

Law 22 In-Goal

DEFINITIONS

In-goal is part of the ground as defined in Law 1 where the ball may be grounded by players from either team.

When attacking players are first to ground the ball in the opponents' in-goal, the attacking players score a try.

When defending players are first to ground the ball in in-goal, the defending players make a touch down.

A defending player who has one foot on the goal line or in the in-goal who receives the ball is considered to have both feet in in-goal.

22.1 GROUNDING THE BALL

There are two ways a player can ground the ball:

- (a) **Player touches the ground with the ball.** A player grounds the ball by holding the ball and touching the ground with it, in in-goal. 'Holding' means holding in the hand or hands, or in the arm or arms. No downward pressure is required.
- (b) **Player presses down on the ball.** A player grounds the ball when it is on the ground in the in-goal and the player presses down on it with a hand or hands, arm or arms, or the front of the player's body from waist to neck inclusive.



Grounding the ball



22.2 PICKING UP THE BALL

Picking up the ball from the ground is not grounding it. A player may pick up the ball in the in-goal and ground it elsewhere in the in-goal.

22.3 BALL GROUNDED BY AN ATTACKING PLAYER

Try. When an attacking player who is onside is first to ground the ball in the opponents' in-goal, the player scores a try. This applies whether an attacking or a defending player is responsible for the ball being in the in-goal.

22.4 OTHER WAYS TO SCORE A TRY

- (a) **Grounded on the goal line.** The goal line is part of the in-goal. If an attacking player is first to ground the ball on the opponents' goal line, a try is scored.
- (b) **Grounded against a goal post.** The goal posts and padding surrounding them are part of the goal line, which is part of in-goal. If an attacking player is first to ground the ball against a goal post or padding, a try is scored.



Scoring a try - grounded against the goal post

- (c) **Pushover try.** A scrum or ruck cannot take place in the in-goal. If a scrum or ruck is pushed into the in-goal, an attacking player may legally ground the ball as soon as the ball reaches or crosses the goal line and a try is scored.



- (d) **Momentum try.** If an attacking player with the ball is tackled short of the goal line but the player's momentum carries the player in a continuous movement along the ground into the opponents in-goal, and the player is first to ground the ball, a try is scored.
- (e) **Tackled near the goal line.** If a player is tackled near to the opponents' goal line so that this player can immediately reach out and ground the ball on or over the goal line, a try is scored.
- (f) In this situation, defending players who are on their feet may legally prevent the try by pulling the ball from the tackled player's hands or arms, but must not kick the ball.
- (g) **Player in touch or touch-in-goal.** If an attacking player is in touch or in touch-in-goal, the player can score a try by grounding the ball in the opponents' in-goal provided the player is not carrying the ball.



- (h) **Penalty try.** A penalty try is awarded if a try would probably have been scored but for foul play by the defending team. A penalty try is awarded if a try would probably have been scored in a better position but for foul play by the defending team.



- (i) A penalty try is awarded between the goal posts. The defending team may charge the conversion kick after a penalty try.

22.5 BALL GROUNDED BY A DEFENDING PLAYER

- (a) **Touch down.** When defending players are first to ground the ball in their in-goal, it results in a touch down.
- (b) **Player in touch or touch-in-goal.** If defending players are in touch-in-goal, they can make a touch down by grounding the ball in their in-goal provided they are not carrying the ball.
- (c) **Grounded against a goal post.** The goal posts and padding surrounding them are part of the goal line. If a defending player is first to ground the ball against a goal post or padding, the result is a touch down.

22.6 SCRUM OR RUCK IS PUSHED INTO IN-GOAL

A scrum or ruck can take place only in the field of play. Therefore, if a scrum or ruck is pushed across the goal line, a defending player may legally ground the ball as soon as the ball reaches or crosses the goal line. This results in a touch down.

22.7 RESTARTING AFTER A TOUCH DOWN

- (a) When an attacking player sends or carries the ball into the opponents' in-goal and it becomes dead there, either because a defender grounded it or because it went into touch-in-goal or on or over the dead ball line, a drop out is awarded.
- (b) If an attacking player knocks-on or throws-forward in the field of play and the ball goes into the opponents' in-goal and it is made dead there, a scrum is awarded where the knock on or throw forward happened.
- (c) If at a kick off the ball is kicked into the opponents' in-goal without having touched or been touched by a player and a defending player grounds it there or makes it dead without delay, the defending team have two choices:

To have a scrum formed at the centre, and they throw in the ball;
or
To have the other team kick off again.
- (d) If a defending player threw or took the ball into the in-goal, and a defending player grounded it, and there has been no infringement, play is restarted by a 5-metre scrum. The position of the scrum is in line with where the ball has been touched down. The attacking side throws in the ball.

