



UNDER 15S · THE LINEOUT TAKES OFF

LIFTING IN THE LINEOUT & THE 50:22

A guide for U15 parents — what is new this season, how your child is kept safe in the air, and what the referee is looking for.

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Under 15s is the season your child's rugby starts to look like the game on television. For the first time players may be **lifted** in the lineout, the **50:22** kick arrives, and restarts from in-goal follow the adult laws. The lineout is still **uncontested**, though: the team throwing in must win the ball, so jumpers and lifters can learn the skill without anyone competing in the air. This guide explains it all in plain English.

WHERE THE RULES IN THIS GUIDE COME FROM

From U15, age grade rugby in England is played to the **World Rugby Laws of the Game, including the World Rugby Under 19 variations**, plus the RFU's own changes in **RFU Regulation 15, Appendix 9 — U15–U18 Variations to the Laws**. That page reads “Effective from Friday 1st August 2025”; the RFU's 2026/27 Regulation 15 did not republish it, so it is still the current version. Where a detail comes from RugbyReferee.net's 2026/27 summary sheet or the RFU's lineout FAQ, we say so. If anything here disagrees with the RFU, **the RFU is right**. Where we give coaching advice rather than a rule, we say so. Links are at the back.

WHAT IS NEW AT U15

1 LIFTING

The RFU says **lifting and supporting is permitted** at U15: team mates may hold a jumper until they are back on the ground. The lineout stays **uncontested** — see pages 2 and 3.

2 THE 50:22

Kick from your own half so the ball bounces into touch inside the opposition 22, and **your team throws in** at the lineout. It applies from U15 — see page 4.

3 TRY-LINE DROP-OUTS

When attackers take the ball into in-goal and do not score, play restarts with a **drop-out from the try line**, as in adult rugby — see page 4.

4 THE BIGGER GAME

30 minutes each half, a **size 5** ball, a full-size pitch, all kicking allowed, and a **6-minute** sin bin. The match ends if the points difference goes past 50.

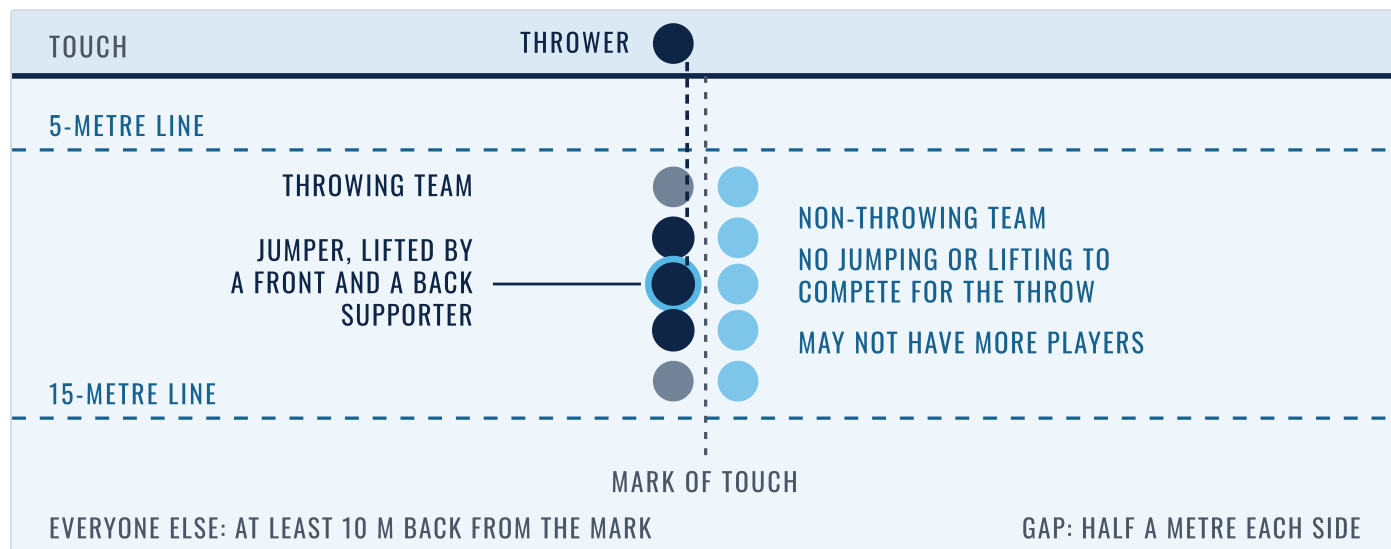
WHY THE LINEOUT IS BUILT UP STEP BY STEP

The RFU introduces the lineout in stages: **uncontested with no lift at U14, uncontested with lifting at U15, and fully contested from U16**. Lifting is **permitted, not compulsory** — teams lift when their players are confident and competent. These lineout and scrum changes are written for **U15 boys**; girls' age bands go from U14 straight to U16, and the RFU encourages girls' teams to bring in the lift at the start of their U16 season.

