

Ulster Rugby

Mini Rugby Regulations

2026/27



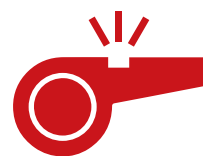
Ball

P4-6: Size 3
P7-U12: Size 4



Teams

P4-5: 6 Max
P6: 8 Max
P7: 10 Max
U12: 12 Max



Start Match

P4-7: Tap & pass
U12: Drop kick (scoring team restarts)



Rucks

P4: None
P5-6: 1v1
P7-U12: 2v2



Tackle

Waist or below.
Sternum to waistline,
Ref "work to get low!"
Above sternum
= penalty



Scrum

P4-5: None
P6: 3 Closest
P7: 5 Closest
U12: 6 Closest



Lineouts

P4-5: None
P6: 3 + Hooker
P7: 4 + Hooker
U12: 5 + Hooker



Passing

Minimum of 2
passes before next
ruck forms
(P4: next breakdown)



Kicking in play

P4-5: None
P6-U12: Kick to space

Regulations

If not directly referred to in the Ulster Rugby Regulations, then the IRFU Mini Rugby Regulations apply.

	Rucks	Defence	Passing	Tackle	Kicking	Restarts	Scrum & Lineouts	Playing Numbers
P4 Born: 1 Jul 2018 – 30 Jun 2019	None / Lift or place the ball	The defence cannot come forward until the ball is in the first receiver's hands	Minimum of 2 passes before next breakdown	Waist & below	None	Tap & pass	None	6 max
P5 Born: 1 Jul 2017 – 30 Jun 2018	1v1 max	The defence cannot come forward until the ball is in the first receiver's hands	Minimum of 2 passes before next ruck	Waist & below	None	Tap & pass	None	6 max
P6 Born: 1 Jul 2016 – 30 Jun 2017	1v1 max	The defence cannot come forward until the ball is in the first receiver's hands	Minimum of 2 passes before next ruck	Waist & below	Kick to space (counts as 1 pass if regathered)	Tap & pass	3v3 3 + Hooker (closest players)	8 max
P7 Born: 1 Jul 2015 – 30 Jun 2016	2v2 max	The defence cannot come forward until 9 runs or passes from scrum or lineout	Minimum of 2 passes before next ruck	Waist & below	Kick to space (counts as 1 pass if regathered)	Tap & pass	5v5 4 + Hooker (closest players)	10 max
U12 Born: 1 Jul 2014 – 30 Jun 2015	2v2 max	The defence cannot come forward until 9 runs or passes from scrum or lineout	Minimum of 2 passes before next ruck	Waist & below	Kick to space (counts as 1 pass if regathered)	The scoring team restarts with a drop kick 5 metres from their own line. It must go a minimum of 10 metres	If all players are aged 11 (Year 8-Sixth Class), 6 players are permitted in the scrum (3-2-1) Lineout (5 plus thrower) (closest players)	12 max
Sanction	Penalty	Penalty	Penalty	Sternum to waistline - Ref "work to get low!" Above sternum = penalty	If the ball goes out of play, free kick from where the kick took place	Kick again if the ball goes off the field without being touched		

GIRLS ONLY Mini Rugby Regulations

These regulations to be followed when Girls Only Mini Rugby teams play each other.

If a mixed team (e.g. boys and girls) are playing a Girls Only (GO) team then revert to Ulster Rugby Mini Laws at the lower age bracket. E.G. U10 GO Team play a P5 mixed team then the P5 Mini Regulations apply.

	Rucks	Defence	Passing	Tackle	Kicking	Restarts	Scrum & Lineouts	Playing Numbers
U8/P4 Only * Not across 2 age groups	None / Lift or place the ball	The defence cannot come forward until the ball is in 1st receivers hands	Minimum of 2 passes between each breakdown.	Waist and below	None	Tap + Pass	None	6 Max
U10/ P5+P6	1 v 1 in ruck	The defence cannot come forward until the ball is in 1st receivers hands	Minimum of 2 passes between each ruck.	Waist and below	Kick to space (counts as 1 pass if regathered)	Tap + Pass	3 v 3 3 + Hooker (closest players)	8 Max
U12/ P7 + 1st Year	2 v 2 in ruck	The defence cannot come forward until 9 runs or passes the ball from scrum or lineout	Minimum of 2 passes between each ruck.	Waist and below	Kick to space (counts as 1 pass if regathered)	Tap + Pass	5 v 5 in scrum 4 + Hooker in LO	10 Max

No ripping of the ball is permitted.

A ruck is formed when there is at least 1 player from each team competing over the ball.

A 'bridger' over the ball, creates an offside line but does not form a ruck.

Jackal's are permitted in line with the normal laws of rugby (except P4, no jackal)

Coaches & referees should encourage players to 'Tackle below the ball'.

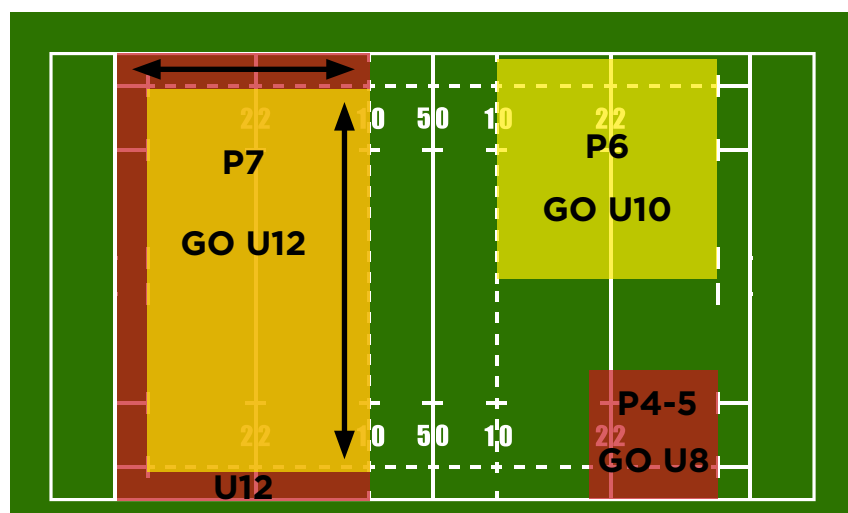
Where kicking in play is permitted from P6-U10 onwards, pitches should have a dead ball line clearly marked out.

Tackle Guide

- Above sternum = penalty
- Waist to sternum, Ref "work to get low!"
If they do, play on.
Rip or cause knock-on = penalty to attack
- Below waist = play on.



Suggested Pitch Dimensions



GO = Girls Only

Rugby Goggles

World Rugby has approved a game-changing amendment to the laws of the game that will enable the wearing of goggles at all levels of the game, reaffirming the sport's commitment to inclusivity.



There are currently only one type approved by World Rugby, produced by Raleri (pictured above).

They are designed to allow you to wear corrective lenses.

Shatterproof prescription lenses must be prescribed and installed by your trusted optician.