



# **UNDERDOG KICKBALL**

## **rules and regulations**

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# Underdog Kickball Rules

**Captains:** You are responsible for providing a copy of these rules to your players.

The following rules are intended to create a safe, fair, and fun league atmosphere. But it is important to remember that this is a kid's game that is supposed to be fun! Whether you are playing in a close 7th inning in a competitive level league, or you are beating a team by 8 runs in an exhibition game... please maintain good sportsmanship and the spirit of the game.



## I Fields

**Please follow all posted park rules and guidelines!**

## A Alcohol

Please respect the Underdog rule that there is to be ZERO alcohol (visible or concealed) at any kickball facility. In nearly all cases, we are using Parks and Rec or School District fields that are youth oriented, and which have strict rules against consumption of alcohol.

No, putting it in a solo cup doesn't work, everyone knows what you have in there.

Trust us, we understand that some suds can make a great time on the kickball field that much better, but please save the celebratory beverages for the sponsor bar, and do not put our staff in the position of beer police.

## B Footwear

Most athletic shoes are acceptable, but **metal spikes, bare feet, & sandals are not permitted.**

# II Team Format and on Field Configuration

## A Rosters

Rosters may hold up to 15 players. There are no gender ratio requirements for the roster.

## B Positioning and Gender Ratios in the Field

A maximum of 10 players can be on the field for the defensive fielding team, while a minimum of seven players is needed to avoid a forfeit. Please follow gender rules for ratio needed.

Each team at full strength must position a **minimum** of three players including one male & one female in the outfield, as well as four players in the infield (First Base, Second Base, Shortstop, & Third Base) including one male and one female, until the ball has been kicked.

Teams must field a coed defense: minimum 3 males and 3 females, maximum 6 males or 6 females. There are no maximums or minimums for non-binary players

- ▶ A team missing a required male/female player, must play down a player for fielding.

**Note:** Teams with nine or more players must field a catcher.

**Example:** Seven males and three females show for a game, 9 kicking order spots, two males share a spot & alternate kicking; but only 6 men and 3 women can play on defense.

## C Late Arrival

Teams with fewer than the minimum required player shall have a 10-minute grace period to wait for additional team members to arrive. Teams with less than the required minimums, after 10 minutes, **must forfeit**. It is encouraged that teams play a “for-fun” game if a forfeit occurs.

During the regular season, teams may bring players not on their rosters to play. During playoffs, only rostered players are eligible unless the office has authorized an injury substitute.

Teams may pick up players from another team during the regular season, however, a large majority of the team must be rostered players for a game to not be deemed a forfeit.

Any substitute players and injury replacement players must sign a waiver before playing. Please understand that if you have a sub, it is your responsibility to notify the umpire.

# III Kicking and Base Running

## A Walks

Three called balls resets the count automatically. Walks are not an option. This is kickball, not walkball!

## B Kicking Order

Every player attending the game goes into the kicking order as long as gender rules allow.

You can **never kick more than two** males or females in a row. You cannot re-use kickers twice in the order to make others fit.

- ▶ Ask your ump for a lineup card...kicking orders should be written down to avoid confusion
- ▶ You must keep the same kicking order for the entire game.
- ▶ Late arrivals go to the bottom of the order while observing proper gender line-up rules.

**Example:** Illegal order: Lady leads off, male kicker, male kicker, male kicker, female kicker.

**Example:** Seven males and three females show up, one male is going to have to take turns kicking in the lineup spot of another male.

## C Kicking the Ball

The kicker may not have their full foot in front of the plate when kicking. At least part of their foot must be even or behind the front plane of the plate. Kicking in front of the plate is a delayed call and counts as a strike against the kicker unless the result of the play is more beneficial to the defense.

## D Bunts

Bunting is allowed only for female players. **Bunts by non-female players will be called a strike.** Runners return to their original bases. Umpires are looking for all other kickers to have a **full follow-through** kicking motion, not the distance. Bunting is a delayed call and counts as a strike against the kicker unless the result of the play is more beneficial to the defense.

No bunting is allowed for female players when a team is up 7 or more runs. A bunt will be penalized as a strike in this situation.

**Note:** Be careful, we're watching for the 'check swing' directional kicks which place a ball ...better swing all the way through! Remember, a bunt isn't defined by how far a ball travels, (a ball kicked to left field could still be called a bunt) we're looking for a full follow through.

