



OVERVIEW OF CHANGES TO PLAYING RULES

Overview of Changes
to the Federation of International Touch
International *Playing Rules*, 5th Edition

1 August 2020

This document is current and maintained by Touch Singapore. Users must refer to the Touch Singapore Director of Referees if further information is sought.	
--	--

Endorsed August 2020

Page 1 of 5



OVERVIEW OF CHANGES TO PLAYING RULES

Introduction

In November 2019, The Federation of International Touch (FIT) held a conference in Paris and introduced the International *Playing Rules*, 5th Edition . FIT is trailing the *Playing Rules* for two years, commencing in 2020.

The updated *Playing Rules* were originally commissioned and endorsed by Touch Football Australia.

Touch Singapore (TSG) has adopted the 5th edition *Playing Rules* for all competitions commencing 1 August 2020.

This 'Overview of Changes' provides a summary of the main changes between the 4th and 5th Edition Rules. This document is for guidance purposes only. TSG has prepared a comprehensive document of changes that is available on the TSG website. Additionally, the reader must refer to the *Playing Rules* or contact the TSG Director of Referees for any queries.

The revised *Playing Rules* reflect how Touch Football is played at the elite level. These changes will drive improvement and a more consistent interpretation of the Rules.

This document is current and maintained by Touch Singapore. Users must refer to the Touch Singapore Director of Referees if further information is sought.		
--	--	--



OVERVIEW OF CHANGES TO PLAYING RULES

Terminology

Terminology used throughout the Rules realign the sport of Touch Football with its origin - rugby league. Additionally, the terminology better reflects terminology used amongst the touch community. *Touchdowns* are now called *Tries*, the *Score Zone* is now the *In-Goal Area*, the *Score Line* is the *Try Line* and a *Period of Time* is now called *Sin Bin*.

Toss

The team winning the toss has the choice of direction their team wishes to run; the choice of Interchange Area; and the choice of which team will commence the match with possession.

Defenders to retire 7 metres

Defenders must retire a distance of 7 metres from the Roll ball as opposed to the current 'not less than 5 metre' rule. Retiring 7 metres closely aligns with the distance currently being applied in most competitions around the world.

Introduction of a 7 metre zone from the Try Line

In accordance with the new 7 metre Rule, sees the introduction of a 7 metre zone to replace the current 5 metre zone at either end of the field. Upon any defender entering the 7 metre zone, all players from the Defenders team must move forward at reasonable pace.

Defence in the 7 metre zone – speed to move forward and not dropping early

When any player from the Defending team enters their teams' 7 metre zone, all players must move forward at a *Reasonable Pace* until the touch is imminent or made. This rule is aimed at speeding up the game and creating more attacking opportunities.

Reasonable Pace is deemed as making a positive intent to initiate a touch. Defenders can no longer take 'small steps' forward and claim this is *Reasonable Pace*. As a guide *Reasonable Pace* is a fast walk. The Referee is the sole adjudicator of *Reasonable Pace*.

Defenders cannot drop to the *Try Line* when the ball enters the 7 metre zone. Defenders do not need to keep moving forward; however, they cannot drop until a Touch is made or Imminent.

Defence in the 7 metre zone – sin binning for 3 infringements

An infringement is committed when defenders do not move forward at a *Reasonable Pace* or drop early to the *Try Line*. 3 consecutive infringements by the defending team will result in the last player to infringe being given an *Exclusion*, that is they are sent to the *Sin Bin*. The *Sin Bin* area is directly behind the Dead Ball Line.

The previous rule to remove a defender following 2 infringements for not moving forward or dropping early within the 5 metre zone no longer applies.

This document is current and maintained by Touch Singapore. Users must refer to the Touch Singapore Director of Referees if further information is sought.



OVERVIEW OF CHANGES TO PLAYING RULES

Zero touch count following an intercept or ball touched in-flight

Upon a team intercepting the ball, the next touch is counted as a Zero Touch.

If the ball is intentionally touched in-flight by a defending team and regathered by the Attacking Team, the next touch will be counted as a zero touch.

In both instances, the Referee must signal zero touch upon the touch being made.

In-correct restart

An in-correct restart, such as tap taken off the Mark or tap taken instead of a Roll ball will no longer result in a Change of Possession. The player will be instructed to return to the correct Mark and perform the correct re-start.

Roll ball

The player performing the Roll ball now is required to make a genuine attempt to stand parallel to the Sidelines. Passing one foot over the ball is permitted.

Actions without Half in position

When the Half is not within one 1 metre of the Roll ball, defenders in an onside position may move forward as soon as the player performing the Roll ball releases the ball. If a defending player makes contact with the ball, a Change of Possession occurs.

Retiring Line of a Defender (Tracking)

After affecting a Touch, a Defender may choose any direction and may change direction as often as they like while returning onside, provided they do not interfere or obstruct the Attacking Team while returning onside.

Time players spend in the Sin Bin

Any player sent to the *Sin Bin* (formerly *Period of Time*) will remain in the *Sin Bin* for a compulsory two completed sets of possession by both teams. The time a player spends off the field will no longer be at the discretion of the Referee. This Rule will provide greater consistency in its application when assessing infringements.

Interchanges during a breakaway

If an attacking player breaks away or takes an intercept, the defending team is prohibited from making an Interchange until after the touch is made. Any player entering the Field of Play from the Interchange during a break away or intercept, regardless of whether a Try is scored or not, will be sent to the *Sin Bin*. The Referee should award a Penalty Try if the Interchange prevented a Try from being scored.

This document is current and maintained by Touch Singapore. Users must refer to the Touch Singapore Director of Referees if further information is sought.



OVERVIEW OF CHANGES TO PLAYING RULES

Acknowledgement

The author acknowledges and is grateful for the contribution of Touch Football Australia, Federation of International Touch, England Touch and Touch Football Western Australia in drafting this document.

Queries must be directed to Touch Singapore, Director of Referees at referees@touchsingapore.net

This document is current and maintained by Touch Singapore. Users must refer to the Touch Singapore Director of Referees if further information is sought.		
--	--	--

	Endorsed August 2020	
--	----------------------	--

		Page 5 of 5
--	--	-------------