**22.8 BALL KICKED DEAD IN IN-GOAL**

If a team kicks the ball through their opponents' in-goal, into touch-in-goal or on or over the dead ball line, except by an unsuccessful kick at goal or attempted dropped goal, the defending team has two choices:

To have a drop out,

or

To have a scrum at the place where the ball was kicked and they throw in.

22.9 DEFENDING PLAYER IN IN-GOAL

A defending player who has part of one foot in in-goal is considered to have both feet in in-goal.

22.10 BALL HELD UP IN-GOAL

When a player carrying the ball is held up in the in-goal so that the player cannot ground the ball, the ball is dead. A 5-metre scrum is formed. This would apply if play similar to a maul takes place in in-goal. The attacking team throws in the ball.

22.11 BALL DEAD IN IN-GOAL

- (a) When the ball touches the corner post, the touch-in-goal line or the dead ball line, or touches anything or anyone beyond those lines, the ball becomes dead. If the ball was played into in-goal by the attacking team, a drop out shall be awarded to the defending team. If the ball was played into in-goal by the defending team, a 5-metre scrum shall be awarded and the attacking team throws in the ball.

- (b) When a player carrying the ball touches the corner post, the touch-in-goal line, the dead ball line, or touches the ground beyond those lines, the ball becomes dead. If the ball was carried into in-goal by the attacking team, a drop out shall be awarded to the defending team. If the ball was carried into in-goal by the defending team, a 5-metre scrum shall be awarded and the attacking team throws in the ball.

- (c) When a player scores a try or makes a touch down, the ball becomes dead.



22.12 ATTACKING INFRINGEMENT WITH SCRUM PENALTY

If an attacking player commits an infringement in in-goal, for which the penalty is a scrum, for example, a knock on, play is restarted with a 5-metre scrum. The scrum is formed in line with the place of the infringement and the defending team throws in the ball.

22.13 DEFENDING INFRINGEMENT WITH SCRUM PENALTY

If a defending player infringes in in-goal, for which the penalty is a scrum, for example, a knock on, play is restarted with a 5-metre scrum. The scrum is formed in line with the place of the infringement and the attacking team throws in the ball.

22.14 DOUBT ABOUT GROUNDING

If there is doubt about which team first grounded the ball in the in-goal, play is re-started by a 5-metre scrum, in line with the place where the ball was grounded. The attacking team throws in the ball.

22.15 INFRINGEMENTS IN IN-GOAL

All infringements in the in-goal are treated as if they had taken place in the field of play.

A knock on or a throw forward in the in-goal results in a 5-metre scrum, opposite the place of infringement.

Penalty: For an infringement, the mark for a penalty kick or free kick cannot be in the in-goal.

When a penalty kick or free kick is awarded for an infringement in the In-goal, the mark for the kick is in the field of play, 5 metres from the goal line, opposite the place of infringement.

22.16 MISCONDUCT OR UNFAIR PLAY IN IN-GOAL

- (a) **Obstruction by the attacking team.** When a player charges or intentionally obstructs an opponent in the in-goal who has just kicked the ball, the opponent's team may choose to take the penalty kick either in the field of play, 5 metres from the goal line opposite the place of infringement, or where the ball landed.

If they make the second choice and the ball lands in or near touch, the mark for the penalty kick is 15 metres from the touchline, opposite where the ball went into touch or where it landed.

A try is disallowed and a penalty kick awarded if a try would probably not have been scored but for foul play by the attacking team.

- (b) **Foul play by the defending team.** The referee awards a penalty try if a try would probably have been scored but for foul play by the defending team.

The referee awards a penalty try if a try would probably have been scored in a better position but for foul play by the defending team. A penalty try is awarded between the goal posts. The defending team may charge the conversion kick after a penalty try.

A player who prevents a try being scored through foul play must either be cautioned and temporarily suspended or sent off.

- (c) **Any other foul play.** When a player commits any other foul play in the in-goal while the ball is out of play, the penalty kick is awarded at the place where the game would otherwise have restarted.

Penalty: Penalty Kick.