Attempts to kick the ball intentionally without full force may also be determined by the umpire to be a bunt.

## E Base Path Violations

Runners must stay within the base paths and are awarded a base if a fielder illegally impedes the runner's path without playing the ball. Conversely, if a runner chooses to run outside of the base path, or interfere with a fielder playing the ball, they will be called out. (*Umpire's discretion*)

**Note:** If in the opinion of the umpire, a defender who is not in full control of a ball causes a runner to alter their path (including slowing down) to a base (including, but not limited to safety bases), the runner will be awarded the bases they would have achieved had they not been obstructed.

## F Overthrows

### 1 In Play

Runners are **not** restricted to one base on an overthrow by the defense when the play continues (the ball is not out of play, bouncing off the dugout fence, for example).

### 2 Out of Play

Any ball that is deemed as out of play results in a dead ball, and

Runners intentionally running through a defender in this situation will not be awarded bases and will be called out.

runners are awarded the base they are going to, plus one, unless the ball is intentionally knocked out of play by a base runner. (Out of play territory is an imaginary line drawn parallel from the end of the backstop.

## G Tagging Up

After a fly ball is **touched**, a runner may tag up and attempt to advance to the next base.

Failure to tag up after the ball is initially touched could result in an out if the runner is legally hit with the ball or the opponent gets the ball to the original base before the runner can return to tag up.

**Note:** A runner can tag as soon as a fly ball is touched, not caught. A player may run while a fielder is bobbling a ball that is eventually caught.

## H No Headshots

Balls thrown at the base runner must be below the neck. When a runner is hit on or above the neck, while running straight up, is considered a "Headshot".

**A headshot results in a dead ball and free advancement to the base they were going towards for the victim. Other runners halfway or more to the base at the time of the headshot will get to finish.**

Conversely, any intentional hitting of the ball by a runner will result in the runner being out.

## I Sliding

Foot first sliding **is** allowed, but **please be careful**. In the interest of safety, head first sliding while advancing is **not** permitted, and will be called as an automatic out.

Runners are permitted to dive back head-first to a base already achieved. A dive back is considered no more than 2 steps before a slide.

Runners that choose to slide or duck out of the way are not protected on head shots.

## J The Ball is Poison to Runners

If the ball touches a base runner while they are off base, the runner is out. This can result from a throw at the runner by a fielder, or if the player is touched by a kicked ball before it is fielded.

## K No Leadoffs

There is no leading off or stealing of bases. Runners must be touching the base until the ball is kicked.

## L End of a Play

When the defensive team gets the ball back to the pitcher in the mound area or if the ball is clearly being returned to the pitcher in the mound area, the play is dead. Runners are not allowed to start towards another base after the ball is being returned. (*Umpire's discretion*)

## IV Pitching and Fielding

Please remember, the point of pitching is to serve up a kick-able ball over the plate so the kicker goes for it and puts the ball in play.

### A Pitching Rules

#### 1 Kickball Pitches

Pitchers must release the ball while touching the pitching rubber.

Pitchers may step off the rubber to finish their natural pitching motion and stop. They may not use their forward progress to gain an advantage by encroaching on the kicker. The pitcher cannot move backwards or side to side until the ball is kicked.

No windup, no curve, no spinning, no fast pitching. Give it up Straight, Slow, & Low. *There is no overhand or sidearm pitching allowed. It will be a called ball.*

If a pitcher is consistently attempting to curve the ball or throw it too fast, the umpire reserves the right to retire a pitcher for the game. Retired pitchers may play other positions.

Encroachment by the pitcher results in a free base for the kicker.

Only one player per inning can field the pitcher position barring injury or umpire decision. The player who starts the inning as pitcher cannot be switched out to any other position during the inning.

#### 2 Ball, Strikes, and Outs

- ▶ **Strikes:** A called strike consists of a legally pitched ball that is rolling smoothly and is completely below the kicker's knee when it reaches the kicker.
- ▶ **Foul Ball:** A foul ball is a strike.
- ▶ **Bunting by anyone other than a female:** Will be called a strike.
- ▶ **Striking Out:** Two strikes is an out.
- ▶ **Fouling Out:** A foul as the second strike results in an out.
- ▶ **3 outs per inning.**
- ▶ **Outs in the Field:**
  - A kicked ball is caught on the fly.
  - A base runner is forced out at the bag.
  - A base runner or kicker is hit with the ball when not on base.

