

# How to Play Kickball - Basic Rules

The most important rule - Have fun, kickball is about having fun and being social.

Below is the basic setup and rules for a kickball game, each section below has additional details and subtleties. For more detailed and complete full set see our full rulebook further down the page.

Kickball is a simple game consisting of two teams, bases, and a big red ball. Played like baseball, the goal is to score more runs than the opposing team. Here is a list of general rules/concepts central to gameplay, from team structure to other less discussed rules.

- 10 fielders.
- 7 innings (if time allows).
- Strikezone is 1 ft on all sides of the home-plate (and above)
- You can throw a runner out, but no headshots.
- one base on an overthrow.
- forced outs.

Once teams are assembled, one team takes the field and the other prepares to kick. Play begins when the pitcher rolls the ball to the kicker. Once the kicker kicks the ball, they run around the bases in order depending on how far they kick the ball - further kicks will afford the runner more time to traverse more bases.

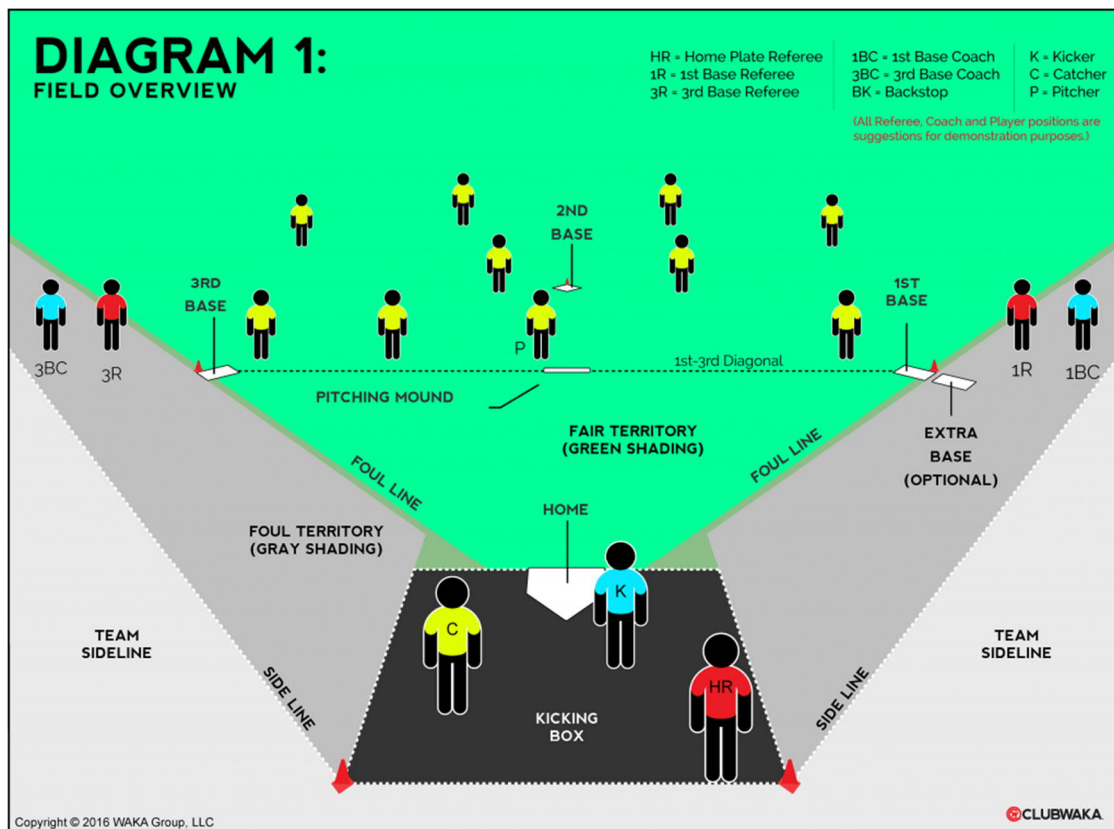
If the ball lands in the foul zone, the kicker must try again and the foul will count as a strike. If a fielding player catches the ball before it touches the ground, the kicker is automatically out. If a fielding player manages to get the ball and pass it to one of the players on the base the runner is going to before the runner gets there, the runner is out. If any fielding player manages to touch the runner with the ball while holding it in their hand, the runner is out.

When a player makes it around all bases and returns to the home base, the kicking team scores a run. The kicking team should aim to score as many runs as possible in an inning without getting out. If three of the kicking team's players get out, the teams switch positions. Once both teams have had a turn in the field and at the plate, the inning ends. Whichever team has the most points at the end of 7 innings (or fewer, if you want to play a shorter game) wins the game.

