

# INTRODUCING RUGBY

**BEGINNERS, NON-CONTACT, ALL AGES**



## Philosophy

Program emphasis is on Fun, Learning, Camaraderie & Teamwork, and Personal Development in a Safe Environment. Building a rugby culture in Virginia, player by player, providing a rugby experience to boys and girls of all ages.

## About Rugby

Played in over 120 countries worldwide

- Included in Summer Olympics 2016
- Rugby World Cup 2015 starts Sept. USA included. (3.9 Billion event viewers!!!)
- Youth Associations: 12 youth rugby clubs draw from Fairfax County
- Fastest growing team sport in the USA

## Why do P.E. teachers love rugby?

- Easy to learn
  - Minimal instruction prior to exercises, requires no prior knowledge of the game to teach!
- Level playing field – most kids have never played before, all start out with equal footing
- ALL PLAYERS run, pass, and score
- Can be played in any open space; indoor or outdoor
- No set number of players, very flexible for the gym class
- SAFE and FUN sporting experience, NO CONTACT
- Cost-effective: Minimal Equipment (a ball and some cones!)
- CO-ED: many girls play in the Rugby Virginia co-ed teams!

## Attributes developed

- |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
|  Conditioning    |  Communication |  Teamwork              |  Technique (Safety) |
|  Decision-Making |  Leadership    |  Hand/eye coordination |  |

## Resources for P.E. teachers

We will provide continued support for your program. We will help grow your programs by offering advice, assistance and additional games & activities. We could come over to your school to help start up the program.

To view today's program details and full descriptions, go here: [www.gfrugby.com/pe.htm](http://www.gfrugby.com/pe.htm)

View the Rookie Rugby Program by USA Rugby: <http://usarugby.org/rookie-rugby>

Rugby in Virginia managed by Rugby VA: <http://rugbyvirginia.com>

For more information, to help develop rugby in Virginia, or to find a club for kids near where you live, please contact us at: [gary@greatfallsrugby.com](mailto:gary@greatfallsrugby.com)

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Here follows a sample program for a full week / 90 minutes a day. It is meant to be flexible. At any point other games and drills can be inserted or substituted. Target: 35+ kids with 5 or 6 teachers.

## Day One

### Introduction to Rugby (15 minutes)

Bring the students together and introduce the history of rugby for no longer than 5 minutes. Keep a rugby ball in your hand for the introduction. Get the students engaged by asking questions – expand on the below how you wish:

- *'Rugby is an old sport, anyone know which country invented rugby?' – Answer: England*
- *'Rugby was invented when a boy playing soccer, picked up the ball and began to run with it. A player from the other team did not think that was fair and tackled him. That is when rugby was invented'*
- *'Rugby came over to America in the early 1800's. It was played on college campuses all across America. In the early 1900's they started to change the rules. After a bunch of rule changes, football was the new sport'*
- Recap:
  - What country invented rugby?
  - What sport did rugby come from?
  - What sport came from rugby?
- Introduce the Rugby Ball: show the kids the ball: "It is fatter than a football and more pointy than a soccer ball. Everyone gets a chance to carry it and pass, catch and score".
- Introduce Catching, Passing and Running with the Ball
  - *Introduce the catch:* "Catching the rugby ball is a fun challenge. Everyone hold your hands up in front of your chest, with your thumbs and **fingers forming a 'W'**, and fingers in the air. This means you are ready to catch the ball. We also do not want to pass the ball to any players that do not have their hands up, ready to catch." See "Receiving the Pass" Skill Card here:  
<http://www.greatfallsrugby.com/coaching/ReceivingThePass.pdf>
  - *Introduce the pass:* Get a volunteer to help you – "In rugby we do not pass like football (demonstrate), we do not pass like basketball (demonstrate), we pass like rugby (demonstrate). This pass is called a scoop or shovel pass, and you make the motion like you are digging a hole with a shovel." *Demonstrate and get kids to pass*

5 min

10 min

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amongst themselves. Quickly and loosely, groups of around three. Get them to pass correctly. Explain that there is a spin-pass as well, but first master the basic pass.

