



**OFFICIAL RULE
BOOK**



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THE RULES

OVERVIEW

IN Tag (Indoor Tag) is an indoor form of non-contact Tag Football played with 4 players per side.

After every 'tag', the tagged player must restart play at the point the tag occurred known as 'the mark', placing the ball on the ground and rolling it backwards with the hand or foot to a team mate standing behind them. This is called a 'roll ball'. The team mate standing behind is called a halfback or dummy half.

A try is scored in the same form as the other rugby codes, by placing the ball on the ground over the try line while retaining control of the ball.

If no try is scored after the fourth 'tag', the opposition shall gain possession of the ball and they shall restart play with a roll ball from 'the mark'.

The ball must be passed in a backwards or lateral direction at all times in the same form as the other rugby codes.

A match is 40 minutes in total. Games can be played in either two 18 minute halves with a 2-minute change over period, or four 9 minute quarters (1 minute quarter time breaks and 2 minute half times). Game times can be altered at the discretion of the management. *E.g. 30 minute games with 15 minute halves.*

The field of play is 28 to 30 metres in length and 10 to 12 metres in width being no less than 4 metres and no more than 4.5 metres in height. The court shall be fully enclosed by netting.

PLAYERS

- 1) All players must wear the official *IN Tag* shorts/belts when participating. Any player not wearing official *IN Tag* shorts/belts will be unable to take the court and participate in play.
- 2) No more than 4 players per team can take the court at any one time.
 - a. During Mixed grade games teams, must have no more than 2 males on the court at any time.
- 3) Substitutions are unlimited and can occur at any time unless otherwise indicated by the umpire
- 4) Substitutions must occur at your teams end of the court and the player substituting off must be off court before a new player can take to the court.
- 5) All players must have the two tags attached to their shorts/belt, one on each hip, before they can participate in a game of *IN Tag*. This includes start and restart of the game and all players subbing on during the game.
- 6) During the game, any player can defend without one or both their tags attached to their shorts.



THE NETS

- 1) The Side Line, End Line and Ceiling Nets shall form part of the court and the ball shall be in play off any net.
- 2) A player may not deliberately hold the nets or use the nets to push off to gain an advantage.
- 3) The nets may not be used to pin a player in such a manner as to prevent movement by said player.
- 4) Players may not deliberately push opposition players into the net.

**If any of the above rules are not adhered to, a penalty to the opposing team will be awarded.*

SCORING

- 1) A try is awarded when the team in possession places the ball on or over the try line within the in-goal areas
 - a. 2pts for a try scored inside the bonus point zone in goal
 - b. 1pt for a try scored inside the in-goal area but outside the bonus point zone
- 2) A player must be in the process of running (or by momentum carrying them) into the in-goal whilst placing the ball down for a try.
- 3) After running into the in-goal area, a player can pass the ball with in the in-goal area and/or back into the field of play as well as run back into the field of play.
- 4) If the attacking player is tagged running within the in-goal area before scoring they will be asked to conduct a 'roll ball' 3m out from the try line where the tag took place. If it is on the last tag, a turnover and tap restart is given to the defending team at the centre spot of their third line.



PLAY START/RESTART

- 1) When starting, or restarting the game with a kick:
 - a. All players in the kicking team, including the kicker, must be behind the third line when the ball is kicked.
 - b. Players from the team receiving the kick must be behind the halfway line and wait for the ball to be kicked before they can contest for the ball
 - c. The ball must travel over the halfway line from a kick restart before any player from either the kicking team or receiving team can play at the ball.
- 2) A penalty is awarded to the receiving team on the centre of the halfway line from kick-off or kick restart when:
 - a. The ball doesn't travel passed the halfway line.
 - b. The ball is touched by a kicking team player prior to it crossing the halfway line.
 - c. The ball touches the net before reaching the halfway line.
- 3) A penalty is awarded to the kicking team on the centre of the halfway line from kick-off or kick restart when:
 - a. The ball is touched by a receiving team player prior to it crossing the halfway line.
- 4) When a try is scored, the non-scoring team shall have a tap restart from the centre of the third line. Once the ball gets to the line the referee will blow the whistle to restart.
- 5) Once a player scores they must not kick or throw the ball away, or perform any other action to prevent a quick restart. This will result in a penalty restart on the half way line (*the try will still count*).

