DUBAI EXILES

RUGBY & NETBALL SINCE 1966



A PARENTS' GUIDE TO THE RULES · SEASON 2026/27

U11

YEAR 6 · CONTACT RUGBY · 12-A-SIDE

ONE TEAM. ONE FAMILY.
ONE EXILES.

U11 AT A GLANCE

THE NUMBERS THAT MATTER

Your child is now playing **Under 11s (Year 6)**. The game changes noticeably this year: more players, a bigger pitch, a bigger ball and, for the first time, **fully contested scrums, rucks and lineouts**.

All rules in this guide are the official 2026/27 UAE Rugby Federation (UAERF) & RCC Mini & Youth Law Variations (Rev.2), which every club in the UAE plays to. Anything not listed follows normal World Rugby law.

THE NUMBERS

what you will see on match day

12 a-side
PLAYERS ON THE PITCH
Scrum of 3 + 2 + 1, lineout of 6.

18
MAX SQUAD SIZE
Rolling substitutions, on and off as often as coaches like.

2 × 20 mins
LEAGUE MATCH
Maximum. Can also be played as 4 × 10 mins. Tournaments: 2 × 15.

40 × 70 m
MAXIMUM PITCH SIZE
Roughly half a full-size pitch, played across the width.

Size 4
BALL
One size down from the full-size 5 used from U15.

50 %
EVERYONE PLAYS
Every player must be on the pitch for at least half of every match.

WHAT'S NEW AT U11

compared with U10 Year 5

	U10 YEAR 5	U11 YEAR 6
TEAM & SQUAD	10-a-side, squad of 15	**12-a-side, squad of 18**
PITCH & BALL	35 m × 60 m, size 3 ball	**40 m × 70 m, size 4 ball**
TOURNAMENT GAMES	2 × 10 mins	**2 × 15 mins**
RUCK	Semi-contested, 2 defenders may compete	**Fully contested, jackal allowed**
SCRUM	5 players, uncontested	**6 players, contested, 1 m push**
LINEOUT	4 + thrower, uncontested	**5 + thrower, contested, no lift**
SCRUM HALF	Must pass	**Can pass or run**

Everything else is unchanged from U10 Year 5. 7 things change this season.

STILL NOT IN THE GAME AT U11

No kicking in open play, no conversions, no penalty goals or drop goals, no lifting in the lineout and no driving mauls. These arrive in the older age groups.

MATCH DAY BASICS

TIME, TEAMS, SCORING & RESTARTS

TIME ON THE PITCH

HOW LONG IS A GAME?

- **League:** 2 halves of 20 mins (maximum), or 4 quarters of 10 mins.
- **Tournaments & festivals:** 2 halves of 15 mins (maximum).
- **Daily limit:** no player may play more than **90 minutes in one day**, however many games there are.

SELECTION

EVERYONE PLAYS

- The **"50% rule"**: every child in the squad must play at least half of every match.
- Substitutions are **rolling**. Players can go off and come back on any number of times, so coming off is not a bad sign.
- Squads are capped at **18** so that the 50% rule is workable.

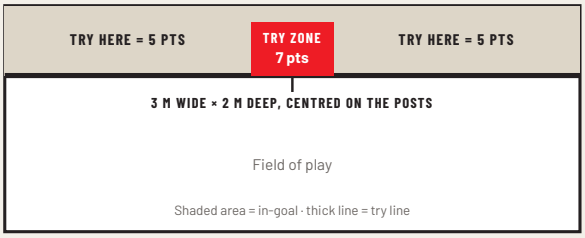
POINTS

HOW DO YOU SCORE?

- **Try = 5 points.** Ball grounded over the try line under control.
- **Optional 7-point "Try Zone".** Some leagues and festivals mark 3 m × 2 m box in the middle of the try line. A try scored inside it is worth **7 points**. This rewards teams for working the ball back towards the middle rather than just sprinting down the wing.
- **No conversions**, no penalty goals and no drop goals. There is no kicking for points at all at this age.

DIAGRAM

THE 7-POINT TRY ZONE



GETTING THINGS GOING

KICK-OFFS & RESTARTS

- Each half starts with a **drop kick** from the middle of the pitch. This is the only kicking you will see at this age.
- The receiving team must stand **7 m back**, and the kick must travel at least 7 m.
- After a try, the team that **did not score** restarts the game with a drop kick. Scoring means you have to win the ball back.

NEAR THE TRY LINE

IN-GOAL & THE "22" RESTART

- If the ball goes dead in the in-goal area or the attacker is **held up** (over the line but unable to ground the ball), the **defending team** restarts with a **tap and pass** 5 m out from their goal line. The attackers must stand 7 m back.
- What would be a "22 drop-out" in senior rugby is replaced by a **free tap and pass** to the team in possession, 10 m out from the try line.

OFFENCES

PENALTIES & FREE KICKS

- The team awarded a penalty chooses between a **tap and pass** (the opposition must retreat **7 m**) or an **uncontested scrum**.
- There is no kicking for touch and no shot at goal.
- Common penalties you will hear: *offside, not releasing the ball, hands in the ruck, not rolling away, high tackle.*

KICKING

NO KICKING IN OPEN PLAY

Apart from the drop kick to start each half and after a score, **kicking is not allowed**. No kicks to touch, no chips, no grubbers. This keeps the ball in hand and encourages passing and running. There is also no "mark".

Kicking out of hand, conversions and the mark arrive at U12 (U14 for the girls' Quick Rip game).

CONTACT & SET PIECE

TACKLE, RUCK, MAUL, SCRUM & LINEOUT

CONTACT

THE TACKLE

- Full tackling to normal **World Rugby Law 14**: below the line of the shoulders, wrap the arms, then release and roll away.
- **No "swinging" tackles.** A defender may not grab an arm or a shirt and swing the ball carrier around or to the ground.