**See "Passing Basics" Skill Card here:**

<http://www.greatfallsrugby.com/coaching/PassingBasics.pdf>

- *Introduce running with the ball:* - simply show the kids how to hold the ball while running. No need to get everyone running with ball yet, we will develop this further during the games later.
- Fingers are spread on each side of the ball
- Ball is carried at chest
- Elbows are tucked in

**See "Running With the Ball" Skill Card here:**

<http://www.greatfallsrugby.com/coaching/RunningWithTheBall.pdf>

### Passing basics and other relays (20 minutes)

Develop passing/catching/running basics further with the games below. *Call for the ball! Pass backwards! Use the skills learnt earlier!*

- **CIRCLE PASSING:** Players form a large circle with about 2 yards between each. Pressure passing (10 minutes).

**Introduction & Focus:** A simple passing game, we introduce pressure situations to test the players. **Reinforce the following:**

- Build towards increasing speed of pass
- Maintain form and technique of previous games

**Example:** Each teacher to a circle. Start by having players attempt to complete passes around the entire circle without dropping the ball. First facing inwards, then outwards. Pass left, pass right. Maybe change during game. If possible, see which can do it quickest. Once complete: **progression to:** "runner vs passer" game: one player in the circle with ball, he passes left, then sprints around the outside of the circle while other players pass the ball around the circle. Passer aims to beat the passers.

- **BASIC PASSING GAME:** In a coned grid 15yd/15yd. Players pass the ball between themselves *in a line* while running slowly from one end to the other (10 minutes).

**Introduction & Focus:** Introduce this game as an introduction to running, passing and catching the ball. This is where it all starts. The kids were previously shown these basics: now **reinforce the following:**

15 min

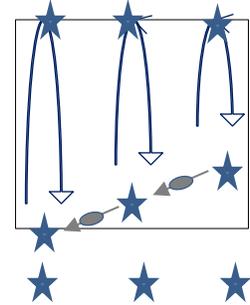
25 min

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- Pass rugby-style: 'shovel or scoop pass,
- Catch hands in front of chest/fingers 'W' (stretch out to one side to receive ball)
- Hold ball with both hands, transfer to other side and shovel pass to next person,
- Players must position themselves (after passing) to receive the ball back. Slow down, position behind the person they just passed to.



*Example.* With our numbers do can do several grids. Each teacher take a grid; depending on numbers; simple relay up the grid, hand over to next team, and so forth. Perhaps do 4x players instead of 3 shown here.

Progress to a race between grids.

### Simply fun games (10 minutes)

- ***BULLDOG (SHARKS & MINNOWS):*** Old school Bulldog: the whole group participates in a grid of approximately 20/20 yards) (10 minutes).

*Introduction & Focus:* We will use this game to promote running, vision, evasion, and pressure passing (at *progression*). Reinforce the following:

- Focus here is mostly evasion. Keep eyes on 'bulldogs' and choose moment to dart though to other side.
- 'Bulldogs': focus on one player at a time. Follow & keep in front of him/her.
- Progression (with balls and passing): look to offload, correctly and with form discussed, prior to 'contact' with 'bulldogs';.

*Example:* select 2x 'bulldogs' to stand in the middle of the play grid. All remaining players stand at one end of the grid. The aim of the game is to run from one end of the grid to the other, without being 2-hand tagged around the waist by the bulldogs. When a player is caught, they become a bulldog themselves. The winner is the last player 'free'.

*Progression:* start as above; but introduce a few balls to the runners; and Bulldogs *can only tag a ball-carrier*. This encourages PASSING.

***View sample here: our game is based on this but without the rugby balls:***

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vzM1gUmeGQE&feature=share&list=PL38C9469639AABD89>

35 min

(5 min water)

50 min

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Building skill and awareness (20 minutes)

**SMALL SIDE TAG GAMES: 1VS1, 3VS1 ETC.** Starting to put it all together.

**Introduction & Focus:** Putting their skills to the test one on one and then working together in small teams will help prepare kids for an actual rugby game. We are starting to build skills, awareness and vision. **Reinforce the following:**

**Make sure they are using passing, catching and running form from 1<sup>st</sup> lesson!**

- Running: Fingers are spread on each side of the ball, Ball is carried at chest, Elbows are tucked in
  - Pass: rugby-style: 'shovel or scoop pass
  - Catch: hands in front of chest/fingers 'W' (stretch out to one side to receive ball)
- **SIMPLE 1 VS 1:** coned grid 10yd/10yd. Start with a simple 1vs1: ball-carrier attacks defender, tries to evade, and score a try at the end-line. Defender: must do 2 handed tag around waist. One chance each (10 mins).