# Full Rulebook

## Kickball At A Glance

Kickball is a simple game consisting of two teams, bases, and a big red ball. Played like baseball, the object is to score more runs than the opposing team. In short, games are played with 10 fielders, 7 innings (if time allows), 2 base coaches, no head shots, one base on an overthrow, forced outs. The following rules will govern all kickball games. For the enjoyment of all, proper respect and civility is required of all participants toward one another. Fighting is not allowed or tolerated.



## Equipment

While participating, players must properly wear the official athletic clothing designated for their use. Athletic shoes are required. Metal cleats are not allowed. Players may wear protective equipment providing it does not offer the wearer an unfair performance advantage.

The official kickball is the red, measuring 10 inches in diameter when properly inflated to a pressure of 1.5 pounds per square inch.

## Player Eligibility

Ages 14 & above are eligible players. All participating players must appear on written lineups, reflecting that game's kicking order, to be exchanged between the captains of each team before play begins. A player removed from the kicking order for ejection, injury, illness, or any reason does not constitute an improper kicking order.

## Teams

Each game shall have two (2) participating teams: the Away team, which kicks first each inning, and the Home team, which kicks last each inning. While fielding, each team must field at least eight (8) and no more than ten (10) players. This must include one pitcher and one catcher at all times during the game.

For a given game, each team shall have one Captain and one Co-Captain who are jointly responsible for the team. The Captains may discuss calls with the Head Referee and must accept the Head Referee's final ruling. No other players besides the Captains should dispute calls with the Referees.

## Base Coaches

Two members of the team at kick may coach first and third base, switching as needed with other team members to remain in the proper written kicking order. Base coaches may not physically assist runners while the ball is in play.

## Regulation Games

Regulation games last seven (7) innings or no more than 55 minutes.

1. In the event of a tie score at the end of the game, the game shall be marked as a tie.
2. If the Home team already leads the game when the bottom of the final inning is reached, that team wins the game instantly and the game is over.
3. If the Home team takes the lead during the bottom of the final inning, that team wins instantly and the game is over.
4. No new inning may begin 50-minutes past the scheduled start time of a game. Any inning that has begun before the 50-minute mark may be completed in its entirety as long as it does not exceed 55 minutes. Any game still in progress at the 55-minute mark shall be called due to time and the final score will revert back to the previous completed inning.

A game that is called off by the Referee after three (3) full innings of play shall be considered a regulation game. The game score at the end of the last full inning shall determine the winner. Regulation games called off that end in a tie shall be marked as a tie. A game that is called off by the Referee for any reason before three (3) full innings of play shall not be considered a regulation game and a new game may be rescheduled.

## Pitching, Catching, and Fielding

Balls must be pitched by hand. There are no restrictions on pitching style. Proper Field Position must be maintained by all fielders while a pitch is in progress, and until the pitched ball reaches the kicker.

1. For Fielders: All fielders besides the catcher must remain in fair territory behind the 1st-3rd base diagonal;
2. For Pitchers: The pitcher must have at least one foot on or directly behind the pitching strip when releasing the ball;
3. For Catchers: The catcher must be positioned within or directly behind the kicking box and behind the horizontal plane of the kicker, parallel to the front edge of home plate.

## Kicking

All kicks must be made by foot or leg, below hip level. Any ball touched by the foot or leg below hip level is a kick. All kicks must occur at or behind home plate and within the kicking box.

## Running and Scoring

Runners must stay within the baseline. Any runner outside the baseline is out.

1. Runners may choose their path from one base to the next, and may follow a natural running arc;
2. Runners are free to change course to avoid interference with a fielder making a play;
3. When attempting to avoid a ball tag, runners may move no more than 4 feet out of their established path.

Obstruction. Fielders may be within the baseline when doing so is necessary to make an active play on the ball, but must otherwise stay out of the baseline. Runners hindered by any fielder within the baseline, not making an active play for the ball, shall be safe at the base to which they were running. Runners may choose to advance beyond this base while the ball is still in play.

Neither leading off base, nor stealing a base is allowed. A runner may advance once the ball is kicked. A runner off base when the ball is kicked is out.

Hitting a runner's neck or head with the ball is not allowed, except when the runner is sliding. Any runner hit in the neck or head shall be considered safe at the base they were running toward when the ball hits the runner. If the runner intentionally uses the head or neck to block the ball the runner is out.

A tag-up is a requirement to retouch or stay on a base until a kicked then caught ball is first touched by a fielder. After a tag-up a runner may advance. A runner failing to tag-up as required is out.

All ties will go to the runner. Runners traveling from home plate may overrun first base and may only be tagged out if actively attempting to advance to second base.

