

FTW Kickball Official Rulebook

v7.0

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1 The Game

- The basics of kickball is based on softball (running around the bases, etc.). The more specific rules are spelled out in this rulebook.
- This is a Co-Ed league with 8-11 players on defense, and there must be a minimum of 4 girls (no maximum) on defense at a time in order to have a full defensive team of 11 players.
- One team will be the home team and starts the game in the field (defense).
- One team will be the visiting team and start the game by kicking (offense).
- The home/visiting team will be determined by a coin-flip or rock-paper-scissors
- All players must be registered FTW Kickball players
- It is highly recommend all players wear the provided team shirts that are similar in color.
- All player's uniforms and attire are an extension of the player.
- Metal spikes or metal cleats shall not be worn by players while participating in game play.
- Athletic gloves that provide an unfair advantage cannot be used (goalie gloves, tacky receiver gloves, baseball gloves, etc...) but players can wear basic gloves to keep their hands warm.
- Finally, the objective is to come out meet some friends or new people and have fun.

1.1 Team Size Registration Information

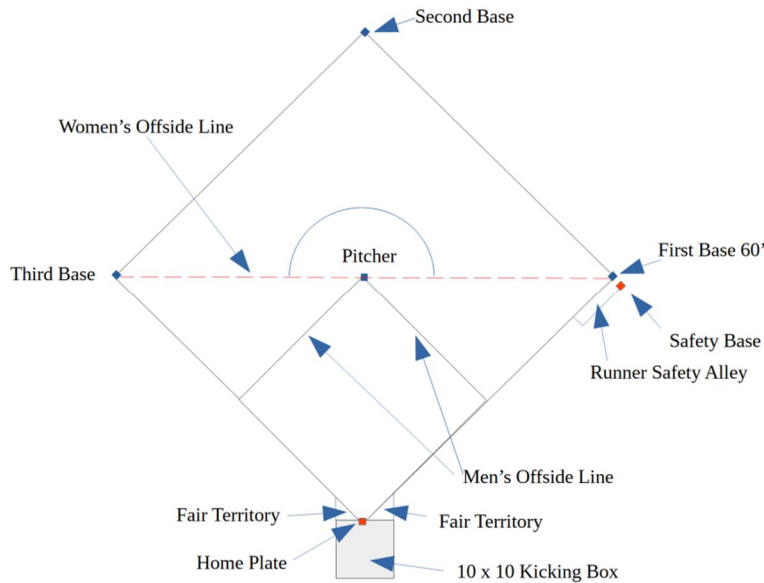
- During registration teams are allowed to select a team color once reaching 12 registered players.
- Recommended roster sizes are 14-18 players to balance between reducing potential forfeit and playing time needs.
 - a. For groups 13 and under: the league will combine incomplete registration teams by combining groups to make a complete roster of no more than 18 players. (example: group of 12 & group of 6 = 18; group of 9 & group of 9 = 18; group of 7 & group of 6 & group & group of 4 = 17 players)
 - b. For teams of 14-15 players: the league will round out rosters with 1-2 Free Agents (as available) up to a max of 16 players.

1.2 Game Length

- The game is complete after 6 innings or 55 minutes whichever comes first. After 55 minutes, the entire current inning will continue until completed (unless the Home team is ahead).
- The winner of the game will be the team which has scored the greater number of runs at the completion of the game.
- Games may end in a tie. Any regular season game that ends in a tie will be recorded as a tie in the regular season standings.
- To expedite play, if the Away team is ahead by 9 runs or more with 9 minutes or less going into the 6th inning, the inning will be 'flipped' to let the trailing team kick again in the top of the 6th.
- Playoff Game Tie-breaker
 1. One Extra Inning (last kicker out starts on 2nd base);
 2. Home Run Derby
- Home Run Derby Rules:
 - Higher Ranked Seed Chooses to go 1st or 2nd
 - Pitch to your own team (only up to 10 pitches per round)
 - 3 Kicks Per Team (can be 1 kicker or up to 3 different kickers per round)
 - If tied continue to another round of Home Run Derby but alternate which team goes first

