

# Overview

## Number of Players

8 players per team on the field

## Rushing the QB

Full rush.

## Blocking

All blocking must be open handed and must be between the waist and shoulders. Blocking in the back or side is illegal. All blocks must be initiated in the front.

## Fumbles

Fumbles can be recovered if they are clean and unchallenged but players must stay on their feet for a legal recovery. Falling or diving to the ground for a fumble will result in a 15 yard penalty. The ref can make the judgement that if this penalty had not occurred the other team would have recovered the ball and the other team will be awarded the ball at the spot of the recovery with a first down in lieu of the penalty. Forward fumbles recovered by the fumbling team are spotted at the point of the initial fumble. If two players of opposite teams are within two yards (judgement of ref) of each other and the ball, the fumble is considered a dead ball and the whistle shall end the play immediately.

## Overtime

If a game is tied after four quarters, the teams will play extra periods until the game finds a victor. Each period consists of one possession for each team, the order of which is decided by a pre-overtime coin toss. After each period, the order of possession flips. Each drive starts at the defense's 25-yard line. If the teams remain tied at the end of a period, they play another. Each team receives one time out during the entire overtime period. Field goals are allowed. No extra points are allowed, only two-point conversions in overtime.

## Mercy Rule

If a team is ahead by 18 points at or after the 2nd half one-minute warning, the game shall be terminated immediately.

## Default

If a scenario is not covered by the UFL rulebook, revert to NFL rules.

# Definitions

## Dead Ball

A Dead Ball is one that is not in play. The time period during which the ball is dead is Between Downs. This includes the interval during all timeouts, including intermission, and from the time the ball becomes dead until it is legally put in play.

## Declaration

The declaration is the announcement made by the quarterback that notifies the officials and defense what point after touchdown (PAT) they will attempt. The following points apply:

- The offense may only change its declaration by calling a timeout. They cannot change the declaration after a penalty has been assessed, even if they call time-out.
- After a touchdown, the quarterback (only) will be asked for a declaration and given a five second visual count. If a declaration is not made within the five-second period the team will be required to run or pass for one point on a PAT.

## Fumble

A Fumble is any act, other than passing, handing, or legally kicking the ball, which results in a loss of player possession. The use of the term Fumble always means that the ball was in possession of a player when the act occurred.

Note: An intentional fumble that causes the ball to go forward is a forward pass and may be illegal

## Live Ball

A Live Ball is a ball that is in play. A Dead Ball becomes a live ball when it is:

- legally kicked on a Free Kick Down or
- legally snapped on a Scrimmage Down or
- legally kicked on a Fair Catch Kick Down.
- It continues in play until the down ends.

## Loose Ball

A Loose Ball is a live ball that is not in player possession, i.e., any ball that has been kicked, passed, or fumbled. A Loose Ball is considered to be in possession of the team (offense) whose player kicked, passed, or fumbled it. It is a Loose Ball until a player secures possession or until the ball becomes dead. If it has not yet struck the ground, a Loose Ball is In Flight.

## Muff

A Muff is the touching of a loose ball by a player in an unsuccessful attempt to obtain possession of it.

**Note:** Any ball intentionally muffed forward is a bat and may be a foul.

Touching the Ball refers to any contact with the ball. There is no distinction between a player touching the ball with his hands, or with any other part of his body, except as specifically provided for.

**Note:** The result of the touching is sometimes influenced by the intent or the location.

Simultaneous touching by two opponents in an attempt to establish possession of a ball that has been kicked is treated as a first touch by the kicking team.

## Player Possession

### Player in Possession

A player is in possession when he is inbounds and has a firm grip and control of the ball with his hands or arms.

### Possession of a Loose Ball

To gain possession of a loose ball that has been caught, intercepted, or recovered, a player must have complete control of the ball and have both feet or any other part of his body, other than his hands, completely on the ground inbounds, and then maintain control of the ball long enough to clearly become a runner. A player has the ball long enough to become a runner when, after his second foot is on the ground, he is capable of avoiding an opponent, tucking the ball away, turning up field, or taking additional steps. If the player loses the ball while simultaneously touching both feet or any other part of his body to the ground, there is no possession. This rule applies in the field of play and in the end zone.

**Note:** If a player goes to the ground in the process of attempting to secure a loose ball, it is a 15 yard unsportsmanlike penalty. If the referee makes the judgement that the ball would have been recovered by the opposing team had this not happened, they can award possession to the other team in lieu of the 15 yards.