### Base Running on Overthrows;

1. an overthrow is a ball thrown, kicked, or deflected into foul territory while making a defensive play toward a player or base;
2. a runner may advance only one base beyond the base the runner is on or running toward when the ball travels into foul territory;
3. one base on an overthrow is a restriction on the runner – not an automatic right for the runner to advance;
4. if any fielder attempts to make an out prior to returning the ball to the pitcher, runners may commence base running.

Running past another runner is not allowed. The passing runner is out. A run scores when a runner touches home plate before the third out is made, EXCEPT that no run can score when the third out is made during a force play situation, or when the kicker is put out before touching first base. At the end of a game the team with the most runs wins.

When a base is displaced during play, any runner is safe while in contact with the base's original and correct location. All displaced bases should be restored at the end of each play.

## Strikes

A count of three (3) strikes is an out. A strike is:

1. a pitch that is not kicked that enters any part of the strike zone;
2. an attempted kick missed by the kicker inside or outside of the strike zone.

## Balls

A count of four (4) balls advances the kicker to first base, with the exception of four-pitch walks. During a single plate appearance, if a kicker is walked on exactly four pitches, without being pitched any strikes or any resulting foul balls, the kicker will be awarded a walk of two bases. Base runners shall only advance as far as they are forced by the kicker proceeding through 1st base to 2nd base.

A ball is:

1. a pitch outside of the strike zone where a kick is not attempted;
2. a pitched ball that does not touch the ground at least twice or roll before reaching the kicking box;
3. a pitched ball that exceeds one foot in height from the bottom of the ball at any time while passing through the kicking box, prior to reaching the kicker;
4. a pitched ball that is higher than one foot at the plate.

## Fairs and Fouls

A count of three (3) fouls is an out. Foul balls never count as strikes. A foul ball is a kicked ball first touching the ground in foul territory. A fair ball is a kicked ball landing and remaining in fair territory

## Outs

A count of three (3) outs by a team completes the team's half of the inning. An out is:

1. a count of three (3) strikes or three (3) fouls;
2. any kicked ball (fair or foul) that is caught by a fielder. Any part of the ball may incidentally touch the ground during the act of catching and still be ruled an out if the fielder first displays full control of the ball and maintains control after touching the ground;
3. a Force Out, being the tag by any part of a fielder's body of a base to which a runner is forced to run, before the runner arrives at the base, while the fielder has control of the ball. The ball may be touching the ground if the fielder displays full control of the ball while simultaneously tagging the base;
4. a runner touched by the ball or who touches the ball at any time while not on base while the ball is in play;
5. a kicker or runner that interferes with the ball;
6. a tag of a base by any part of a fielder's body, while the fielder has control of the ball before the runner originating at that base can tag-up as required due to a caught ball;
7. a runner off base when the ball is kicked;
8. a runner physically assisted by a team member during play;
9. any kicker that does not kick in the proper kicking line up;
10. a runner that passes another runner;
11. a runner outside of the baseline;

12. a runner who misses a base, as called by a Referee upon the conclusion of the play;
13. a runner who fails to properly tag up on a caught ball, as called by a Referee upon the conclusion of the play;
14. a runner touched by the ball while on a base they are forced to vacate by the kicker becoming a runner.

## Ball In Play

Once the pitcher has the ball in control and retains possession on the mound, the play ends. Runners who are off base at this time and in forward motion may advance only one base. Runners who are off base at this time and not in forward motion must return to the base from which they were running.

Interference is:

1. when any non-fielder or a runner touches or is touched by a ball in play in fair territory. This interference causes the play to end, and runners shall proceed to the base to which they were headed;
2. when any runner on or off base intentionally touches a ball or hinders a fielder. This interference causes the play to end, the runner to be out, and any other runners shall return to the base from which they came, unless forced to advance;
3. when any kicker intentionally touches a pitched ball by hand or arm before the pitch is called a Ball or Strike, or intentionally touches a kicked ball to render it foul. This interference causes the play to end, the kicker to be out, and any runners shall return to the base from which they came.

During any play where a ball is popped or deflates significantly, that play shall be replayed with a properly inflated ball.

## Injury and Substitution

In cases of injury or illness, a time-out may be requested for participant removal and replacement with a teammate as a substitute. If the participant later returns to play, the participant must be inserted in the same written kicking order position previously held.

Only runners who are injured while traveling to a base, and who successfully make it to a base, may be substituted. There are no other allowable runner substitutions. A runner may be substituted no more than twice during the game. Upon the second substitution, the player will be removed from the game and no longer be allowed to participate.

## Other

The spirit of these rules is to ensure a fun environment and participant enjoyment. All games are to be played in a sportsmanlike manner. If necessary, the Head Referee will address any inconsistencies, discrepancies, and misunderstandings in accordance with the spirit of these rules.

These rules are maintained at [mocva.net/kickball](http://mocva.net/kickball) and are subject to change without notice.