

## The Basics of Touch

The aim of the game is to score touchdowns by getting through the opponent team's part of the field and placing the ball down in the touchdown zone.

Teams are made of up to 14 players, with a maximum of **six players on the field at any time** with unlimited substitutions.

The game lasts 45 minutes, divided into two 20 minutes halves and a five minute half-time break. Just before the game, team captains gather with the referee/s for the toss. The winner gets the ball and chooses which direction they want their team to run.

The game starts with a 'tap' on the half way line.

## Basic Rules

The rules are quite simple, and even if it's your first time playing, you will pick up the basics in no time and enjoy the game with your teammates, no matter what everyone's skill level is.

Basically, while attacking, you have to run forward and pass the ball backward; that means the ball carrier is up front, with his teammates on the same line or slightly behind them, so they can pass the ball to them.

Defenders only need to 'touch' the ball carrier to stop the attacking team; the rules of the game stipulate that the 'touch' has to be made 'with the minimum force necessary'. It can be done on any part of the body, including the ball or clothing. The 'touch' can also be made by the ball carrier on a defensive player.

After making a 'touch', the defending team has to go backward behind an imaginary 'defensive' line, approximately five metres away from where the touch has been made; the referee will show you where they expect you to be. The person who has been 'touched' performs the rollball, from where the touch occurred.

The ball carrier has to perform a 'rollball', on the exact mark where the 'touch' was made. Be careful not to be 'over the mark' when performing a roll ball. Basically you place the ball on the ground and walk over it. The rollball is commonly called a 'dump' (as you dump the ball and walk over).

Your team will have six 'touches' as your opportunity to score. The sixth 'touch', dropping the ball or any infringement to the rules result in a changeover. The attacking team then becomes the defending side.

The rules of the game are easy to understand and suitable for everyone to enjoy Touch Football.

## Touch Football Rules - Detailed

1. **Mode of Play.** The ball may be passed, knocked or handed between onside players of the attacking team who may in turn run or otherwise move with the ball in an attempt to gain territorial advantage and score. Defending players prevent the attacking team from gaining a territorial advantage by touching the ball carrier. Either defending or attacking players may initiate touches upon which, play stops and is restated with a Rollball, unless other rules apply.
2. **Duration.** All matches shall consist of 2 x 20 minute halves with 5 minutes break at half time.

- *Semi Finals and Finals:* In the result of semis and finals finish at full time with a draw, drop off rules will apply and time will continue. That is, every 5 minutes numbers are dropped by one team member for each team until you are left with 3 on 3. First team to score wins the match
3. **Scoring.** A try is awarded when a player (without being touched and other than the dummy half) places the ball on the ground on or over the team's attacking score line and within the boundaries of the Touchdown Zone (dead ball line). A try is worth one (1) point.
  4. **Number of Players.** A Team consists of no more than six (6) of who are allowed on the field at any time.
  5. **Attacking Team.** The attacking team is to start the match with a foot tap at the centre of the halfway line following the indication to commence play from the referee and after the referees whistle has sounded. All players of the attacking team are to remain in an onside position until the ball has been tapped.
  6. **Method.** The foot tap is taken by placing the ball on the ground at or behind the mark, releasing both hands from the ball, tapping the ball with either foot a distance of not more than one (1) metre, and retrieving the ball cleanly. Any player of the attacking team may take the tap. Any onside player of the attacking team may retrieve the ball once the tap has been taken.
  7. **Defending Team.** All players of the defending team are required to retire a distance of not less than ten (10) metres from the mark for the tap and should get back to where the referee holds position or calls the 10 metre mark. Defending players may move forward of their positions once the ball has been tapped with the foot or attacking player moves off position.
  8. **General.** Providing other Rules do not apply, the team with the ball is entitled to six (6) touches prior to changing possession with the opposing team.
  9. **Changeover Procedure.** Following the sixth touch or the loss of possession due to any other means, players of the team losing possession are to hand, or pass the ball to the nearest opposition player, or place the ball on the ground at the mark without delay. Attacking players who request the ball are to be given the ball. Players are not to delay the changeover procedure.
  10. **Ball to Ground.** If the ball is dropped to the ground, a change of possession is the result. The mark for a change of possession is where the ball first pitches or where the attacking player dropped or passed the ball, whichever is of greater advantage to the team gaining possession.
  11. **Mishandled Ball.** If a player mishandles the ball and providing the ball does not go to ground, play is to continue. If the ball makes contact with the ground possession is handed over to the opposing team.
  12. **Intercepts.** Intercepts by onside defending players are allowed. Following an intercept, play continues until the first touch is affected, a touchdown is scored, or a stoppage occurs as a result of other actions.

## **THE ROLLBALL**

1. When required a player is to perform a Rollball under the following circumstances:
  - (a) When a touch has been affected;
  - (b) When possession changes due to the sixth touch;

- (c) When possession changes due to the ball going to ground;
- (d) When possession changes due to an infringement by an attacking player at a penalty or a tap;
- (e) When possession changes or when the half is touched (or places the ball on or over the score line) whilst in possession of the ball;
- (f) When possession changes due to a player in possession of the ball running across the sideline;
- (g) When so directed by the referee.