THE RULES

THE U15 LINEOUT

A lineout restarts the game after the ball goes into touch. Two lines of players stand side by side, and a thrower sends the ball straight down the gap between them. At U15 only the team throwing in may jump for it.



Seen from above. The lines stand between the 5-metre and 15-metre lines, half a metre either side of the mark of touch (World Rugby Law 18.10). Players not in the lineout stay at least 10 metres back (Law 18.35).

HOW THE UNCONTESTED LINEOUT WORKS

WHO WINS IT	The lineout is uncontested at U15 (Appendix 9). The team throwing in must win the ball — if the throw is straight and one of their players catches it cleanly (RFU lineout FAQ).
LIFTING	Lifting and supporting is permitted: a player may bind to a jumper until they have returned to the ground (Appendix 9). Only the side throwing in lifts (RugbyReferee.net). Lifting is allowed, not compulsory.
THE CONTEST	The other team may contest for the ball only once the catcher has safely returned to the ground and the ball is at chest height . Going for it earlier gives away a penalty (RugbyReferee.net 2026/27).
MISSED CATCH	A straight throw that goes over the intended catcher is still uncontested — the throwing team must still win it. If the ball hits the ground, it may then be contested (RFU lineout FAQ).
MAULS	A maul can form from the lineout, but the catcher must be back safely on the ground before the other team can go for the ball (RFU lineout FAQ).
NUMBERS	The throwing team decides the maximum. At least two per team; the other team may have fewer, not more (Law 18.11–18.14; the FAQ gives a maximum of thirteen).
WHEN IT ENDS	When the ball, or a player holding it, leaves the lineout, goes inside the 5-metre line or beyond the 15-metre line; when a ruck or maul moves fully past the mark of touch; or the ball becomes unplayable (Law 18.38).

WORLD RUGBY · LAW 18 AND RUGBY READY

LIFTING SAFELY

A lift puts a player high above the grass, so the laws around it are all about control: when a jumper may go up, where they may be held, and how they must come down.

THE GOLDEN RULE — WORLD RUGBY LAW 18.29(C)

Players who lift or support a team mate “must lower that player to the ground safely as soon as the ball is won by either team.”

Rugby Ready: support players are responsible for bringing jumpers to ground safely.

WHAT THE LAWS SAY

NOT TOO SOON	No one may jump, be lifted or be supported before the ball has left the thrower's hands. FREE KICK (Law 18.20)
WHERE TO GRIP	Lifters may take hold of the jumper before the throw, but not below the shorts from behind or below the thighs from the front. FREE KICK (Law 18.19)
COMING DOWN	As soon as the ball is won, by either team, the jumper is lowered safely — never dropped or left in the air. FREE KICK (Law 18.29c)
HANDS OFF	No contact with an opponent before the ball is thrown in. PENALTY (Law 18.21)

WHO DOES WHAT IN THE LIFT

Key points from World Rugby's Rugby Ready: The lineout.

IN THE AIR

THE JUMPER

- ✓ Explode upwards from a **two-footed** take-off
- ✓ Keep a **long body shape** so the lifters keep control
- ✓ Talk to the lifters about coming down
- ✓ Land on **two feet**, knees bent

ON THE GROUND

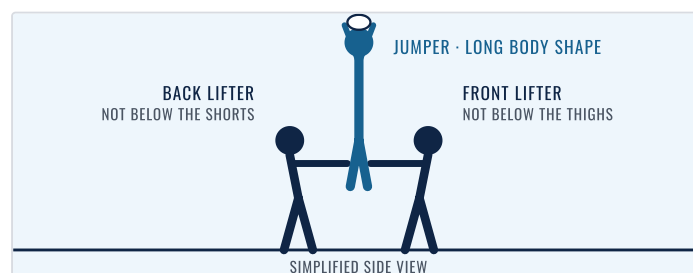
THE LIFTERS

- ✓ Wide, stable base, feet shoulder-width apart
- ✓ Squat with a **flat back**, chest up
- ✓ Lift with **leg drive and locked arms**, not the back
- ✓ Bring the jumper down safely and under control

EVERYONE

NEVER

- ✗ Knock a player in the air off balance
- ✗ Knock a lifter off balance while they hold a jumper
- ✗ Leave a jumper stranded mid-air
- ✗ Use a lifter to block the other team



