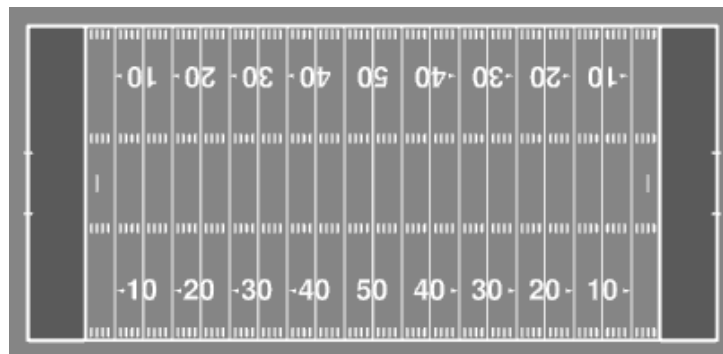


D2

Basics of the Game and Rules

AMERICAN FOOTBALL FACT SHEET

- The game is played between two teams, with 11 players on the field from each team at any one time.
- Substitutions can be made and up to 46 can be used by one team in a match! Most clubs have an offence and defence team as well as “special teams”, who are on the field for short periods like kick-offs, field goals etc.
- The field is 120 yards long, which includes two 10-yard end zones, and it’s just over 53 yards wide – much skinnier than a football (soccer) field.



The numbers on the field show how far it is to the end zone in that direction.

- Each game has four 15 minute quarters, with a half-time break after the second quarter. Because the clock is stopped regularly, games often last much longer than this in reality, sometimes 3-4 hours.

The object of the game is to move the ball forward to the opposing team’s end zone to score a touchdown or field goal.

- In a similar way to rugby league, teams are allowed 4 attempts (called “downs”) to advance the ball 10 yards forward.
- Each time the ball advances a full 10 yards, the team gets another 4 downs to take it another 10 yards.
- A touchdown is scored when you carry the ball into the end zone or when you receive it in the end zone. Touchdowns are worth 6 points. When a touchdown is scored, teams have the chance to go for a conversion (1 point) by kicking for goal from the 3-yard line, or they can run the ball over the line (like a touchdown) for 2 points.
- If a team is not making enough ground towards gaining 10 yards, they may, usually on their fourth down, attempt to kick a field goal, which is worth 3 points. Alternatively, they may “punt” the ball, which is kicking it towards the other team’s line when they don’t want to give up possession in their current position.
- A very rare way to score points is a “safety”. This happens when an attacking team has been forced as far back as their own end zone and one of the players is tackled there or fumbles the ball. The 2 points are given to the defending team.