

**BRITISH  
AMERICAN FOOTBALL  
ASSOCIATION**

**FOOTBALL RULES  
AND  
INTERPRETATIONS**

**2017 EDITION**

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## Foreword

The rules are revised each year by IFAF to improve the sport's level of safety and quality of play, and to clarify the meaning and intent of rules where needed. The principles that govern all rule changes are that they must:

- be safe for the participants;
- be applicable at all levels of the sport;
- be coachable;
- be administrable by the officials;
- maintain a balance between offense and defence;
- be interesting to spectators;
- not have a prohibitive economic impact; and
- retain some affinity with the rules adopted by NCAA in the USA.

IFAF statutes require all member federations to play by IFAF rules, except in the following regards:

1. national federations may adapt Rule 1 to meet local needs and circumstances, provided no adaption reduces the safety of the players or other participants; BAFA takes advantage of that to allow (for example) 90-yard fields and reduced end zones that are our solution to using rugby pitches and the like;
2. competitions may adjust the rules according to (a) the age group of the participants and (b) the gender of the participants;
3. competition authorities have the right to amend certain specific rules (listed on page 35);
4. national federations may restrict the above so that the same regulations apply to all competitions under their jurisdiction.

These rules apply to all contests involving BAFA-affiliated teams and take effect from 1st March 2017. (**Exception:** Competitions that began before 1st March 2017 will continue to use 2016 rules until the end of their competition).

For brevity, male pronouns are used extensively in this book, but the rules are equally applicable to female and male participants.

BAFA has established a mechanism for discussing and deciding future changes to this book. Each organisation affiliated to BAFA has a voice on the Rules Committee. You may make suggestions for changes to your organisation's representative(s). Suggestions may be made at any time, but to be eligible for consideration for the following year they must be received by 1st October.

Jim Briggs, BAFRA (Editor)  
on behalf of the  
BAFA Rules Committee

Those who find it necessary to write to the editor for interpretations of rules or play situations will receive prompt replies if they number their questions and email them to [rules@britishamericanfootball.org](mailto:rules@britishamericanfootball.org).

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## Table of Contents

Rules changes.....	4
Points of emphasis .....	7
The Football Code.....	10
BAFA Regulations .....	13
1 Basic principles.....	13
2 Registration.....	17
3 Code of conduct.....	19
4 Regulations on organisations .....	26
5 Game regulations .....	28
6 Competition complaints and appeals .....	30
7 Procedures for regulatory cases .....	30
8 Procedures for appeals.....	33
Rules and Interpretations .....	35
Rule 1 — The Game, Field, Players and Equipment.....	37
Rule 2 — Definitions .....	53
Rule 3 — Periods, Time Factors and Substitutions .....	72
Rule 4 — Ball in Play, Dead Ball, Out of Bounds.....	92
Rule 5 — Series of Downs, Line to Gain .....	97
Rule 6 — Kicks.....	101
Rule 7 — Snapping and Passing the Ball .....	115
Rule 8 — Scoring.....	131
Rule 9 — Conduct of Players and Others Subject to the Rules.....	140
Rule 10 — Penalty Enforcement .....	161
Rule 11 — The Officials: Jurisdiction and Duties.....	170
Rule 12 — Video judge.....	171
Rule 13 — Standards for Game Management .....	175
Summary of penalties .....	188
Officials’ Signals.....	199
Appendix A — Guidelines for Game Officials to Use During a Serious On-Field Player Injury.....	202
Appendix B — Guidelines for Game Officials and Game Management To Use Regarding Lightning.....	203
Appendix C — Concussions.....	206
Appendix D — Field Diagrams .....	207
Appendix E — Equipment: Additional Details .....	213
BAFRA Terms and Conditions .....	217
Index of Rules and Interpretations.....	27