**Focus on:**

- Ball-carrier approach defender on small steps, feint, left-right, ball in 2 hands.
- Defender, also on small steps, ready to follow feint.

Set up split evenly per teacher. Kids run through quickly, 1 vs 1, next two go, fast.

Video: this is standard stuff but this link shows an example of 1vs1 and 2vs2:

<http://vimeo.com/18094933>

- **PROGRESS TO 3VS1, DRAW & PASS:** Same 10/10yd grid. Three vs. 1 defender (10 min).

First do demonstration, walk through the game yourself or use one of the helpers. The goal here is to: hold ball in two hands, run at defender and move to their outside in order to force them to defend you (and follow you). This opens up space for your team-mate; look at team-mate, pass at chest height in front of him. Then follow and continue support of person you passed the ball to. See here for the 'draw & pass':

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FQtu9jZG7Ds&feature=share&list=PL38C9469639AABD89>

50 min

60 min

70 min

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Putting it all together (20+ minutes)

**SCRIMMAGE (SIMPLE TOUCH RUGBY):** Kids apply the skills they learned earlier in class. Simple 2-hand touch around the waist. Tagged player must pass within 3-count, he must not over-run the tag spot (3 steps maximum then pass!). Tagger and defenders, after tag retreat to your side and allow continuity. Unlimited tags until infringement.

Review and Wrap

Quick review/questions - everything that you went over throughout the training and emphasize some of the following: what a try is and how many points it is worth, the name of the USA National Teams, and anything else that you may have covered, etc. Or anything you think is relevant.

Day Two

Review (10 minutes)

Bring the students together again review some of the basics. Spend a couple of minutes on the Fun Facts from yesterday, talk about the new day, then a good 5 minutes asking for feedback from yesterday:

- Show me catching-ready hand position
- Someone be the coach and show how you get 2 people to pass correctly, what to look for ..
- Show how you run with ball
- Etc – and anything you want to include here ...

The rest of the day, and subsequent days; are taken up with advancing some of the games we've already introduced; adding progressions, a higher degree of difficulty, a little more risk, increasing pressure, adding opposition, .... and challenging the kids a little more each day.

90 min

0 min

10 min

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## Reinforce Passing & Handling (20 minutes)

- **CIRCLE PASSING:** Players form a large circle with about 2 yards between each. Pressure passing (10 minutes). See day one.
- **BASIC PASSING GAME:** In a coned grid 15yd/15yd. See day one. Cant get enough of this. (10 minutes).

## Simply fun games (20 minutes)

- **RATS & RABBITS:** All kids participate at the same time, in pairs, reaction game! (10 min).

Introduction & Focus: Kids switch from offense to defense in this game of quick reactions. This will better equip the students for game-like, pressure situations. Reinforce the following:

- Don't cheat! Move only when instructed.
- Prepare your body for explosive movement

Example: All kids at same time, two long equal lines, in pairs facing each other, 2 yards apart. Behind each line of kids is a 'home base' about 15 yards away. Coach calls 'Rabbits' or 'Rats' and that whole line turns and sprints to 'home base'. Object is for other line to catch opposite player before they reach the base. Progression: kids sit back to back, lie on stomach, back, etc.

View image here: [http://www.irishrugby.ie/playrugby/rats\\_and\\_rabbits.php](http://www.irishrugby.ie/playrugby/rats_and_rabbits.php)

- **STUCK IN THE MUD:** Make the BALL do the work! (10 min). In a coned area no bigger than a normal classroom, nominate two players as the attack team, the rest as runners. (might be better to make 2 grids with numbers we have). The attack team has one ball. Their objective is to touch one of the runners while holding the ball, but they are only allowed to pass the ball, not run with it. When touched, a runner joins the attack team. The game continues until all the runners are captured. What this does is make ball carriers focus on passing with speed, under pressure.

20 min

30 min

(water 5 mins)

45 min

55 min

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## Putting it all together (20+ minutes)

- **2VS1, DRAW & PASS:** Same 10/10yd grid. TWO attackers vs. 1 defender (10 min).

Before we do scrumage; progress from 3v1 to 2v1: First do demonstration, walk through the game yourself or use one of the helpers. The goal here is to: hold ball in two hands, run at defender and move to their outside in order to force them to defend you (and follow you). This opens up space for your team-mate; look at team-mate, pass at chest height in front of him. Then follow and continue support of person you passed the ball to.