1.3 The Field

- The bases (first, second, third and home) are all 60 feet apart and make a square.
- Base color coding is for safety
 - Red: Runners area (base defenders shall not stand in the center area)
 - White: Neutral area that can be used by both base defender and runner
 - Blue: Base defender area
- First base is placed inside the first base foul line and a safety base is placed outside the first base foul line. (There is 'one base' space between the 1st base and the safety base)
- The safety base is for the kicker to contact while running to 1st base to avoid collisions with the defender at first base.
- The pitcher's mound is located directly between 1st & 3rd base.
- The pitching mound is a ten (10) foot radius circle with the pitcher's plate in the center
- First base runner safety alley is 15 feet before first base along the outside of the 1st base line
- The outfield is the area between two foul lines formed by extending two sides of the infield square out to the fence.
- The infield and outfield, including the foul lines, and properly placed bases and cones, are in fair territory and all other are foul territory.
- The kicker's box is a 10 foot square with the front of the kicker's box aligned with the front side of home base and the Strike Stripe™.
- Home Plate is part of the kicking box.



1.4 The Strike Zone

- A 4 inch “strike stripe”™ across the front of home-plate marks the left & right edge of the strike zone.
- At least half of the ball must pass over the “strike stripe”™ to count as a strike.
- Any pitched ball, that doesn't make contact with the kicker, is called a ball if:
 - The pitch is outside the “strike stripe”™.
 - The bottom of the ball bounces above 1ft off the ground in the area from the front of the “strike stripe”™ to 1ft behind home plate.
 - The pitched ball doesn't bounce twice or roll prior to crossing the “strike stripe”™.

1.5 The Officials

- Each game will be officiated by one Head Home Base Ref as assigned by FTW Kickball.
- Head Refs will each season read and follow the online Head Ref Instruction Manual
- The Head Home Base Ref will stand behind or beside the catcher. Their duties are to:
 - a. Take full charge of, and be responsible for, the proper conduct of the game;
 - b. Call and count balls and strikes;
 - c. Call and declare fair balls and fouls except those commonly called by Field Refs;
 - d. Make all decisions as they relate to the kicker;
 - e. Make all decisions except those commonly reserved for the Field Refs;
 - f. Determine when a game shall be forfeited or suspended;
 - g. Announce and impose time limits and length of game restrictions;
 - h. All final decisions on rules interpretations will be decided by the Head Home Base Ref
- Each game will also be officiated by two Field Refs: one at first and one at third base.
- The Field Refs shall be provided by the designated team (an independent third party team that is listed on the schedule).
- The Field Refs may take any position on the playing field they think is best suited to make calls on the bases while not interfering with game play but will typically be near 1st & 3rd base.
- Their duties are to:
 - a. Make decisions on the bases except those specifically reserved to the Head Home Base Ref;
 - b. Assist the Head Home Base Ref in calling interference, defensive line infractions, illegal kicking infractions and fair and foul balls.
 - c. Adjust their positioning when runners are on base to observe the off-sides lines, runners leading off, and kicking infractions; therefore, shall not ref sitting down.
- If different calls are made on a play the head home base ref will first call together the other two refs to the side to discuss the play and determine a final ruling. The head home base ref will make the final decision, then share the ruling with the coaches and play will proceed from that point.

2 TEAM LINE-UPS

2.1 Kicking Order & Defense Fielding

- The kicking order may contain more than 11 players (No maximum number of kickers).
- Completed kicking orders must be ready at the time of the 1st kicker.
- Not all players in the kicking order are required to be fielders.
- However, all fielders are required to be in the kicking order.
- There is a maximum of 11 players on defense (must be a minimum of 4 girls)

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- There is a minimum of 8 players to play a game with no greater than a 2:1 ratio of guys to girls; fewer than 8 players is a forfeit:
 - The result of a forfeited game shall be a score of six (6) to zero (0) in favor of the offended team.
 - The result of a game in which both teams have to forfeit (mutual game forfeit) shall be (6) to six (6).
- Acceptable League Defensive Player Combinations:
 - 3 girls + 5 guys = 8 players
 - 3 girls + 6 guys max = 9 players (this is maximum defensive players with only 3 girls)
 - 4 girls + 4 guys = 8 players
 - 4 girls + 5 guys = 9 players
 - 4 girls + 6 guys = 10 players
 - 4 girls + 7 guys = 11 players
 - 5 girls or more can be on defense there just needs to be 8-11 total defenders

2.2 Emergency Sub Position

Emergency Sub is intended to help a team avoid a forfeit or playing short-handed:

- A coach may add ONE (1) sub position to their team for the league determined price, if desired.
- The sub cannot be a registered player from another roster in that league.
- This spot can be an add/drop of different players, but any person playing as that sub would have to first sign a Waiver & Release form for that season.
- Subs are not eligible for league discount deals, season parties, or able to be used for the playoffs. The team sub position may be provided with an FTW Kickball shirt. The coach can charge a substitute player for a portion of the fee, or collect from their team players, but we'll leave that up to the coaches to decide.