DIVING

Players are not allowed to dive whilst in possession of the ball or defending. This will result in a penalty to the opposing team.



DEFENCE

- 1) When a tag is removed, the defender must drop it at that point and move back to the inside position.
- 2) Once a defender has made a tag it is the responsibility of the attacking player who has been tagged to make the effort to come back to where the tag was made, and roll ball.
- 3) Defenders must be at least 5m back from the roll ball.
- 4) On all tap restarts, all defenders must be 5m back from the tap restart.
- 5) At a roll ball, no defenders can move until the dummy half touches the ball.
- 6) A player may defend with one or no tags. However, if they retrieve the ball this will be an automatic tag and they must restart play with a roll ball.
- 7) A defender must not deliberately obstruct the ball carrier or a member of the attacking team who does not have the ball.
- 8) A defender **cannot** change direction and move into the path of the attacker.
- 9) If a defender makes a tag after the attacking player has passed the ball, the referee will call a '**late tag**' and allow the attacker to progress with only one or no tags until that player is '**touched**' or another attacking player is tagged by the defending team. At this point the tag count will restart at one from the point the attacking teams' progress is stopped. ***This is the advantage and not a penalty.***
- 10) If a defender makes a tag after the attacking player kicks the ball, the referee will call 'late tag' and allow play to continue.
- 11) If the attacker regains the ball the tag count will restart at one.
- 12) If the defending player obtains the ball the referee will call 'advantage over' and allow play to continue.
- 13) In the event an attacking player gets tagged early or 'off the ball', or a tag falls off while a player is clear of the defence to score, the referee will always play the advantage rule and the defender only needs to **touch** the player with the missing tags to constitute a tag.
- 14) If it is a simultaneous tag and off load, no action is taken the referee will call '**simultaneous, play on**' and the attacker may re-join play as a support player with the referee using the advantage rule and the defender only needs to **touch** the player with the missing tags to constitute a tag.



ATTACKING

General

- 1) A player may pass the ball by throwing or handing the ball to a team mate on the court. A pass must be lateral or backwards.
- 2) If the ball is deemed to be passed forward, a turnover will be awarded to the opposition.
- 3) The dummy half can run and be tagged with the ball.
- 4) There is **(4)** four tags/plays to promote the ball before the changeover occurs.
- 5) There is a time limit of **(7)** seven seconds for the attacker playing the ball, it is at the referees' discretion to penalise the attacker if deemed to be time wasting.
- 6) Tag count always starts with **(1) one**, unless the ball is acquired from broken play and no advantage has been gained (e.g. knock-on, dropped ball) in which the tag count will start as **(0) zero**, the last is **3rd** tag with the **4th** being the changeover.
- 7) If an attacker loses a tag whilst in possession before making it **to** or **through** the defensive line, they must stop and play the ball. (*See exceptions under the Advantage Rule Situations*).
- 8) The only person able to promote the ball with **(1) one** or **NO** tags is the dummy half, the player taking a penalty tap, however they are not allowed to take more than **(1) one** step with the ball in hand before passing it.
- 9) An attacker may not protect their tag from nor fend off a defender. This will result in a handover and penalty to the defending team.
- 10) An attacker **can** touch or check their tags are in place and secure whilst no defenders are within reach.
- 11) An attacker **cannot** deliberately make contact into a defender. Whoever initiates contact will be penalised.
- 12) Jumping/Stepping is allowed but the attacker will be penalised if any contact is made with any defender when performing these manoeuvres.
- 13) An attacker **can** spin into a gap, but will be penalised if contact is initiated with defender.
- 14) Attackers must do their best to avoid the defender at all times.
- 15) If the ball carrier falls over within the in-goal area and places the ball fairly, then a try will be awarded.
- 16) If the ball carrier is tagged behind their own try line, their team will restart play with a drop kick from the centre of their try line.
- 17) The dummy half can pass the ball with one or no tags on if they do so immediately and take no more than **(1) one** step from the mark.
- 18) If the dummy half is not in position within **(7) seven** seconds of the roll, a turnover will be awarded to the defending team. *This count is at the discretion of the referee.*



- 19) The ball carrier must not obstruct any defender from making a tag. e.g. *bumping off or fending*.
- 20) If an attacker attempts to kick the ball as a defender is in the process of bending down, about to pick it up, it will be deemed dangerous play and a penalty awarded to the defending team.
- 21) The attacker can only contest a loose ball if the defender loses or spills it. The attacker at no point can dive on the loose ball. The defender initially has **sole rights** to dive on the loose ball.

