



# AGE GRADE LAW VARIATION

## Girls U14



## 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 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	<p>Keep high levels of activity in the session.</p> <p>Ensure every player is receiving the same opportunity to take part.</p>	<p><b>Avoid Queues.</b></p> <p>When running skill or technique zone activities, try to minimise the number of people waiting in a queue. Use multiple stations where possible.</p>
Purpose	<p>Have a clear purpose to your session, and stick to the plan.</p> <p>Share this with your players, fellow coaches and parents.</p>	<p><b>Core skills at the heart of training.</b></p> <p>Use the Technical Blueprint to ensure you develop competence of core skills before progressing.</p>
Enjoyment	<p>Most of all, above anything else, we need to create a rugby experience which is enjoyed by everyone.</p> <p>Set appropriate levels of challenge for players - too much and it won't be enjoyable, too little and they'll be bored.</p>	<p><b>Understand your players.</b></p> <p>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.</p>
Safe	<p>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.</p>	<p><b>ACTIVATE programme.</b></p> <p>Use the activate warm-up programme to develop players' physical competence and reduce injury risks.</p>

**Remember - If in doubt, sit them out!**

## Overview

U14 Rugby is the second step in the girls specific playing pathway in Scotland. The game continues the focus around developing the foundation skills of attack and defence, giving players opportunity to practice the skills of evasion, catching, passing, tackling, offloading and rucking in small sided games. The use of Size 3 Balls will be trialled to encourage a greater range of passing and offloading.

## Let's Play

- The recommended team size for U14 Rugby is 8 a side. The rules of play for games of this size fall under the blue column.
- The 'Let's Play' guidelines, provide playing options for teams that have 6 or 7 players.



Players	8	7	6
Pitch Size	Half a pitch (can be made smaller to help confidence with tackling)		
Ball Size	3		
Max Playing Time	No more than 60 minutes in a festival		
Scoring	1 Point per Try		
Tackle	Yes – Below Waist		
Handoff	Yes		
Breakdown	Up to 1 supporting players per team		
Scrum	3 players, Contested, 1.5m push, 9 must pass	No Scrum - Tap & Pass	
Lineout	No Lineout – Pass from Touch		
Kick Off/ Restarts	Tap & Pass to the team that conceded		
Open Play Kicking	Yes – kicking from hand only		

## Tackle

- All tackles should be on or below the waist (belly button) of the ball player.
  - **Sanction: Free Kick to non-offending team.**
- No swing tackles: The tackler is responsible for safely bring the ball carrier to the ground – throwing the ball carrier to ground is not permitted.

### Referee Guidance:

- As players tire, tackle height may increase – if a tackle is made in the AMBER zone (between armpits and waist) a referee can play on as long as the ball isn't prevented from being played (targeting the ball)



## 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.

## Number 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 Carrier, 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 to assist in the competition for the ball.

## When is the breakdown over? (for a 1v1 breakdown)

- When a 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

The rationale for a 1v1 breakdown is for players to develop safe and correct technique – encourage the following:

- Ball Player
  - 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 feet (kick)
    - **Sanction: Free kick to the non-offending team**
  - WORLD RUGBY GLOBAL LAW TRIAL – Cleanout and safety of the 'jackler' (defined as the first arriving team-mate of the tackler, who must remain on their feet to contest directly onto the ball. If previously involved in the tackle, they must first clearly release the ball carrier before contesting for the ball) - clean outs which target or drop weight onto the lower limbs are no longer permitted
    - **Sanction: Free Kick to the non-offending team**

Players	8	7	6
Breakdown	Up to 1 supporting players per team		

## Scrum

- Nearest 3 players from each team should form the scrum
- Scrum is CONTESTED
  - o Both hookers can strike for the ball;
  - o No Pushing allowed
    - o **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
  - o **Sanction: Free Kick to attacking team at point where the defence were offside**

Players	8	7	6
Scrum	3 players, Contested, 1.5m push, 9 must pass		No Scrum - Tap & Pass

## Lineout

- No Lineouts – Pass into play from the point where the ball went out for the team who didn't put the ball into touch
- Defending Team:
  - o Must be 5m back from the point where the lineout pass is taken.
  - o Defensive team can move forward once the ball has been touched by the first receiver

## Coaching Guidance

- Encourage the first receiver to find space via evasive footwork or to pass to a team mate in a better position.

Players	8	7	6
Lineout	No Lineout – Pass from Touch		

## Restarting the Game

### Kick Offs

- The game starts with a Tap and Pass from the centre of the pitch
- Defending team:
  - o must be at least 5m back
  - o can move once the first receiver touches the ball
- Attacking team
- Coaching Guidance – Encourage the first receiver to find space via evasive footwork or to pass to a team mate in a better position.

### Restarting After a Try

- After a try is scored, the team that conceded the try starts with the ball.

### Free Kicks

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

Players	8	7	6
Kick Off/ Restarts	Tap & Pass to the team that conceded		

## Open Play Kicking - is permitted in all U14 Rugby

Open play kicking is introduced at U14 to develop a vital go forward skill. The Initial focus should be the development of contestable kicks with the aim of continuing attacking play and the skill of regathering the ball. It is for this reason that only kicks from hand are permitted.