**Note 2:** If a player has control of the ball, a slight movement of the ball will not be considered loss of possession. He must lose control of the ball in order to rule that there has been a loss of possession.

# Game Timing

## Length of Game

Games are 30 minutes long with two, 15 minute halves. Each half has a one minute warning.

**\*\*EXCEPTION**

The championship game will consist of 2 25-minute halves with a 2 minute warning

## Time Between Plays

There are 30 seconds between plays including between extra points and kickoffs.

## Stoppage of the Clock

Prior to each one minute warning, the only time the clock stops is after scores, during timeouts, injuries, and official's discussions. After extra points the clock will start on the ready whistle until the one minute warning of each half.

## Time Outs

Each team receives three time outs per half. Only the head coach or players legally on the field may call time outs. Injured players causing officials stop the clock may not participate in the next play unless the team elects to take a timeout. Teams may take a time out to avoid a 10 second runoff. If a team uses an instant replay challenge, they lose a timeout regardless of the result.

## One Minute Warning

A one-minute warning is given to both head coaches and the clock is stopped. The clock restarts at the next snap.

## Halftime

Halftime is a 5 minute intermission between halves.

## Coin Toss

Before the kickoff of the game, the Referee, in the presence of both team's captains (limit of three per team, active, inactive or honorary) shall toss a coin at the center of the field. Prior to the Referee's toss, the call of "heads" or "tails" must be made by the captain of the visiting team, or by the captain designated by the Referee if there is no home team. Unless the winner of the toss defers his choice to the second half, he must choose one of two privileges, and the loser is given the other. The two privileges are:

The opportunity to receive the kickoff, or to kick off; or The choice of goal his team will defend.

For the second half, the captain who lost the pregame toss is to have the first choice of the two privileges listed in (a) or (b), unless one of the teams lost its first and second half options, or unless the winner of the pregame toss deferred his choice to the second half, in which case he must choose (a) or (b) above. Immediately prior to the start of the second half, the captains of both teams must inform the Referee of their respective choices.

## Official Clock

The linesman has the official clock.

## Illegal Substitutions

If a substitute enters the field of play or the end zone while the ball is in play, it is an illegal substitution. If an illegal substitute interferes with the play, it may be a palpably unfair act. In this scenario if the officials judge that a score would have occurred had the palpably unfair act occurred, they can change the result of the play to the score in lieu of the penalty.

## Disqualified and Suspended Players

A player must be withdrawn and substituted for when he is ejected. An ejected player must leave the playing field within a reasonable time and may not return. Suspended players are not allowed at the field. Suspended coaches may be at the field prior to the game but not during.

## Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Using entering substitutes, legally returning players, substitutes on sidelines, or withdrawn players to confuse opponents, or lingering by players leaving the field when being replaced by a substitute, is unsportsmanlike conduct. The offense is prevented from sending simulated substitutions onto the field toward its huddle and returning them to the sideline without completing the substitution in an attempt to confuse the defense.

## Illegal Equipment

- No pads allowed
- Metal Cleats
- Helmets
- Casts
- Other than securely attached sports glasses, glasses are not allowed.

## Legal Equipment

- Molded Cleats
- Knee Braces
- Gloves (no pads)
- Players may use, and in fact are encouraged to use their own securely mounted GoPro or other securely mounted camera

## Flags

Any player caught with a manipulated flag belt will be ejected from the game. Any player pulling his flag to stop or disrupt play will be ejected and a 15 yard penalty will be assessed.

It is illegal to put any substance of any kind on flags or the flag belt. Flags are to be returned to the referees at the conclusion of each game.

## No (or Hidden) Flag belt:

If the ball-carrier loses his flag belt because of a defender, the play is dead at the point where the belt separated. A player wearing a towel, playbook or any other item covering a piece of the flag belt will be considered down if a defender pulls the item out. The following conditions result in one-hand touch:

- the ball-carrier has no flag belt
- the ball-carrier loses his flag belt without it being pulled
- the ball-carrier's jersey covers the flags and the defense cannot pull the flag with ordinary effort
- one of the pop flags falls out or is missing
- the ball-carrier's flags fall below the waist.

## Jerseys

Jerseys cannot cover flag belt. Cut-off style jerseys must end at least four inches above the flag belt.

All teams must be in matching color uniforms.

## Adhesive, Slippery Substances

Adhesive or slippery substances on the body, equipment, or uniform of any player; provided, however, that players may wear gloves with a tackified surface if such tacky substance does not adhere to the football or otherwise cause handling problems for players.