AFTER THE TACKLE

THE RUCK CONTESTED

- Once a player is tackled, both teams compete for the ball on the ground. This is a **ruck**, fully contested under **World Rugby Law 15**.
- Defenders may **counter-ruck** (drive the attackers off the ball) and **jackal** (grab the ball while on their feet before a ruck forms).
- Everyone must enter from their own side ("through the gate") and stay on their feet.

STANDING TACKLES

THE MAUL

When the ball carrier is held up standing and team-mates bind on, that is a **maul**. If it stops and the ball is not out within **5 seconds**, the referee awards a **scrum to the team that had the ball** (World Rugby Law 16).

BALL CARRIER

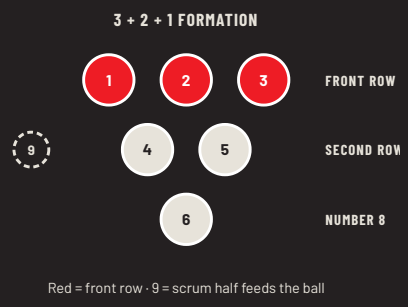
FENDING & THE "SQUEEZE BALL"

- Ball carriers may **fend** (push a tackler away with an open hand) but **only to the chest or below**. Never to the face or neck.
- **No "squeeze ball".** A tackled player may not curl up over the ball and push it back between their own legs. Present it to the side.

SET PIECE

THE SCRUM CONTESTED

- **6 players** per side in a **3 + 2 + 1** formation: a front row of three (two props and a hooker), two second rows and a number 8.
- The scrum is **contested**, but the push is limited to a **maximum of 1 metre**. Driving further is a penalty.
- The **number 8 cannot pick the ball up** from the base. Only the scrum half may play it.
- The **scrum half can pass or run** from the scrum.
- The **defending scrum half may not go past the middle of the scrum**, giving the attacking 9 space to clear the ball.



Red = front row · 9 = scrum half feeds the ball

SET PIECE

THE LINEOUT CONTESTED

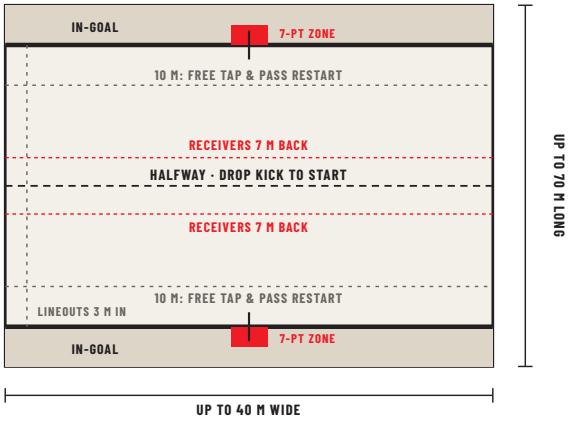
- When the ball goes into touch, play restarts with a lineout of **5 players per team plus the thrower**, formed **3 metres in** from the touchline.
- Both teams may **jump and compete** for the ball, but there is **no lifting** or supporting of jumpers.
- **No driving mauls** from a lineout. Once caught, the ball must be passed or run.
- Everyone not in the lineout must stay **7 m back** until it is over.



THE PITCH & THE JARGON

WHERE THINGS HAPPEN, AND WHAT THE WORDS MEAN

THE U11 PITCH



Maximum sizes, not to scale. Clubs usually mark this pitch across part of a full-size field, so distances vary by venue.

DISTANCES TO REMEMBER

KICK-OFF	receivers 7 m back
PENALTY / FREE KICK	opposition 7 m back
LINEOUT	backs 7 m back
RESTART NEAR TRY LINE	5 m out, attackers 7 m back
SCRUM PUSH	max 1 m

WHERE TO FIND THE FULL RULES

This guide summarises the U11 (Year 6) column of the *2026/27 RCC & UAERF Mini & Youth Law Variations, Rev.2*. Your age-group coach has the full document covering every age group from U6 to U18. If in doubt, ask them rather than the referee.

JARGON BUSTER

what the words mean

TAP & PASS
The player taps the ball with their foot and passes to a team-mate to restart play. Used for penalties, free kicks and many restarts.

RUCK
Players from each team, on their feet, over a ball on the ground after a tackle. Once a ruck forms, hands are not allowed.

JACKAL
A defender staying on their feet and grabbing the ball from a tackled player before a ruck forms.

MAUL
Like a ruck, but the ball carrier is still standing and held by players from both sides.

SCRUM
The forwards bind together while the scrum half feeds the ball in. Restarts play after minor errors such as a forward pass or knock-on.

LINEOUT
Restarts play after the ball goes into touch. Two lines of players compete for a ball thrown in from the touchline.

KNOCK-ON / FORWARD PASS
Dropping the ball forwards, or passing it forwards. Both give possession to the other team.

OFFSIDE
Being in front of the ball, or on the wrong side of a ruck, scrum or lineout. The most common penalty at every age.

BEHAVIOUR

DISCIPLINE

There are no yellow cards in the senior sense. Any **misconduct** (dangerous play, backchat, repeated foul play) is dealt with by a compulsory **5-minute substitution**. The player comes off, cools down with the coach and can come back on after 5 minutes. It is a teaching moment, not a punishment for life.

ON THE SIDELINE

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU

Referees at this age are often young or volunteer coaches applying these variations for the first time. Decisions will not always be perfect. Please back the referee, let the coaches coach, and cheer effort as loudly as tries.

One team. One family. One Exiles.