- **SCRUMMAGE (SIMPLE TOUCH RUGBY):** Kids apply the skills they learned earlier in class. Simple 2-hand touch around the waist. Tagged player must pass within 3-count, he must not over-run the tag spot (3 steps maximum then pass!). Tagger and defenders, after tag retreat to your side and allow continuity. Unlimited tags until infringement.

## Review and Wrap

Quick review/questions - everything that you went over throughout the training and emphasize some of the following: what a try is and how many points it is worth, the name of the USA National Teams, and anything else that you may have covered, etc. Or anything you think is relevant.

## Day Three

## Review (10 minutes)

Bring the students together again review some of the basics. Spend a couple of minutes on yesterday's activities, talk about the new day, then a good 5 minutes asking for feedback from yesterday:

- Show me catching-ready hand position
- Someone be the coach and show how you get 2 people to pass correctly, what to look for ..
- Show how you run with ball
- Etc – and anything you want to include here ...

65 min

90 min

0 min

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The rest of the day, and subsequent days; are taken up with advancing some of the games we've already introduced; adding progressions, a higher degree of difficulty, a little more risk, increasing pressure, adding opposition, .... and challenging the kids a little more each day.

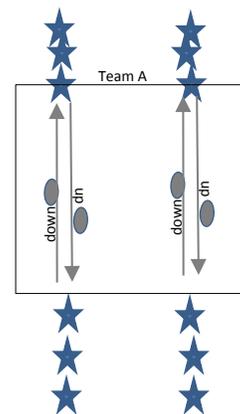
## Reinforce Passing & Handling (20 minutes)

- **FOLLOW-MY-LEADER**: run in single file, first player with the ball, 2<sup>nd</sup> player calls, the ball-carrier stops, presents ball to next player who takes ball and continues running ahead. First player joins the back of the line, continue/repeat .... Relays, compete.
- **BASIC RUNNING W/BALL & PICKING UP BALL GAME**: In a coned grid 15yd/15yd. Players learn to control the ball, and to pick it up while running at pace (10 minutes).

**Introduction & Focus**: Continuing introduction to running and controlling the ball. It is very important to be able to pick a ball up while running at pace. **Reinforce the following**:

- When placing ball use control to place it, don't throw / drop it. Ball should not move.
- For place and pick: bend knees.
- For pick: use one hand to scoop (under ball) other to control on top.

**Example**: with our group: use grids proportionate to our numbers and create two teams (even if one team/grid has two lines – see pic to right), with kids on each side of grid to allow relay. On command first player of each team runs out 10 yds (hold ball correctly), places the ball on the ground (don't let ball roll; bend knees and PLACE on ground), then continue running without the ball to the end line, tags team-mate who runs out, to pick the ball up with two hands, bend knees (scoop the ball), run and give a "gut pass" to the next player in line. Continue until each does both put-down and pick-up. Declare winner.



## Simply fun games (20 minutes)

**HOT POTATO**: Large grid, two equal teams (our group: make several groups, so we can have around 5 per team = 10 kids in a 15/15 yard grid). Players run around the grid in any direction trying to complete as many passes as possible in the time allowed.

20 min

30 min

(water 5 mins)

45 min

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Add degree of difficulty: a player must pass the ball to someone other than whom they received the pass from. Other team tries to intercept. Try and figure out the best 2 teams and have them play in front of everyone?

- **RATS & RABBITS**: All kids participate at the same time, in pairs, reaction game! (10 min).

See Day 2. Add different variations.

### Putting it all together (20+ minutes)

- **SCRIMMAGE (SIMPLE TOUCH RUGBY)**: Kids apply the skills they learned earlier in class. Simple 2-hand touch around the waist. Tagged player must pass within 3-count, he must not over-run the tag spot (3 steps maximum then pass!). Tagger and defenders, after tag retreat to your side and allow continuity. Unlimited tags until infringement.

### Review and Wrap

Quick review/questions - everything that you went over throughout the training and emphasize some of the following: what a try is and how many points it is worth, the name of the USA National Teams, and anything else that you may have covered, etc. Or anything you think is relevant.

## Day Four

### Review (10 minutes)

Bring the students together again review some of the basics. Spend a couple of minutes on yesterday's activities, talk about the new day, then a good 5 minutes asking for feedback from yesterday:

60 min

70 min

(water 5 mins)

90 mins

0 min

10 min

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## Reinforce Passing & Handling (20 minutes)

- **FOLLOW-MY-LEADER**: run in single file, first player with the ball, 2<sup>nd</sup> player calls, the ball-carrier stops, presents ball to next player who takes ball and continues running ahead. First player joins the back of the line, continue/repeat .... Relays, compete.?