COACHING ADVICE

Rugby Ready's coaching tips start with progressions: lifters first practise lifting **tackle bags and rucking pads**, using their legs rather than their backs, before they ever lift a team mate. **Lifting is taught at training, never at home.**

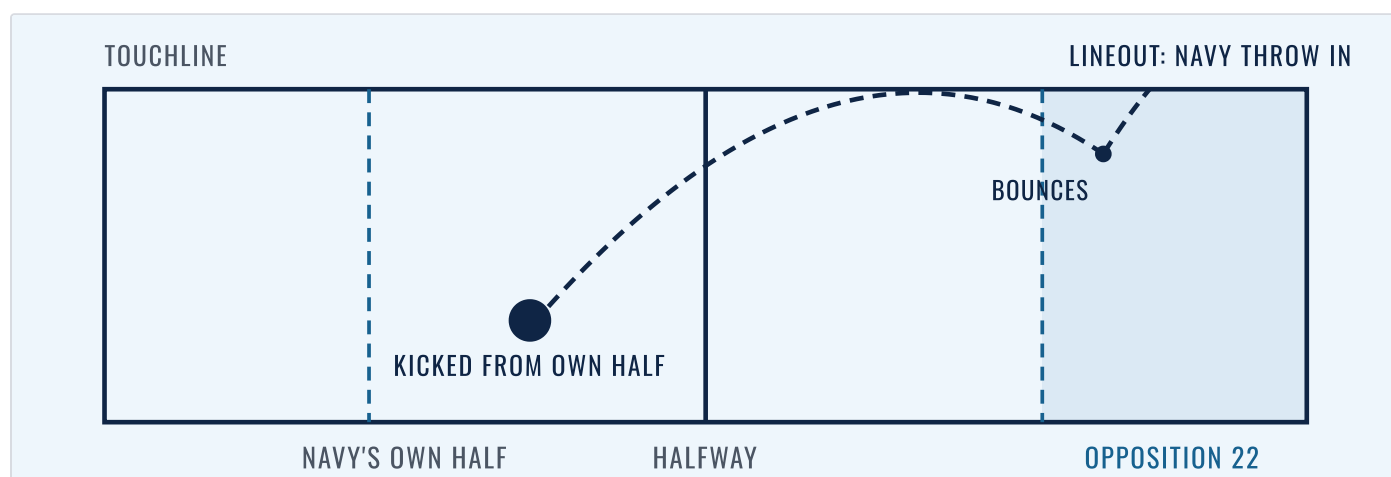
KICKING AND RESTARTS

THE 50:22 AND TRY-LINE DROP-OUTS

WHAT A 50:22 IS — WORLD RUGBY, LAWS OF THE GAME

"When a ball is kicked by a player in their own half, and it goes indirectly into touch in the opposition's 22."

Normally the other team throws in after the ball goes into touch. After a 50:22 the **kicking team throws in** at the lineout, where the ball reached the touchline (Law 18.8).



Kicked from navy's own half, it bounces, then crosses the touchline inside the opposition 22.

IT IS A 50:22 WHEN

- ✓ The kicker is in **their own half**
- ✓ The ball lands in the field and **bounces** into touch inside the **opposition 22**
- ✓ The ball came from open play

IT IS NOT A 50:22 WHEN

- ✗ The kick goes straight out without bouncing
- ✗ It is a kick-off or any kind of restart kick
- ✗ The team **passed the ball back** into its own half and there was no tackle, ruck or maul, and no opponent touched it there — then the other team throws in

TRY-LINE DROP-OUTS

From U15, in-goal restarts follow the adult laws. A **try-line drop-out** is a drop kick taken on or behind the defending team's try line, and it must cross the **5-metre line** (Law 12.12–12.13). RugbyReferee.net's 2026/27 sheet lists these as try-line drop-outs when attackers took the ball into in-goal and did not score:

- The ball is **grounded by the defence** in in-goal
- An attacker is **held up** and cannot ground the ball
- An attacker **knocks on** in in-goal
- The ball carrier is tackled out over the touch-in-goal or dead-ball line

22 DROP-OUT

Still used after a **missed penalty goal or drop goal**, and when a kick in open play goes dead through in-goal without being touched (Law 12.11).

5-METRE SCRUM

A knock-on from the field of play into in-goal (defence throw in), or when defenders take the ball into their own in-goal and it does not come out (attack throw in) — RugbyReferee.net 2026/27.

KICKING

All kicking is allowed, including kicks at goal, box kicks and drop goals. Team mates in front of the kicker are offside and must retreat — offside at kicks is as World Rugby's laws.



