

PLAYING WITH SPIRIT

Ultimate Frisbee started as a game invented in the 1960s by high school students in the United States. Throughout its history, the sport has always belonged to the players. The rules of the sport categorically state that...

“all players are responsible for administering and adhering to the rules.” (rule 1.1)

The rules of Ultimate Frisbee do not seek to be punitive, instead...

“It is trusted that no player will intentionally break the rules; thus there are no harsh penalties for inadvertent breaches, but rather a method for resuming play in a manner which simulates what would most likely have occurred had there been no breach.” (rule 1.2)

Players have full autonomy over this, and should always seek to answer one simple question – **what seems fair?**

The structure for the self-governance of the sport is known as Spirit Of The Game, and consists of five main tenets that also form a framework for teaching players the vital skill of self-refereeing. This skill can be transferable to any other game or activity that requires cooperation with other parties to be successful.

RULES KNOWLEDGE AND USE

- Players should all agree on what rules to play by.
- Remember the rules that are in effect, and be prepared to teach them to others if they are unsure.
- Be prepared to explain a breach and why it changed an otherwise fair outcome.

AVOIDING FOULS AND BODY CONTACT

- Ultimate is a non-contact sport. This means players set their own boundaries.
- Defence must make all efforts to play “clean” – the only way to defeat your opponent is to be better than them!
- Withdraw from a situation when you aren’t completely confident you can avoid a foul.

FAIR MINDEDNESS

- Always trust that your opponents are holding themselves to a high standard, and respond accordingly if they point out a breach.
- Be prepared to let some breaches go if they do not significantly change the outcome of the play
- Hold yourself accountable to fair play – sometimes you might need to call a breach on yourself!

ATTITUDE & SELF CONTROL

- Never sacrifice the mutual respect between players, player safety or the basic joy of play.
- Make an effort to ensure everyone is enjoying the game.
- Never try to deceive or intimidate an opponent.
- Celebrate great plays – there’s no shame in being beaten by an amazing effort!

COMMUNICATION

- It is completely okay to pause the game to find a fair outcome. It doesn’t need to be rushed.
- Use respectful language that doesn’t assume actions were intentional.
- Make sure all players know why the pause happened, and what the outcome is.

Use the “Be Calm” approach

- **B**reathe – don’t react straight away
- **E**xplain – share your perspective
- **C**onsider – hear out your opponent
- **A**sk – what did other players see?
- **L**isten – be prepared to change your mind
- **M**ake the call – what is your final decision?