Late Tag / Pre-Tag / Touch situations

- 1) An attacking player CAN play on (advantage played to the attacking team) with (1) one or NO tags on, (touch the player to halt play) if deemed to be:
 - a. **Late Tag / Pre-Tag** - In the instance the attacker is deemed to be Late tagged (tag removed after the ball has been off loaded) / Pre-tagged (tag removed prior to receiving the ball), play will continue and late/pre-tagged player is deemed as being alive and can play on, with (1) one or no tags on. Once progress is stopped the tag count will restart back at one, this is the advantage given - not a penalty. (If the attacking team fails to advance forward at least 7m from infringement area, hence receiving no advantage, then a penalty will be given centre field from where play is halted.)
 - b. **Simultaneous Tag** - Is when the ball is released at the same instant as the tag is removed.
 - c. **Tag(s) Fall Off** - after the attacking team have ALREADY PASSED THROUGH the defensive line.

To stop the progress of this player, the defender is only required to **TOUCH the attacker's body, any area below the shoulders, (No malicious touching or head shots); it is optional to remove the remaining tag.*



ADVANTAGE

The law of advantage takes precedence over most other laws and its purpose is to make play more continuous with fewer stoppages for infringements. When the result of an infringement by one team is that their opponents may gain an advantage, the referee does not whistle immediately for the infringement, the referee allows play to continue with the option to return to the original offence.

When a player can play on with missing tags.

- 1) Once the **defensive line has been broken** and a support player receives the ball. *The tag count continues*
- 2) When a kick down field is re-gathered by a chasing attacking player. *The tag count continues*
- 3) From a late tag or early tag offense. *Tag count restarts from one.*

** A defender only needs to touch the player without tags to halt their progress. Apart from these situations, any other time in the game if a player receives the ball with any tags missing, the referee will call an automatic tag and that player must stop and play the ball.*

PASSING

- 1) All passes must come out of the hands in a backward or lateral direction from the direction of play.
- 2) Players can pass into the nets but must travel off the net in a backward or lateral direction.

** Passes that do not travel backward or lateral will result in loss of possession and will result in a handover of possession.*

KNOCK-ONS

- 1) A turnover will be awarded to the defending team in the case the ball comes off a players' hands / arm / shoulder / head and is propelled forward causing a knock-on.
- 2) If an attacking player propels the ball in a backward direction play will continue.



KICKING

- 1) Kicking is allowed at any time and of any type, but the defender has all rights to the ball if collision with a defending player is eminent.
- 2) Players from the kicking team may kick the ball again whilst it is on the ground or scoop it up. Providing the defender is not already in the motion of bending over to pick it up.
- 3) If any player dives or falls on the ball this will result in an automatic handover. Any collision will result in a penalty to the defending team.
- 4) All kicks must come off the lower shin or foot ONLY. Anything else will result in a turnover.
- 5) You can use any kick in general play - the chip, bomb, downtown, grubber etc.
- 6) The players from the kicking team must be behind the ball when it is kicked in general play or the kicking player must progress past them to put them on side.
- 7) If a ball is kicked in general play and bounces off a net within the in-goal area and re-gathered by the kicking team, the tag count will be restarted.
- 8) If a ball is **kicked** in general play and a member of the kicking team regains the ball that has not been contested by the defending team, then the play and tag count shall continue.
- 9) If a member of the kicking team regains the ball that comes off a defender who has played at it, play shall continue and the tag count shall be restarted.