2.3 Additions/Reductions to Line-Up

- A player can be added at any time to reach 11 total players for games started with 8-10 legal players, the kicker(s) are added to the bottom of the kicking order.
- A late arriving player can be added until the end of the third (3rd) inning. If the team has already completed a turn through the kicking line-up the arriving player must be added to the bottom of their kicking order.
- A player added after completion of the 3rd inning (except to reach full team of 11 players) must replace a current player of the same gender and follow the "Player Substitutions" rules below.
- Player Substitutions:
 - A player substitution is when a player that has not kicked or played in the field during the current game replaces a current player in the game.
 - The 'substitute' player will take the current player's spot in the kicking order and is now eligible to play defense.
 - The current player being substituted for is now out of the game for the remainder of that game. They cannot go back into the field or kick anymore that game.
 - When a substitution is being made, the coach has to notify the Head Ref before the substitution takes place. The Head Ref will then inform the other team's coach.
 - Failure to inform the head-ref of a substitution will be ruled an out for that kick.

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- If the kicking order is reduced to less than 11 legal players due to injury or ejection, each spot that was vacated below 11 players will result in an out each time a vacated spot comes up to kick. If the team has a substitute player available, they can fill the vacated spot.
- If the kicking order is reduced by injury or player ejection and the kicking order is greater than or equal to 11, then an out is not incurred.

3 Offense

3.1 The Count (Fouls, Strikes, Balls)

- Three Fouls = An Out
- Three Strikes = An Out
- Three Balls = A Walk
- Fouls count separately than strikes.

3.2 Kicking

- For a kick to be legal, the kicker must make contact with a pitched ball while the ball is inside the kicking box.
- A kicker becomes a runner when they legally kick a ball that becomes fair.
- Fair ball is a legally kicked ball that:
 - Stays fair and settles on the ground in fair territory between home & first or between home & third;
 - Is touching first or third base with any portion of the ball before passing the foul line;
 - Flies past first or third base and first falls on fair territory beyond first or third base;
 - While the ball is in fair territory it touches a ref or player that is touching fair territory;
- Foul ball is a legally kicked ball that:
 - Touches foul territory at any time between home and first base, or between home and third base;
 - Flies past first or third base and first falls in foul territory beyond first or third base;
 - While on or over foul territory, touches a ref, player or any object foreign to the natural ground (if the ball is fully over foul territory and touched, then it is foul).
- All illegally kicked balls count as a foul ball and defined as:
 - A ball touched more than once by the kicker (double kick);
 - A kick on or above the knee;
 - A ball intentionally touched by any body part other than the lower leg;
 - A ball stopped or trapped by the kicker;
 - A kick when the ball is outside the kicking box, which includes in front of the plate.

Exception:

- A ball that pops/deflates due to the force of the kick will be ruled no-pitch (unless it was a Home Run)

3.3 Home Runs and Over Fence Rulings

- The FTW Kickball League Fields are oriented to allow for Home Run Fences.
 - The Home Run Limit is 3 per team per game.
 - After 3 Home Runs a Home Run counts as an out.

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- After a Home Run is kicked the kicker must advance to 1st base, but after that rounding the bases and touching home plate is a formality and an out will not be called.

A Home Run is:

- A ball that passes over the fence, in fair territory in the air is a Home Run.
- A ball that strikes a tree hanging over the home-run fence into fair territory in the air will be determined by head-ref if it would have been a home-run, otherwise the ball will be played as a live ball as though it bounced off of a fence.
- If a player is pushing into the Safe-T-Fence in-order to catch a fly ball, then it is up to the refs to determine if the ball would've cleared the fence
- A kicked ball that the Head Ref determines would have cleared the fenced on its own, even if touched by a defender while in the air.(Example: A defender makes a play on the ball at the wall, jumps above the wall, touches the ball, and it goes over the fence.) This would be considered a Home Run and does count toward the 3 HR limit.

Balls Bouncing over the HR Fence or Knocked Over the HR fence by the Defense:

- A ball that bounces over the fence is a ground rule double.
- A ground rule double means the kicker and all runners on base move 2 bases from their starting base.
- For a ball that lands fair then deflects off of a defender over the outfield fence. Award 1 base for the hit, and a ground rule double for 3 total bases.
- A kicked ball, that the Head Ref determines would **not** have cleared the fenced on its own, is touched by a defender while in the air and then goes over the fence counts as a 4-Base Error. The kicker and all base runners score. This **does not** count toward the 3 HR kicking limit.