**1. Method.** The attacking player is to position on the mark, face the opponent's (defending) scoreline, stand parallel to the sidelines, and places the ball between the feet. In some games the ball is rolled a distance of not more than one (1) metre; however not in this competition. Once the ball is placed on the mark, the attacking player may step over the ball

**2. Attacking Team.** Any other player of the attacking team may receive the ball from the Rollball and thus become the “dummy half”. The dummy half may pass or run with the ball. However, if touched, loses possession. Dummy half cannot score and must make a pass before crossing the try line to optionalise a try being scored.

**3. Defending Team.** All Players of the defending team are to retire a distance of not less than five (5) metres from the mark for a Rollball. Players of the defending team are not permitted to move forward until the dummy half has made contact with the ball.

**4. Actions Without Half in Position.** When the player in possession is required to Rollball without a dummy half in position, players of the defending team may move forward as soon as the ball leaves the hand/s of the player in possession. Should a defending player gain possession, the match is recommenced with a Rollball at the same mark.

## THE TOUCH

**1. General.** Players of both defending and attacking teams are to use the minimum force necessary to affect touches. No slapping or hitting.

**2. Ball knocked from Hands.** If the ball is knocked from the hands of a player in possession during a touch, the touch counts and the player retains possession, and they are required to perform the Rollball. The touch count continues, unless it is the sixth (6th) touch.

**3. Actions Following Touch.** After a touch has been affected, the player in possession is required to stop, return to the mark where the touch occurred if the mark has been over-run, and perform a Rollball without delay.

**4. Passing after Touch.** A player is not to pass or otherwise deliver the ball after a touch has been effected or a late pass will be awarded and possession is handed to the opposing team.

**5. Claimed Touch.** A player must not claim or otherwise call for a touch unless a touch has actually been made. This is referred to as a “phantom touch” and a penalty is awarded to the attacking team. *This rule is to the discretion of the referee not the players.*

**6. The Mark.** The mark for the Rollball is dependent on the position of the player in possession at the time of the touch.

**7. Interference After Touch.** Following a touch, the ball is deemed to be dead and is brought into play at the Rollball when the half touches the ball or, if there is no half in position, when the ball leaves the hands of the attacking player performing the Rollball. after a touch is made.

**8. Touched While Scoring.** On the rare occasion a player places the ball on the ground on or over the score line at the same time a touch is affected, the touch counts and a touchdown is not awarded. *This is also to the referee's discretion as to what occurred first or simultaneously.*

**9. Touch on Offside Defender.** Should a player in possession effect a touch on an offside defender who is making every effort to retire and remain out of play, the touch is to count.

### **BALL ON OR OVER SIDELINE/SCORELINE**

**1. On or Over Sideline.** The ball becomes dead when it or a player in possession touches or crosses the sideline and a change of possession results. However if a player in possession is touched prior to crossing the sideline, then the touch counts and play continues with a Rollball at the mark where the touch occurred.

**2. Touched over Attacking Score line.** If a player in possession of the ball is touched after crossing the attacking score line and prior to the scoring of a touchdown, the touch counts. Play is restarted with a Rollball five (5) metres infield from where the player in possession crossed the scoreline.

**3. Ball on or behind Defending Scoreline.** If a player in possession of the ball is touched whilst on or behind their defending scoreline, the touch counts and play is restarted with a Rollball five (5) metres infield from where the player in possession was touched.

**4. Actions Near Defending Score line.** An attacking team is not required to Rollball within five (5) metres of the defending scoreline. After each touch the player in possession may move forward to the five (5) metre broken line to Rollball.

**5. Actions near Attacking Scoreline.** When a touch is affected within five (5) metres of the attacking scoreline, a player in possession may move directly behind the mark a distance of up to five (5) metres to the broken line to restart play with a Rollball.

**6. Actions further than Five (5) Metres from Defending Scoreline.** When defending players are required to defend further than five (5) metres from their defending scoreline, they must move forward beyond the five (5) metre broken line and continue to move forward in an attempt to affect a touch on the player in possession.

### **BALL TOUCHED IN FLIGHT**

**1. Intentional Contact by Defender.** If the ball goes to ground following a defender's attempt to gain possession, the attacking team retains the ball and the touch count restarts. This also applies if the defending player deliberately knocks the ball to the ground. The mark where the Rollball occurs is where the ball first pitches or where the defender touched the ball, whichever is of best advantage to the attacking team.

**2. Intentional Contact but not to Ground.** If a defending player touches the ball in flight and the ball is retrieved by an attacking player, play continues and the touch count restarts at the next touch.

**3. Intentional Contact and Touched again by Attacker.** If an attacking player attempts to gather the ball after a deflection by a defender and the ball goes to ground, the attacking team retains possession and the touch count restarts.

**4. Rebound and Ball to Ground.** If the ball rebounds from a defending player, who has not made an attempt to retrieve it, and the ball goes to ground, a change of possession results. Play restarts with a Rollball where the ball first pitches or where the ball rebounded from the defender, whichever is of best advantage to the team gaining possession.

**5. Rebounds but not to Ground.** If the ball rebounds from a defending player who has not made an attempt to retrieve the ball and the ball is regained by an attacking player, play on and the touch count continues.

### **OFFSIDE**

**1. Attacking Team.** A player in the attacking team is offside when that player is forward of the player who has possession or who last had possession. In general play, offside attacking players who interfere with play should be penalised.

**2. Attacking Player Offside at Tap.** Attacking players are to remain onside at a tap until the ball has been tapped and regathered.