# Offense

## Formations

The offense must have at least 5 men on the LOS.

## Eligible Receivers

Of the players on the line of scrimmage, only the ones on each end are eligible. Other players must be off the line of scrimmage by one yard to be eligible. These other receivers may be between the tackle and the end, between the end and the sideline, or in the backfield. Each tackle must be covered by an eligible receiver.

## Motion

Any receiver in motion will be considered off the line of scrimmage. Only one man is allowed in motion at the snap. More than one man in motion at the same time is considered illegal motion.

## Passes

One forward pass is allowed per play. A forward pass is a ball thrown or handed forward. A lateral is a ball thrown parallel to or backwards from the line of scrimmage. The quarterback can ground the ball to stop the clock immediately after taking the snap from any legal formation. It is an illegal forward pass if the pass is thrown with any part of the body beyond the line of scrimmage.

## Legal Catch

For a legal catch, the player must secure control of the ball in his hands or arms prior to the ball touching the ground; and touch the ground inbounds with both feet or with any part of his body other than his hands

## Carrying the Ball

The ball-carrier shall not :

- flag shield
- charge (attempt to run through defender)
- dive to advance the ball
- toss the ball to self

A ball-carrier that goes to the ground may get up and advance the ball unless touched by a defender before being on both feet again. A stiff-arm between the upper chest or shoulder is legal.



## Going Out of Bounds

Any receiver who has by any means gone out of bounds may not catch, or be the first to touch, any pass. Re-establishing himself in bounds makes the pass complete, but his touching of the pass remains illegal.

## Bad Snaps

Snaps that hit the ground are considered fumbles.

## Offensive Line

Offensive lines must have the center between the tackles. Offensive linemen are ineligible to take handoffs or catch passes unless tipped by a defensive player first. It's ineligible receiver downfield if an offensive lineman is more than three yards past the line of scrimmage on a pass that crosses the line of scrimmage.

## Centers Exchange

The ball must be snapped through the center's legs where possession of the ball must be transferred from the center to another player. Center sneak plays are illegal.

## Tackle Eligible

There are no restrictions on player numbers and eligible receivers. As long as the formation is legal, any player who is an eligible receiver may catch a pass. This includes players wearing numbers typically designated for offensive linemen.

Additionally, either or both of the "tackles" may go out for a pass provided their position is immediately filled by another offensive player who immediately becomes ineligible. A tackle intending to go out for a pass must report to the linesman prior to the snap. Failing to report will result in an ineligible tackle eligible penalty.

## Sleeper Plays

Sleeper plays are illegal. To be eligible to participate in a given offensive play, a player must have been in the previous huddle and no player changes can occur during a no-huddle offense. These are illegal procedures.

## Ball Retrieval

The offense is responsible for retrieving the ball and bringing it back to the linesman after each play. Any attempt by the defense to prevent or delay this can be considered delay of game on the defense.

# Defense

## Rushing the QB

Full rush.

## Formations

Defenses may choose any defensive scheme they please with no restrictions on linemen.

## Legal Contact Within 5 Yards

Within the area five yards beyond the line of scrimmage, a defensive player may chuck an eligible receiver in front of him. The defender is allowed to maintain continuous and unbroken contact within the five-yard zone, so long as the receiver has not moved beyond a point that is even with the defender.

## Pass Defense

The defender cannot use contact to break up a pass play.

## Tackling

Tackling is illegal and results in a 15 yard penalty. An official may deem a tackle as preventing a TD and award the TD in lieu of the penalty. This can happen anywhere on the field.

## Pushing Out of Bounds

Pushing out of bounds is allowed with open hands between the waist and shoulders. Players already obviously heading out of bounds are not to be pushed. This rule is not to be abused as a way of “jacking up” a player, rather, it should be used only as a means of ending the play by directing the offensive player out of bounds. Unnecessary roughness will be called if in the judgement of the ref the defender used excessive force.

## Obstruction

Holding the ball carrier in any way will be considered obstruction and result in a 10 yard penalty. An official may deem obstruction as preventing a TD and award the TD in lieu of the penalty. This can happen anywhere on the field.

## Free Blitz

A free blitz is in effect, when any of the following occurs:

- The quarterback moves outside the tackle box
- An offensive player engages with a defensive lineman

- The ball is handed-off.

If the blitz occurs before any of the above situations, it is not a free blitz.

## Simulating the Snap

Simulating the cadence of the quarterback is considered an unsportsmanlike conduct foul.