## B Encroachment by Infielders

Infielders must remain behind an imaginary line extending between 1st and 2nd, and 2nd and 3rd bases until the ball is kicked into play. Encroachment will result in a free base for the kicker. The result of the play will remain if it is more advantageous to the offense.

## C Catcher Position

The catcher must give the kicker sufficient room to kick and needs to be positioned within touching distance of the flat part of the backstop until the ball is kicked. Encroachment will result in a free base for the kicker. The result of the play will remain if it is more advantageous to the offense.

At the umpires discretion, based on backstop distance, the umpire may place discs in lieu of using the backstop. In this case, the catcher cannot have a foot on the ground in front of the discs until the ball is kicked.

A team can only have one catcher at a time. Only one player per inning can field the catcher position barring injury. The player who starts the inning as catcher cannot be switched out to any other position during the inning.

## D Infield Fly

There is no infield fly rule, but a fielder cannot intentionally tank a catch to gain advantage on defense (usually to turn a double play). An infraction results in the kicker being called safe at first, all forced base runners move up a base, and un-forced runners return.

## E Safety Bases

The orange safety bases next to first base and behind home plate are to be used by the kicker-only to run through the base. The fielder cannot use it to record an out, and the runner must return to the normal base after touching the safety base. The kicker isn't required to use the safety base, but we recommend it.

## F Rover

The 10th defensive fielder is commonly referred to as the Rover. This player can be a fourth outfielder or fifth infielder at any time. A player must start as one or the other before the pitch. Encroachment rules still apply.

## G End of an Inning

To end the play and force runners to take no further bases (and no further outs can be made), the defensive team needs to get the ball back to the pitcher in the mound area. "Time" will be called when the pitcher has caught the ball on or in very close proximity to the mound.

**Note:** This is an important rule to master in order to keep runners from advancing after the play is "over" but when time has not yet been called by the Umpire. (Umpire's discretion).

# V Playoffs

## A Playoff Format

In certain situations teams at or near the bottom of the standings may not advance to the playoffs. Playoff brackets are not determined until the end of the season as we may break teams up into separate divisions.

## B Seeding

Teams are seeded according to wins and ties. Teams may be split into divisions. These divisions may not be solely based on team record. Teams may be placed in a division based on their performance, team history and strength of schedule during the regular season.

## C Rosters

Non-Roster subs are not allowed in the playoffs unless they have been pre-approved by the office and added to your roster. Sub requests are not automatically approved and must be submitted for review during normal business hours for review.

Players are welcome to play on multiple teams in the league during the regular season. During the playoffs, players can only play on one team per division. They must pick the team before the playoffs and are not able to switch teams if one of their teams loses.

Team rosters do need to be independent of each other to the point that they will be able to play at the same time, or play each other.

# VI. Conduct and Sportsmanship

The umpire's word is final. Umpires may eject players for "unsportsmanlike" conduct. Any occurrences not covered in the rules are to be settled by the supervisor and noted. Proper method to discuss a call is to wait until the play is clearly over, ask for time, and meet with the ump to **discuss** and get clarification.

Players, please remember we are all out here for **FUN!** So please be **mature** with the umps.

***Based on severity, unsportsmanlike plays may result in call reversal in favor of the opposing team - and possible penalties against the offender including suspension or a league ban.***

This could include (but is not limited to) :

- ▶ Throwing the ball at someone when they are already standing on a base.
- ▶ Throwing the ball at someone as hard as you can from a short distance
- ▶ Throwing the ball at someone's head as they're lying on the ground.
- ▶ Running someone over in the base paths to get an obstruction call.
- ▶ Kicking the ball off the field in frustration like a big baby.

*If you have a question about a call, wait until time is called, and then politely ask the umpire.*

**Please practice fair play, and show good sportsmanship at all times!!**

**PLEASE follow ALL posted park rules!**

**There is NO Alcohol at the fields, please save it for the sponsor bar.**

**REMEMBER EVERYONE:  
THIS IS FOR FUN. PLAY SAFE!!!**