- Kicking from hand is permitted
- Kicking of a ball on the ground is not permitted.
  - **Sanction: Free Kick to the non-kicking team from the point where the ball was kicked**
- Coaching Guidance: Encourage players to use contestable kicks e.g. chips and grubbers

### Kicking to Touch

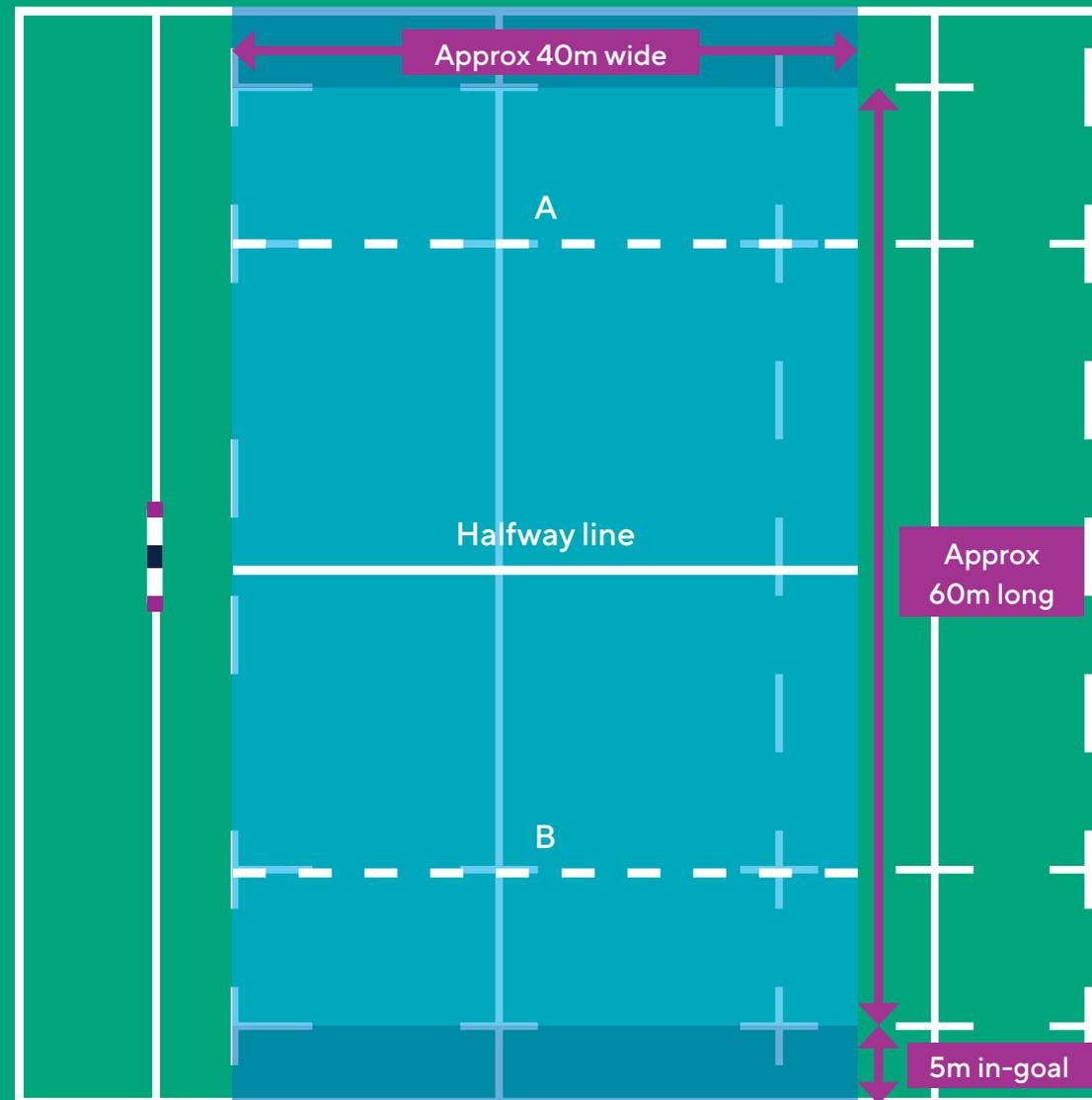
- Players can kick the ball straight into touch (without bouncing) if they are within 10m of their own try line (marked by the full pitch 15m lines A & B – see diagram on next page)
- Players can kick the ball into touch outside of their own 10m, so long as the ball bounces before leaving the pitch
  - **Sanction: Pass from touch to the opposition team, level with the point where the kick was taken**

### 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 tap and pass at the place where the ball was kicked
- WORLD RUGBY GLOBAL LAW TRIAL - Ball carrier held up in-goal\*, attacking kick grounded in-goal by defence or knock on by attacking team in-goal – Tap and pass from 15m line to defending team (marked by A and B on the next page)

Players	8	7	6
Open Play Kicking	Yes – kicking from hand only		

## Half Pitch Set Up for 6-8 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](https://www.sportscotland.org.uk)

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