

Notes for groundsmen

These notes accompany the diagram on the previous page as a summary of requirements for the marking of the field. For full details see Rule 1-2.

1. There is no such thing as a metric American football field. All measurements must be in yards, feet and inches.
2. A full sized field is 360ft long and 160ft wide, consisting of two 10yd end zones and twenty 5yd grid segments. If there is insufficient length, it may be shortened to 330ft by taking two 5yd segments out of the middle. If absolutely necessary, a further 12ft may be saved by reducing the size of both end zones to the minimum allowed 8yds. A legal field cannot therefore be marked if there is less than 106yds (318ft) between the goal posts.
3. Note that the width of the field is significantly less than for sports such as soccer, rugby or hockey and that it cannot be varied.
4. Yard lines across the field at 5yd intervals between the goal lines (i.e. NOT in the end zones) are essential: they are relied upon for accurate measurement of the distance the ball is advanced.
5. The inbounds lines are 60ft from each sideline. They are not actually lines but rather a series of "hashmarks" at 3ft intervals. Each hashmark should be approximately 2ft long (i.e. from a point 60ft from the sideline to a point 58ft from the sideline) on each side of the field. The hashmarks do NOT extend into the end zones.
6. Similar 2ft long lines should be marked starting 4in inside each sideline (between the goal lines). These should line up with the hashmarks in the middle of the field to give a series of consistent reference points for aligning the ball.
7. There must either be numbers or marks 27ft from each sideline on every 10yd line (but not the 5yd lines). If numbers then it is the *top* of each number that is 27ft from the sideline. The proper size of the numbers is 6ft x 4ft but they can be smaller if necessary. If not numbers, a 1ft long mark should be made 27ft in from each sideline on each 10yd line.
8. There must be two (adjacent) boxes drawn outside each sideline, stretching from a point 25yds from each goal line. These boxes are shorter if segments are taken out of the middle of the field since the two end points of them are fixed in relation to the goal lines. Stretching from 6ft to 12ft outside the sideline is the *coaching box*. Stretching from 12ft as far as there is room for it is the *team area*. These are the areas in which coaches and substitutes must stay during play.
9. For safety reasons goal posts may not be inside the field. They must either be on the end lines or outside them. If the goal posts cannot be moved, the length of the field must be reduced.