THEIR 10m – 22m 5m from Touch	Sideline 22m to 22m 5m from Touch	Sideline Goal to Goal 5m from Touch	On Field Behind Team	On Field, free Range

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PROGRESSION OF PLAY = PoP

CONTACT / SET PLAY

Grouping (level)	U14	U12	U10	U8	U6
General	Contact			<i>Non contact</i>	<i>Non contact</i>
Tackling	Contact & WRAP <u>MUST</u> be at the STERNUM or BELOW (this is open field, goal line/bangers must be refereed for safety) No sling tackles!		Contact & WRAP MUST be at or Below the waistline (navel)	2- HAND touch at shorts Waistline / below	
	Wrap MUST be HELD to ground, No grab and pull down				
“Stiff Arming” Fending off a tackle	YES - Hand contact at Arm Pits or BELOW No hands to the Face &/or Neck	YES - Hand Contact at Arm Pits or BELOW No hands to the Face &/or Neck	Ball carrier <u>NOT</u> allowed to fend of the tackle (no stiff arm)	Ball carrier <u>NOT</u> allowed to fend of the tackle (no stiff arm)	Ball carrier <u>NOT</u> allowed to fend of the tackle (no stiff arm)
RUCKS	Opposed			None	

	Regular World Rugby Law	Regular World Rugby Law	1 player from each side ONLY (tackler/tacklee, makes the total # in the ruck, 4) (Latching & pre-binding is illegal) {STAY on your FEET}	Ball must be released immediately
	5 second rule, Use it or lose it			
Safety Considerations	Once tackled, the ball carrier MUST RELEASE the ball in a side lying position, only (i.e. jackknife position) At no time shall a player release the ball back between the legs while on their knees with the head down (i.e. "squeeze ball")			
MAULS	Opposed			None
	Regular World Rugby rules	No more than 4 from each team which includes the initial ball carrier Max. 10-meter Drive	No more than 4 from each team which includes the initial ball carrier !!! NO DRIVE !!!	
	5 second rule, use it or lose it			
SCRUMS	Allowed			None (touch-step over)
#s in scrum	15's = 8, 12 & 10's = 5, 7's = 3		10's = 5, 7's = 3	None (step over & scrum half)-reset
Contest	Yes, unless requested otherwise		NO	NO
Backline is Back	5 meters			3 meters

Scrum half	All Options	All Options, No #8 moves	All options, No #8 moves MUST PASS	
Defending Scrum half	Regular World Rugby rules	Defending scrum half CANNOT go past the Mid-Line and cannot leave the scrum		5m back 3m back
Push Limit	One Step ½ meter No Wheeling	NO push No Wheeling	N/A No Push at all	N/A
If a Front Row player is sent OFF or Injured, the scrum <i>MUST be uncontested</i> , if not replaced by a trained substitute				
Line-Outs	YES		Receiver must PASS	NONE
Contest	YES		NO	Reset awarded
# in Line-Out	World Rugby rules apply (min 2)		Maximum of 2	Reset awarded
Lifting	YES	NO	NO	N/A
Front player distance from touch	5 meters		3 meters	N/A
15-meter line	YES	NO		N/A
Back line is back	10 meters		5 meters	N/A

Rugby Texas Policies & Guidelines for Youth Competitions

PROGRESSION OF PLAY = PoP

KICKING

Grouping (level)	U14	U12	U10	U8	U6
Start / Restarts	Drop Kick Must travel 10 meters		Drop or Punt kick Must travel 5 meters	Punt kick Must travel 5 meters	Receiving team "tap & go" Mid-field
Open Field kicking	YES	Yes, ONLY Defensively, BEHIND the 22 meter (see penalty kick)		NO	
Conversions	Yes, not outside 15m line		NO	NO	
Penalty kick at Goal	NONE			NO	
Penalty kick for Touch	YES			NO	
Drop Goal	YES	NO			

REFEREES & PENALTIES

Grouping (level)	U14	U12	U10	U8	U6
Center Referee	WR Certified Referee Required for U14, live scrums		WR Certified Coach at minimum		
	WR Certified Referee Required for U14, live scrums		WR Certified Coach at minimum		
Touch Judge	Each Team Provides			N/A	
Yellow Card	Misbehavior, repeated violations				
Sin bin time Ref has discretion to less time	15's / 12's = 10 min 10's / 7's = 3 / 2 min	5 min	3 min	2 min	2 min
Red Card	Flagrant misbehavior, Dangerous play				
Period of effect	Current game to the season, depends on incident		Out for the game & the next game or entire tournament, whichever is greater		Out for the current Game only

