

U15-U18 Variations to the World Rugby Laws of the Game

Players and Match Officials must ensure that the World Rugby Laws of Game (including the World Rugby Under 19 Law Variations) and any such law variations set out below (and/or otherwise agreed by the RFU) are observed when playing boys and girls rugby at U15 to U18 in England, which are mandatory for clubs, schools and colleges.

RFU Regulation 15 <https://www.englandrugby.com/run/rules-governance/rfu-rules-and-regulat...> must also be complied with at all times.

Any terms defined in these Rules shall have the meanings set out in the World Rugby Laws of the Game.

Law Variations applicable to all age groups and bands between U15 and U18 for boys and girls rugby.

1. Ball and Pitch Sizes:

Ball size: U15, U16, U17 and U18 – ball size 5

Pitch Size: as set out in World Rugby Law 1

2. Substitutions and Replacements:

Rolling substitutions are permitted and substituted players can be re-used at any time. Substitutions can only take place when the ball is dead and always with the referee's permission.

There is no limit on the number of replacements that a team may have, even if competing teams have unequal number, unless otherwise specified by separate regulations specific to a competition.

3. Squeezeball:

No player shall use the technique known or referred to as "Squeezeball" and no person involved in the teaching or coaching of rugby may teach or coach to encourage the use the "Squeezeball" technique.

Note: "Squeezeball" is a technique where the ball carrier goes to ground, head forward (touching or close to the ground), irrespective of immediate contact with opponents, usually keeping parallel to the touchline, holding and protecting the ball close to the chest and, when on the ground, pushing the ball back between the legs.

4. Sin Bin:

If a player is temporarily suspended in an Age Grade match, the duration of time in the Sin Bin shall be as set out below:

- U15 – 6 minutes
- U16, U17 and U18 – 7 minutes

5. Tackle

The tackler must grip and hold the ball carrier below the base of the sternum (the area of the tummy or belly and below). The ball carrier must not go into contact with an opponent with their shoulders below their hips, or dip down late and low or otherwise place their head into the head space of the opponent.

Sanction: a penalty will be awarded to the non-offending team.

Additional Law Variations applicable to U15 boys only

The variations below shall also apply at U15:

5. The Scrum:

- **a)** There is no 'turnover' law. If scrums are reset for wheeling beyond 45 degrees the throw-in is to the side in possession at the time it is wheeled beyond 45 degrees.
- **b)** The scrum-half not throwing the ball into the scrum must not move beyond the middle line of the scrum until the ball has emerged from the scrum or an opponent has lifted the ball from the ground. In the event of a strike against the head, the scrum-half who has thrown the ball into the scrum is similarly restricted in not following the ball. Sanction: Penalty Kick.

6. Law 18 Line-Out:

- **(a)** The lineout will be uncontested at U15.
- **(b)** Lifting and supporting is permitted at this age group, i.e. a player may bind to a jumper until they have returned to the ground.