FOR VOLUNTEER REFEREES — AND CURIOUS PARENTS

REFEREEING THE U15 LINEOUT

This routine works through a lineout in the order things happen. The routine is practical advice; the rules it enforces are World Rugby's Law 18 and the RFU's U15 variations.

- 1 FORM IT.** Two straight lines, half a metre either side of the mark, between the 5- and 15-metre lines. At least two per team; the other team never has more. Formed within 30 seconds (a World Rugby Global Law Trial).
- 2 EVERYONE ELSE BACK.** Players not in the lineout at least 10 metres from the mark of touch.
- 3 WATCH THE GRIPS.** No lifting before the ball leaves the thrower's hands; no grip below the shorts from behind or the thighs from the front; no contact with opponents.
- 4 THE THROW.** Straight down the mark of touch and at least 5 metres. At U15 the RFU FAQ asks for advantage to the other team where it is safe, so throwers still learn under pressure.
- 5 NO CONTEST IN THE AIR.** The other team must not jump, lift or compete for the throw.
- 6 DOWN SAFELY.** The jumper is lowered as soon as the ball is won. Say it out loud if you need to.
- 7 THEN PLAY ON.** The other team may contest once the catcher is safely on the ground and the ball is at chest height.

FREE KICK FOR

- The other team competing for the throw — or a **penalty** if there is foul play (RFU lineout FAQ)
- Jumping or lifting before the ball is thrown
- Gripping below the shorts or thighs
- Not lowering the jumper safely once the ball is won

PENALTY FOR

- Contesting before the catcher is safely down with the ball at chest height (RugbyReferee.net 2026/27)
- Contact with an opponent before the throw
- Non-participants offside at the lineout

THE REST OF THE U15 GAME AT A GLANCE

SCRUM

Eight a side (3-4-1), “Crouch, Bind, Set”, pushing limited to 1.5 metres. The throwing scrum half feeds with their **left shoulder on the middle line**. The **other scrum half must not follow round** — they may not move past the middle line until the ball is out (Appendix 9: penalty). Wheeled past 45 degrees: reset, thrown in by the team that had the ball when it wheeled.

TACKLE

Below the **base of the sternum** — the tummy or below. Ball carriers must not lead with shoulders below hips or dip late and low. **Squeezeball** is banned. All three are penalties (Appendix 9).

FREE KICKS

A team awarded a free kick **cannot choose a scrum** instead (RugbyReferee.net 2026/27).

SIN BIN

6 minutes (Appendix 9). Rolling substitutions, unlimited, when the ball is dead and the referee agrees.



YOUR PART IN IT

HELPING YOUR CHILD

AT HOME

Coaching advice — keep lifting for training.

- **Never practise lifting at home.** Lifts are taught at training with progressions and supervision.
- **Practise the landing.** A two-footed jump and a soft, two-footed landing with bent knees is safe anywhere.
- **Practise throwing.** A straight throw to a target builds the skill every lineout depends on.
- **Talk about the 50:22.** Watch a match together and spot one — own half, bounce, opposition 22.

ON THE TOUCHLINE

- **Praise the right things** — a controlled lift, a safe landing, lifters who stay with their jumper.
- **Let the coaches coach.** Lineout calls are a code between players; shouted advice gets in the way.
- **Respect the referee.** Very often a volunteer, and the lineout is one of the busiest moments to referee.
- **Cheer effort** from both teams. Our values are the game's values: Teamwork, Respect, Enjoyment, Discipline and Sportsmanship.

Is your child a jumper or a lifter? World Rugby's Rugby Ready says all players should ideally be able to be jumpers and supporters, and may swap roles during the lineout. Being lifted is not only for the tallest.

CONCUSSION

The UK Concussion Guidelines for Grassroots Sport sum it up in five words: **“If in doubt, sit them out.”** Nobody should return to sport within 24 hours of a suspected concussion, and the guidelines advise calling **NHS 111** within those 24 hours.

England Rugby's free **HEADCASE** e-learning has a version written for parents of age grade players. It explains how to recognise concussion and what to do, and takes about half an hour.