# Special Teams

## Kickoff Line of Scrimmage

Teams kickoff from their own 40 yard line.

## Kickoff

- A kickoff puts the ball in play at the start of each half, after a try, and after a successful field goal. A dropkick or placekick may be used for a kickoff.
- Note: During a placekick on a kickoff, the kicking team may use a manufactured tee that is one inch in height and approved by the League. Once the ball has been placed on the kicking tee, the kicking tee cannot be moved. If the ball falls off the tee, or the tee is moved, the covering officials must stop play and restart the timing process without penalty to the kicking team. If the ball falls off the tee a second time during the same free kick down, the kicking team then must either use a player to hold the ball or must kick it off the ground. The ball may be placed on the ground leaning against the tee, provided the tee is in its normal upright position.
- A safety kick puts the ball in play after a safety. A dropkick, placekick, or punt may be used for a safety kick. A tee cannot be used for a safety kick. Safety kicks occur from the kicking team's 20 yard line.

## Onsides Kick

The ball must travel past the opposing team's restraining line prior to a member of the kicking team touching it. Once it has traveled past the restraining line it becomes a live ball and normal live ball or fumble rules apply. The kicking team cannot advance a recovered onsides kick. If players of opposite teams become within two yards of each other and a live ball that has hit the ground, the play shall be whistled dead and the receiving team will be awarded possession.

## Return Team

Muffs are fumbles. The receiving team must have four men on the restraining line prior to the kick. Fair catches are legal and indicated by the receiver waving one arm above his head while the ball is in the air.

## Punts

- Fake punts are legal. Offensive formation rules apply to punts.
- The defense can rush and block punts. There is no diving to block a punt. Diving results in a 15 yard penalty and an automatic first down.
- If the kicked ball is blocked and fails to cross the line of scrimmage, it may be picked up and advanced by either team according to the fumble rules. However, if it is picked up by the kicking team, the play is treated as any other play from scrimmage; i.e., if it is the team's final down, it must advance the ball beyond the first down marker in order to avoid a turnover on downs.

- All muffs are considered fumbles, in which case the receiving team may advance the ball but the punting team may not. The receiver is allowed a 3-yard neutral zone to make the catch. Fair catches are legal and indicated by the receiver waving one arm above his head while the ball is in the air.

## Field Goals

A Field Goal or extra point kick is made by kicking the ball from the field of play through the plane of the opponents' Goal, which is an area either between the goal posts and above the cross bar, or, if above the goal posts, between the outside edges of the goal posts. A Field Goal is made by a drop kick or a place kick from (a) on or behind the line on a play from scrimmage. Kicking blocks less than or equal to two inches in height are legal. Where field goal posts do not exist, 2 members from the offensive team must hold up portable goal posts.

## Fake Field Goals

Fake field goals are legal. Normal offensive formation and eligibility rules apply.

## Defending a Field Goal

- Normal defensive rules apply with the exception that players may not rush the "A" gap.
- Rushing the "A" gap is a 5 yard penalty. If the offense fires out into the "A" gap, the defense can then rush.
- There is no diving to block a FG. Diving results in a 15 yard penalty and an automatic first down.
- If the defense comes in high-impact contact with the holder, center or kicker, a 15 yard personal foul will be charged on the kickoff, and the player(s) involved may be ejected.

## Placement After Missed Field Goal

If a missed or blocked field goal was attempted inside the 20, the ball comes out to the 20. If a missed field goal was attempted outside the 20, it comes back to the previous line of scrimmage. The exception is any returned field goal.

## Returning a Field Goal

If a missed or blocked field goal or extra point is caught in the air by a defender before or in the end zone, it may be returned in the same manner as a punt. Missed or blocked field goals can be returned for touchdowns and missed or blocked extra points for two points. In this case, it doesn't matter who (if anyone) touched the ball prior to the catch. If a blocked field goal is in or behind the neutral zone, it is treated like a fumble (normal fumble rules apply) and can be advanced by either team. Beyond the neutral zone, a blocked kick is treated like a punt and can be advanced only by the defense, unless a defensive player fumbles the ball, after which an offensive player can advance it.

## Blocked Place Kicks

If a place kick is blocked and is caught in the air by a member of the kicking team on the kicking team's side of the line of scrimmage, it may be advanced. If it is caught in the air by a member of the kicking team on the defensive side of the line of scrimmage, the play is dead at that spot.

On a field goal, the offense cannot gain a new first down on a blocked kick except by penalty.