See previous day. Mix it up.

- **FOUR-CORNERS**: adding some complexity. 12/12 yard grid, 4 or 5 kids on each corner, they run diagonally to opposing corner, using 2 balls, and:
  - Straight across, pop-pass to team-mate,
  - Out to middle, pass to left, continue to end, etc
  - As above, to right,
  - Run a few yards then roll to his opposing player to collect from ground - continue

## Simply fun games (10 minutes)

- **BULLDOG (SHARKS & MINNOWS)**: Old school Bulldog: the whole group participates in a grid of approximately 20/20 yards) (10 minutes).

See Day 1

- **CASTLE**: smaller 5/5 yard grid within a large 25/25 yard grid. Two equal teams of around 8 each. One player (who has the ball) of Team A goes in middle grid. He has to pass ball to a team-mate while the opposing team try prevent pass or intercept. They can't go into the grid. Every time the ball is cleanly caught, the catcher runs into inner-grid; and tries to find another team-mate to pass to, .. etc. Try and get all your team-mates into grid.

## Building skill and awareness (15 minutes)

**SMALL SIDE TAG GAMES: 1VS1, 3VS1 ETC.** putting it all together.

- **SIMPLE /VARIOUS**: continue small-side games like 2v1, 3v1, as you see fit for 15 minutes.

20 min

30 min  
(water 5 mins)

45 min

55 mins

70 mins

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## Putting it all together (20+ minutes)

- **SCRIMMAGE (SIMPLE TOUCH RUGBY):** Kids apply the skills they learned earlier in class. Simple 2-hand touch around the waist. Tagged player must pass within 3-count, he must not over-run the tag spot (3 steps maximum then pass!). Tagger and defenders, after tag retreat to your side and allow continuity. Unlimited tags until infringement.

## Review and Wrap

Quick review/questions - everything that you went over throughout the training and emphasize some of the following: what a try is and how many points it is worth, the name of the USA National Teams, and anything else that you may have covered, etc. Or anything you think is relevant.

## Day Five

## Review (10 minutes)

Bring the students together again review some of the basics. Spend a couple of minutes on yesterday's activities, talk about the new day, then a good 5 minutes asking for feedback from yesterday:

## Reinforce Passing & Handling (20 minutes)

- **FOUR-CORNERS:** adding some complexity. 12/12 yard grid, 4 or 5 kids on each corner, they run diagonally to opposing corner, using 2 balls, and:
  - Straight across, pop-pass to team-mate,
  - Out to middle, pass to left, continue to end, etc
  - As above, to right,
  - Run a few yards then roll to his opposing player to collect from ground - continue
- **BASIC PASSING GAME:** In a coned grid 15yd/15yd. (RUNNING IN LINES) Players pass the ball between themselves in a line while running slowly from one end to the other (10 minutes). – SEE DAY ONE.

90 mins

0 min

10 min

20 mins

30 min

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30

## Simply fun games (30 minutes)

- **RELAY DAY!** Set up several relays. Depending on total numbers, equal teams of around 8. Relay races. Some examples:
  - Out to cone with ball, 'score a try', sprint back and hand off ball,
  - Out to cone while throwing ball up & catching while running, and back,
  - Egg and knees race – 1<sup>st</sup> puts the ball between his legs and waddles out to the cone. He "lays the egg" and then returns. The other player then runs out. He puts the ball between his legs and then waddles back.
  - Out to cone and back through legs of team,
  - Out to cone and back, collects second by holding on, goes out and back to collect third etc

60 min

(water 5 m)

65 min

## Putting it all together (20+ minutes)

- **SCRIMMAGE (SIMPLE TOUCH RUGBY):** Kids apply the skills they learned earlier in class. Simple 2-hand touch around the waist. Tagged player must pass within 3-count, he must not over-run the tag spot (3 steps maximum then pass!). Tagger and defenders, after tag retreat to your side and allow continuity. Unlimited tags until infringement.

85 mins

90 mins

## Review and Wrap

Quick review/questions - everything that you went over throughout the training and emphasize some of the following: what a try is and how many points it is worth, the name of the USA National Teams, and anything else that you may have covered, etc. Or anything you think is relevant.

90 mins