READ MORE: PARENTS, WELFARE AND CONCUSSION

AGE GRADE RUGBY

[RFU — Age Grade Rugby overview](#)

englandrugby.com/play/parents-guardians/age-grade-rugby-overview

CONCUSSION

[RFU — HEADCASE concussion information](#)

englandrugby.com/run/player-welfare/headcase

UK GUIDANCE

[UK Concussion Guidelines for Grassroots Sport](#)

sportandrecreation.org.uk/campaigns-and-policy/concussion/concussion-guidelines-for-grassroots-sport

BEHAVIOUR

[RFU — Code of conduct](#)

englandrugby.com/play/parents-guardians/code-conduct

FREE COURSE

[RFU — HEADCASE e-learning](#)

englandrugby.com/run/player-welfare/headcase-e-learning

CONTACT & LOAD

[RFU — Age Grade contact training, match load and recovery](#)

englandrugby.com/run/coaching/coach-resources/contact-guidance

Questions? Speak to your child's coach or your Parent Rep.



SOURCES AND FURTHER READING

FIND OUT MORE

The variations come from the RFU; the laws and safety programmes from World Rugby. Every link was checked on the day this guide was created — tap a title to open it. Links on welfare and concussion are on page 6.

THE RULES

U15–U18 RULES

[RFU — U15–U18 Variations to the Laws \(Reg. 15, Appendix 9\)](#)

[englandrugby.com/run/rules-governance/rfu-rules-and-regulations/regulation-15-age-grade-rugby/regulation-15-appendix-9-u15-u18-variations-to-the-laws-of-the-game](#)

ON ONE PAGE

[RugbyReferee.net — U15 regulations, season 2026/27 \(PDF\)](#)

[rugbyreferee.net/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/2026-27-u15s-RRNet-RFU-Regulations.pdf](#)

LINEOUT FAQ

[RFU — The introduction of the lineout to age grade rugby \(PDF\)](#)

[rugbyreferee.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Lineout-FAQs.pdf](#)

THE LAWS

EVERY LAW

[World Rugby — Laws of the Game 2026 \(PDF\)](#)

[passport.world.rugby/media/jxnmptk/2026en-laws-of-the-game-compressed.pdf](#)

DROP-OUTS

[World Rugby — Law 12: Kick-off and restart kicks](#)

[passport.world.rugby/laws-of-the-game/laws-by-number/12-kick-off-and-restart-kicks](#)

DEFINITIONS

[World Rugby — Definitions \(50:22, lineout...\)](#)

[passport.world.rugby/laws-of-the-game/definitions](#)

LAW TRIALS

[World Rugby — Global Law Trials \(1 January 2025\)](#)

[passport.world.rugby/laws-of-the-game/whats-new/2025-01-global-law-trials](#)

SAFE TECHNIQUE

LIFTING

[World Rugby — Rugby Ready: The lineout](#)

[passport.world.rugby/injury-prevention-and-risk-management/rugby-ready/the-lineout](#)

TACKLING

[World Rugby — Rugby Ready: The tackle](#)

[passport.world.rugby/injury-prevention-and-risk-management/rugby-ready/the-tackle](#)

REFEREEING

JUNIOR RUGBY

[RugbyReferee.net — Refereeing junior rugby](#)

[rugbyreferee.net/refereeing-junior-rugby](#)

LOCALLY

[Devon RFU — Become a rugby referee](#)

[devonrfu.co.uk/become-a-rugby-referee](#)

ALL AGE GRADES

[RFU — Regulation 15: Age Grade Rugby](#)

[englandrugby.com/run/rules-governance/rfu-rules-and-regulations/regulation-15-age-grade-rugby](#)

NEXT SEASON

[RugbyReferee.net — U16–U18 regulations, 2026/27 \(PDF\)](#)

[rugbyreferee.net/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/2026-27-u16-u18s-RRNet-RFU-Regulations.pdf](#)

THE LINEOUT

[World Rugby — Law 18: Touch, quick throw and lineout](#)

[passport.world.rugby/laws-of-the-game/laws-by-number/18-touch-quick-throw-and-lineout](#)

THE SCRUM

[World Rugby — Law 19: Scrum](#)

[passport.world.rugby/laws-of-the-game/laws-by-number/19-scrum](#)

UNDER 19S

[World Rugby — Under 19 law variations](#)

[passport.world.rugby/laws-of-the-game/variations-7s-10s-u19-game-on/under-19](#)

LATEST CHANGES

[World Rugby — 2026-07 Law updates](#)

[passport.world.rugby/laws-of-the-game/whats-new/2026-07-law-updates](#)

SCRUMMAGING

[World Rugby — Rugby Ready: The scrum](#)

[passport.world.rugby/injury-prevention-and-risk-management/rugby-ready/the-scrum](#)

INJURY PREVENTION

[RFU — Activate injury prevention programme](#)

[englandrugby.com/run/player-welfare/activate](#)

REFEREE COURSE

[RFU — How to book a Ready 2 Referee course](#)

[help.rfu.com/support/solutions/articles/103000161012](#)