Replacement allowed	NO Ref discretion	YES
If a front row player is sent off, a front row player replacement MUST come on & you lose a player at another position.		
Reporting	Red & Yellow cards MUST be reported to Rugby Texas to be documented and tracked.	
Age Restrictions	Referees <u>under the age of 17</u> can ONLY officiate 15's games which are more than <u>two years BELOW</u> their age.	
	Referees under the age of 17 can ONLY officiate 7's games which are of the <i>same age or below</i>	
	ALL Referees MUST take the "PoP" test to referee any Rugby Texas Game. <u>Eligible varsity refs MUST referee a JV, girls/boys, U14 & U12 level game to be Varsity eligible.</u>	
	High school Referees CANNOT referee High school Varsity games w/o all three of the following met. (1.) RT Competition Director and/or RT Board approval, (2.) Referee society approval, (3.) World Rugby certified CMO MUST be PRESENT at the game and submit a report to the RT Board &/or Competition Director.	

OFF-FIELD CONDUCT DURING MATCH PLAY

Grouping	Applies to ALL Levels
Expectations	Players, coaches, referees and spectators are to demonstrate GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP at ALL times and abide by the Code of Conduct established by USA Rugby and Rugby Texas.
Violation 1	Warning: If safety is a concern, ejection from the area.
Violation 2	Penalty kick or 10-meter advance given to opposing team (U6, U8, U10) If safety becomes a concern, ejection from the area.
Violation 3	Continued poor conduct ejection from the area. Play is NOT to continue until the offending individual (or group) is out of the area or at least 100 meters away.

	Any offending action concerning the conduct of a coach may also include additional disciplinary action.
Reporting	Violations requiring action MUST be reported to Rugby Texas within 24 hours .
Enforcement	<u>Off field Disciplinary Reports</u> may be submitted by Referee, Tournament Director, Club President or Rugby Texas Disciplinary Official, which will fall under WR regulation 18 .

Rugby Texas Policies & Guidelines for Youth Competitions
PROGRESSION OF PLAY = (PoP)

RESOURCES

World Rugby

<https://www.world.rugby/news/673997/game-on-global-community-law-variations-to-advance-rugby-accessibility-and-welfare>

Field size and times of for young rugby players in USA Rugby:

<http://assets.usarugby.org/docs/field-size-and-times-of-play-for-youth-rugby-players-in-usa-rugby.pdf>

Southern California Youth Rugby

<http://www.socalyouthrugby.org/regulations.htm>

Australia Rugby Referees

<https://australia.rugby/about/codes-and-policies>

<https://australia.rugby/participate/referee/laws> - see: Kids Pathway (U6 – U12) Law Variations and just scroll to the bottom of the page for “Age Restrictions”

Irish RFU Guidelines for Youth Rugby

<https://www.irishrugby.ie/irfu/laws-regulations/>

English RFU

<https://www.englandrugby.com/participation/coaching/age-grade-rugby>

USA Rugby – Rookie Rugby

2014-15 NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook

NFHS Sports Medicine Handbook 2011

National Athletic Trainers’ Association

NEW / UPDATED LINKS (2021)

<https://australia.rugby/participate/referee/laws> - see: Kids Pathway (U6 – U12) Law Variations and just scroll to the bottom of the page for “Age Restrictions”

USA Youth and High School Eligibility

- 1.2. Player Eligibility

- e) Players must be within four (4) years of the moment the player first enrolled in ninth grade, regardless of when that player started playing rugby or had the ability to start playing rugby.

- g) Players must be at least 15 years old to participate in High School Rugby. Players that are 14 and enrolled in high school must complete the 'Under 15 Waiver' to participate in High School Rugby. 14-year-old players must not participate in the front row of fifteens or 10s contact high school rugby matches.

- *What does this mean for Rugby Texas? High school in Texas is 9th grade thru 12th grade. Our U14 age band MIGHT push (when registering in RX) a fourteen-year-old 8th grader to our high school registration. **If the player is 14 and in 8th grade, then they must (unless there is a physical advantage that could pose a safety issue) play in U14.** ***This does not mean that an 8th grader always plays U14! A 15-year-old in 8th grade HAS TO PLAY IN OUR HIGH SCHOOL AGE GROUP.*