**Any player from the kicking team who, while in the process of retrieving the ball, collides with an opposition player, will be penalised back at the point the kick was taken.*

*Players may **NOT** dive or fall on the ball in general play.*

DROP KICK

- 1) A drop kick restart will be required when;
 - a. A player is tagged within their own in-goal area
 - b. A player grounds the ball in their in-goal
- 2) The drop kick must be taken from within the three-point zone
- 3) All players from the kicking team must be behind the try line when the kick is taken
- 4) The ball must travel over the kicking third line before **any player** can contest it
- 5) Infringements of these drop kick rules will result in a penalty on the centre spot of the third line to the non-offending team.



CONTACT OFFENCE

By the attacking player

- 1) Changing their running line which causes a collision with a defender.
- 2) Jumping, spinning or side stepping is allowed, but any contact that occurs from these actions which impedes a defender will result in a penalty.
- 3) Attacking players must not deliberately run or dive into a stationary defender.

By the defending player

- 4) Who deliberately moves into the path of an attacking player causing a collision
- 5) Using contact to impede or slow down an attacking player running through a gap in the defensive line in order to remove a tag.
- 6) Grabbing on to attackers shorts or shirt to slow them down.

**All the above contact actions will result in a penalty against the offending team.*

PENALTIES

- 1) Penalties are to be taken by way of a tap restart at:
 - a. The position the incident took place unless otherwise stated in these rules
 - b. The infringing team must retire at least 5m from where the penalty is taken
 - c. Further misconduct by the infringing team shall allow the referee to advance the mark of the penalty by a further 5m.
 - d. Any penalty awarded to a team within their own third will be taken at the centre point of the third line
 - e. Any penalty awarded to a team in the oppositions third will be taken at the point of the infringement, but no closer than 5m to the try line.



FOUL PLAY

- 1) In the event of misconduct by a player, the referee shall, at his/her discretion, caution, sin-bin or send off a player from the game.
- 2) Players who are SIN BINNED must surrender their tags to the referee by handing over both tags and NOT throwing them. The team will get the tags back at the referee's discretion or up to (2) two minutes.
- 3) Players who are SENT OFF must surrender their tags to the referee by handing over both tags and NOT throwing them. The team will get the tags back after a (2) two-minute period but that player whom was sent off cannot take any further part in the game.
- 4) Referee will hold, then drop the tags at any part of the field, for sin bin & send offs, any player may retrieve the tags and re-join play, (except for the player sent off).
- 5) Players who are sent off are reported to the module management via the referees and their case will be looked at and a suspension period (if required) will be sorted. Their team delegate will be notified of the result.
- 6) Suspended players may not participate until the time specified by the module or event management.

INJURY STOPPAGES

- 1) In the event of an injury that causes the game to be stopped for long periods of time or even cancelled. e.g. *awaiting an ambulance*
- 2) If possible or necessary:
 - a. the game can be rescheduled and replayed
 - b. moved to another court and the remaining time continued until finished
 - c. if already into the second half of the match the team in front at the time the injury occurs will automatically be given the win.

POWER PLAY

- 1) This is optional and to be used at representative level or during finals.
- 2) Each team will have an equal period during each game where the opposition will have only 3 players on the court.
- 3) The team who has their power play in place will have their points worth;
 - a. 3pts for a try scored in the bonus point zone
 - b. 2pts for a try scored in goal but outside the bonus point zone



MISCONDUCT

- 1) Unsportsmanlike conduct covers the behaviour and attitude of players on the field and may result in a penalty, sin-bin or send off.
- 2) **NO TOLERANCE FOR PUNCHING**
- 3) *IN Tag* supports the stance against violence in sport & adhere to the NO TOLERANCE - ONE PUNCH Rule adopted by many sports across the country. Automatic suspensions will occur.
- 4) The Module Manager or Event Co-ordinator have the right to strip teams of their position(s) on the ladder if deemed to have brought the game into disrepute. Regardless of whether it is during the regular rounds or finals series. In the event of it being in the finals the team(s) next on the ladder will move up a place to fill that now vacant void. e.g. *2nd team on is disqualified due to bringing the game into disrepute then the 3rd position team will take 2nd place, etc.*
- 5) If any form of fighting occurs the management has the right and will be obligated to hand out lengthy penalties in extreme cases – total dismissal from *IN Tag* participation. This applies to not only players but also officials, spectators and parents.