

Rules of the Victorian Football Association, 1882

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1. The distance between the goals should not be more than 200 yards, and the width of playing space to not more than 150 yards to be measured equally on each side of a line drawn through the centre of the goals. The goal posts shall be seven yards apart; of not less than 12ft in height. The ball to be used shall be the No. 2 size Rugby (26 inches in circumference).
2. Two posts, to be called the 'kick-off posts', shall be erected at a distance of twenty yards on each side of the goal-posts in a straight line with them; the intervening line between such kick-off posts shall constitute the "goal-line".
3. Matches shall be played with not more than twenty a side, unless where handicaps are conceded. Any club found playing more than the number arranged for shall have all goals kicked prior to the detection of same annulled.
4. The captains of each side shall toss for choice of goal. The side losing the toss for choice of goal has the kick-off from the centre-point between the goal. When half the time arranged for play has expired, the players shall change ends, and the ball be thrown in the air by the field umpire in the centre of the ground.
5. The game shall be won by the side kicking the greatest number of goals.
6. That all matches shall be commenced and played out to the time arranged, and shall not be stopped except by the consent of both captains, the team refusing to play to lose the match.
7. A goal must be kicked by one of the side playing for goal between the posts, without touching either of them (flags excepted), or any player after being kicked. Should any of the spectators standing between the goal-posts interfere with or stop the progress of the ball going through, a goal shall be scored.
8. The goal umpires shall be sole judges of goals and of cases of the ball going behind goals; and in cases of doubt may appeal to the field umpire. The field umpire shall decide in all other matters during the progress of the game, and may appeal to a goal umpire.
9. In case the ball is kicked behind goal by one of the opposite side within the kick-off posts (except when a goal is kicked, in which case the ball is kicked off from the centre of the ground), any one of the side behind whose goal it is kicked may bring it ten yards in front of any portion of the space between the kick-off posts, and shall kick it towards the opposite goal. The ball striking either the goal posts or kick-off posts shall be considered as having gone behind "goal line".
10. In the event of a player kicking the ball wilfully behind his own goal line it shall be thrown in by the field umpire at right angles from the point where it crossed the goal line.
11. Any player catching the ball directly from the foot or leg on or below the knee of another player may call 'mark'. He then has a free kick from any spot behind and in a line with his mark and the centre of his opponents' goal-posts, no player being allowed to come inside the spot marked, or within five yards in any other direction.
12. The ball may be taken in hand at any time, but not carried further than is necessary for a kick, unless the player strikes it against the ground every seven yards. In the event of a player with the ball in hand trying to pass an adversary, and being held by him, he must at once drop the ball.
- 13.. Tripping, hacking, rabbiting, slinging or catching hold of a player below the knee are prohibited; pushing with the hands or body is allowed only when a player is in rapid motion within five or six yards of the ball. Holding a player is allowed only while such player has the ball in hand, except in cases provided for in Rules 9, 11 and 12.
14. When the ball goes out of bounds it shall be brought back to the spot where it crossed the boundary line, and thrown in by the umpire at right angles with that line, but shall not be playable until after it touches the ground within bounds.
15. The ball while in play may under no circumstances, be thrown or handed to a player.
16. The field umpire on being appealed to, may either award a 'free-kick', call 'play on', or stop the play and throw the ball in the air, and stop all attempts at scrimmages, enforce as strictly as possible the running, pushing and holding clauses of rules 12 and 13 and in every case his decision shall be final, and the club disputing same shall lose the match. But in the event of an umpire refusing to decide upon any matter in dispute, clubs may, according to Rule 8 of the Association, appeal to that body, whose decision shall be final.
17. No one wearing projecting nails, iron plates, or gutta percha on any part of his boots or shoes shall be allowed to play in a match.

18. In case of infringement of any of the above rules, any player of the opposite side may claim a free kick from the place where the breach of the rule was made, the player nearest the place of infringement being the only one entitled to the kick.

19. No player shall play with more than one club during one season, except he permanently change his residence from town to country, or vice versa, and has first obtained the consent of the Association; but in the event of a member of one of the Associated clubs, after playing in a match or matches, being rejected by his club in three successive matches, he shall be allowed with the consent of the Committee of his club and with the appeal of the Association, to join one other club for the season. Should the committee of his club withhold its consent, the Association shall have the power to grant a permit without such consent.

20. That any club playing a member of another club, shall for the first offence be fined Five Pounds, for the second, Ten Pounds and for the third shall be disqualified from playing any of the Associated Clubs during the remainder of the season.

21 In the event of a club disbanding, its members may be at liberty to play with any other club, with the consent of the Association. But no club shall be considered to have disbanded after the last Saturday in June.

22. None of the above laws shall be altered or rescinded, nor shall any rule be added during a season, nor shall any rule be repealed, altered, amended, or adopted without the concurrence of an absolute majority of the Association at a meeting specially called for that purpose.

DEFINITIONS

1. A drop-kick or drop is made by letting the ball drop from the hands on to the ground, and kicking it the very instant it rises.
2. A place kick or place is kicking the ball after it has been placed on the ground.
3. A punt consists in letting the Ball fall from your hands, and kicking it before it touches the ground.
4. Rabbiting is one player stooping down so as to cause another to fall by placing his body below the other's hips.
5. Slinging is the act of catching a player by or round the neck and throwing him to the ground.