3.4 Base Running

All players should attempt to avoid excessive contact while running bases and playing defense, if it looks like there may be contact just let the ball go or run around the contact there aren't any professional scouts here so just relax and have fun out there.

Running to 1st Base:

- It is legal for a kicker to slide into first base, however it should only be into the safety base.
- The runner should always run to the outside safety base and stay on the right side of the first base line (runners safety alley).
- If a player is attempting to run to the safety base (Head Home Base Ref decision) and the ability to run to the safety base is interfered by the opposing team, then the player may run to the inside base to avoid contact.
- A runner may run passed first base and not be tagged out.
- If a runner makes an aggressive move toward 2nd base, as determined by the Head-Ref, they become an active base-runner again and can be tagged out. (Simply turning around to the left is not an aggressive move.)

1st Base Offensive Interference determined by the Head Home Base Ref:

- If the defender is making a play at first base and the runner goes to the white base by mistake instead of the outside safety base and makes contact with the defender then the runner is out. (Exception: on extra base kicks the runner may go to the white base while attempting to advance, the first base defender should be out of the base path.)

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General Base Running

- A runner must start on the base until a pitched ball is kicked. If the runner is off the base when the ball is kicked, the runner is out. This is true if the kick is fair or foul.
- A runner may advance once a ball is kicked.
- The baseline is a straight line from the runner to the base they are attempting to reach and is only established when a ball tag attempt occurs.
- During the tag attempt, if the runner goes out of the baseline (3ft on either side of their line to the base) to avoid a tag, they are out.
- Runners may advance as long as the play is being made on a base runner or until the Head ref rules an end of the play.
- Runners must stop advancing once the ball is returned to the pitcher while the pitcher is in the 10ft radius pitcher circle.
- Base runners can advance after a caught fly ball, if the runner touches the base they started on (This action is commonly referred to as a "Tag Up")
- Base runners can advance on a fly ball once it makes first contact with the defender. (Example: If the fielder attempts to catch a fly ball, bobbles the ball without the ball touching the ground, and then it is finally caught by that fielder or another fielder, the runner can "Tag-Up" as soon as the ball touches the first fielder attempting to catch the ball.)
- A runner cannot pass another runner; the original trailing base runner will be declared out.
- Teams may only replace a base runner twice during a game. Upon the second replacement of a specific base runner that player shall not return to the game. The pinch-runner is the last same sex person to make an out.
- In the event a base moved locations while a runner was advancing into a base, the runner should attempt touch the original location where the base was located, or the new location of the base if the runner was **unaware** that the base moved.
- Base runners can continue advancing on a thrown, kicked, deflected ball into the outfield.

Touching home base:

- To score a run, the runner may touch the white home plate outline OR the left "strike stripe"TM. This is allowed to reduce potential contact during force plays at home.

Base Coaches:

- A base coach is a team member who is stationed in foul territory near first or third base and directs the kicker and the runners.
- Base coaches may not make contact with a base runner while the play is active), if there is contact during the play the runner will be called out. After the play is over go ahead and high five (after a HR the play is not active, it's fine to high five then too)!

Base Running on Overthrows:

- An overthrown ball is any ball thrown, kicked, or deflected into foul territory while making a defensive play toward a player or base.
- Base runners can attempt to advance 1 base after an over throw into foul territory.
- The "1" extra base is the one past the base the runner(s) were heading toward at the time of the overthrow, unless the defense returns the ball into play attempting to get a runner out, then all runners may continue.
- The runner(s) can not induce play to continue by attempting to advance more than 1 base on an overthrow.
- When an overthrown ball is stopped in foul territory by an object or a player other than a defensive player, the play is immediately dead and the head ref will determine if forward progress occurred to award the runner an additional base.

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- If for some reason a live ball is considered 'out of play' (accidentally thrown over the fence or the ball rolls into an area where playing is hazardous (parking lot)), the kicker will be awarded two extra bases from the point when the call was made. This call is made at the Head Refs discretion.

