

NUMBERS

1. Each team has no more than 15 players in the playing area during play.
2. A match organiser may authorise matches to be played with fewer than 15 players in each team.
3. A team may make an objection to the referee about the number of players in their opponents' team. If a team has too many players, the referee orders the captain of that team to reduce the number appropriately. The score at the time of the objection remains unaltered. **Sanction: Penalty.**
4. For international matches, a union may nominate up to eight replacements.
5. For other matches, the match organiser decides how many replacements may be nominated, up to a maximum of eight.
6. Replacements are made only when the ball is dead and only with the permission of the referee.
7. If a player re-joins or a replacement joins the match without the referee's permission and the referee believes the player did so to gain an advantage, the player is guilty of misconduct. **Sanction: Penalty.**
8. The table indicates the minimum number of front-row players by squad size and the minimum replacement obligations. A match organiser may, having taken player welfare into account, amend the minimum number of front-row players in the squad and the minimum replacement obligations at defined levels of the game.

Squad size	Minimum number of front row players in the squad	Must be able to replace at the first time of asking
15 or fewer	3	-
16, 17 or 18	4	Either a prop or a hooker
19, 20, 21 or 22	5	Both a prop and a hooker
23	6	Loose-head prop, tight-head prop and hooker

LAW 4 Players' clothing

6. The referee has the power to decide at any time that part of a player's clothing is dangerous or illegal. In this case, the referee must order the player to remove the item. The player must not take part in the match until the item is removed or rendered harmless.
7. If, at an inspection before the match, a match official tells a player that an item banned under this law is being worn and the player is subsequently found to be wearing that item on the playing area, that player is sent off for misconduct. **Sanction: Penalty.**
8. The referee must not allow any player to leave the playing area to change items of clothing, unless they are bloodstained.

World Rugby Regulation 12 can be found at: <http://playerwelfare.worldrugby.org/reg12>

PRINCIPLE

A player who commits foul play must either be cautioned or temporarily suspended or sent off.

OBSTRUCTION

1. When a player and an opponent are running for the ball, neither player may charge or push the other except shoulder-to-shoulder.
2. An offside player must not intentionally obstruct an opponent or interfere with play.
3. A player must not intentionally prevent an opponent from tackling or attempting to tackle the ball-carrier.
4. A player must not intentionally prevent an opponent from having the opportunity to play the ball, other than by competing for possession.
5. A ball-carrier must not intentionally run into an off-side team-mate to obstruct the opposition.
6. A player must not obstruct, or in any way interfere with an opponent while the ball is dead.

Sanction: Penalty.

UNFAIR PLAY

7. A player must not:
 - a. Intentionally infringe any law of the game.
 - b. Intentionally knock, place, push or throw the ball with arm or hand from the playing area.
 - c. Do anything that may lead the match officials to consider that an opponent has committed an infringement.

Sanction: Penalty.

- d. Waste time. **Sanction:** Free-kick.

REPEATED INFRINGEMENTS

8. A team must not repeatedly commit the same offence.
9. A player must not repeatedly infringe the laws.

Sanction: Penalty.

10. When different players of the same team repeatedly commit the same offence, the referee gives a general caution to the team and if they then repeat the offence, the referee temporarily suspends the guilty player(s).

DANGEROUS PLAY

11. Players must not do anything that is reckless or dangerous to others.
12. A player must not physically or verbally abuse anyone. Physical abuse includes, but is not limited to, biting, punching, contact with the eye or eye area, striking with any part of the arm (including stiff-arm tackles), shoulder, head or knee(s), stamping, trampling, tripping or kicking.
13. A player must not tackle an opponent early, late or dangerously. Dangerous tackling includes, but is not limited to, tackling or attempting to tackle an opponent above the line of the shoulders even if the tackle starts below the line of the shoulders.
14. A player must not tackle an opponent who is not in possession of the ball.
15. Except in a scrum, ruck or maul, a player who is not in possession of the ball must not hold, push, charge or obstruct an opponent not in possession of the ball.
16. A player must not charge or knock down an opponent carrying the ball without attempting to grasp that player.
17. A player must not tackle, charge, pull, push or grasp an opponent whose feet are off the ground.
18. A player must not lift an opponent off the ground and drop or drive that player so that their head and/or upper body make contact with the ground.

19. Dangerous play in a scrum.

- a. The front row of a scrum must not form at a distance from its opponents and rush against them.
- b. A front-row player must not pull an opponent.
- c. A front-row player must not intentionally lift an opponent off their feet or force the opponent upwards out of the scrum.
- d. A front-row player must not intentionally collapse a scrum.

20. Dangerous play in a ruck or maul.

- a. A player must not charge into a ruck or maul. Charging includes any contact made without binding onto another player in the ruck or maul.
- b. A player must not make contact with an opponent above the line of the shoulders.
- c. A player must not intentionally collapse a ruck or a maul.

21. A player must not retaliate.

22. Teams must not use the 'cavalry charge' or 'flying wedge'.

23. A player must not attempt to kick the ball from the hands of the ball-carrier.

24. A ball-carrier is permitted to hand off an opponent provided excessive force is not used.

Sanction: Penalty.

25. A player must not intentionally charge or obstruct an opponent who has just kicked the ball.

Sanction: Penalty. The non-offending team chooses to take the penalty either:

- a. At the place of the infringement; or
- b. Where the ball lands or is next played but not nearer than 15 metres from the touchline; or
- c. If the ball is kicked directly into touch, on the 15-metre line in line with where the ball crossed the touchline; or
- d. If the ball lands in in-goal, touch-in-goal or on or over the dead-ball line, five metres from the goal line in line with where the ball crossed the goal line and at least 15 metres from the touchline; or
- e. If the ball hits a goal post or crossbar, where the ball lands.