4 Defense

4.1 Pitching

- The pitcher will begin the act of pitching on or within the ten (10) ft radius circle with the maximum distance of having 1 foot on the pitching circle that is behind the pitcher's plate.
- The pitcher must stay behind the pitcher's plate during the pitch. After pitch delivery the pitcher must follow the offside lines restriction for defensive positioning.
- No pitch will be immediately declared when the kicker or head ref are not ready for the pitch.

A pitch is consider illegal (when not kicked) and declared a ball if:

- A pitch is not made by hand.
- A pitch that exceeds the 12" height limit in the strike zone.
- A pitch that does not touch the ground at least twice prior to reaching home base.
- A pitch thrown completely outside the kicking box.

Intentional Walk:

- Any at-bat where three illegally thrown pitches (examples: outside the box, less than 2 bounces, illegally delivered) are made to the kicker and charged as balls without a legally thrown ball or strike. The kicker will be awarded 2 bases, all other runners advance only if forced to advance similar to a regular walk.

4.2 Defensive Players

- All players (except the catcher) must start in fair territory and behind the respective off-sides lines.
- Catcher must remain behind the kicker (cannot be beside the kicker) and has to have both feet inside the catchers box until the kicker makes contact with the ball.
- The catcher box is the same as the kicking box except it extends backward indefinitely.
- If the catcher is outside the catcher box when the ball is kicked, it is an encroachment.
 - Catcher Encroachment Clarification: The catcher doesn't have to be directly behind the kicker. The catcher can be latterly left or right, just not outside the box before the kicker makes contact. If the kicker starts way behind the kicking box the catcher can wait 2 feet behind the kicking box along the edge and stay out of the way of the kicker.
- For force plays at the plate, the catcher may touch the white home plate outline OR the right "strike stripe"™. This is allowed to reduce potential contact during force plays at home.
- Defensive Substitutes: One pitcher change is allowed per inning, other players are allowed to be substituted for during an inning for illness or injury.

Defensive Interference determined by the Head Home Base Ref:

- Defenders should always stay left of the first base line (in fair territory) when trying to catch the ball at first base.
- If the ball goes 'up the line' (more towards home plate or the area where the runner is still running in the runners safety alley), the defender shall leave the base rather than "stand in" or "reach into" the runners safety alley.
- If the defender is in the runners safety alley while the runner is within 15 feet of 1st base the runner will automatically be safe.

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- The base defender shall not block a base or home plate when making a defensive play at the base or plate, rather provide a path for a runner to reach the base and avoid collisions.

4.3 Outs

An offensive player is out when:

- They are contacted with the ball (except contact above the shoulders, unless the runner ducks, dives, slips into the throw or is sliding).
- The defense has control of the ball on a base before a forced advancing runner reaches the base. (If there is no force, then contact must be made with the runner in order to get an out).
 - A force is when a runner legally loses their right to occupy a base and therefore must advance to the next base by reason of the kicker becoming a runner and therefore must advance to first base. (A tag situation is not a Force.)
- A defender catches the ball in the air, the kicker is out.
 - Catching a ball then running into the Safe-T-Fence (which includes falling over it) is still an out. The play continues, so runners may advance per normal base running rules and the defenders should continue playing defense as a ball in play.
 - Exception: a ball caught after contacting the fence or pole in fair territory is a live ball, runners may keep advancing. Catching a ball off of a fence or pole is not an out (a fence or pole is like the ground).
- As determined by the Head Ref, if the fielder drops the ball while in the act of throwing the ball after a catch the ball shall be ruled to have been caught.
- A runner is out if they left their base early prior to first contact on a caught ball and the defense gets the ball to the runners starting base before the runner can return to “Tag-Up”.
 - A tag-up situation is considered an appeal play rather than a force. The kicker and other base runners that Tagged-Up correctly can advance and score as a normal runner.

4.4 Off-Sides Line

For male kickers:

- The Off-Sides Line is the perpendicular line from the pitching plate to the 1st & 3rd base lines. This makes a square which all defenders must start behind until the ball is kicked.

For female kickers:

- The Off-Sides Line is the dashed line running from 1st base to 3rd base and defenders have to start behind that line until the ball is kicked.

For the pitcher:

- The pitcher begins the act of pitching outside of the ten (10) ft radius circle.
- The pitcher does not stay behind the pitcher’s plate through the act of pitching.

For the catcher:

- The catcher must remain behind the kicker until the ball is kicked.

Off-Sides and Encroachment Violations:

- Each Violation: Kicking team has option on the violation. Take the pitch as a ball or take the result of the play. (In the event of a walk, other base runners advance only if forced.)