**Key Terms**

Completed pass

Any catch that result in the team in possession of the disc retaining possession. Any pass that is not caught is incomplete.

Cutting

An offensive player tactic used to gain separation from the defender requiring deception, change of direction, and change of pace speed.

Defensive player

A player whose team is not in possession of the disc. A defensive player may not pick up a live disc or a disc in play or call for a pass from the thrower.

Foul

Non-incidental contact between opposing players. In general, the player initiating the contact has committed the foul.

Ground contact

All player contact with the ground directly related to a specific event or maneuver (e.g., jumping, diving, leaning or falling), including landing or recovering after being off-balance. Items on the ground are considered part of the ground.

Guarding

A defender is guarding an offensive player when they are within three meters of that offensive player and are reacting to that offensive player.

Handler

The offensive player in possession of the disc becomes the handler.

Incidental contact

Contact between opposing players that does not affect continued play.

Line

A boundary defining the playing areas. On an unlined field, the boundary is an imaginary line segment between two field markers with the thickness of said markers. Line segments are not extrapolated beyond the defining markers.

Marker

The defensive player within three meters of the thrower’s pivot or of the thrower if no pivot has been established. If the disc is not in play, a defensive player within three meters of a spot on the field where the disc is to be put into play is considered the marker.

Offensive player

A player whose team is in possession of the disc.

Pivot

The particular part of the body in continuous contact with a single spot on the field during a thrower’s possession once the thrower has come to a stop or has attempted a throw or fake. When there is a definitive spot for putting the disc into play, the part of the body in contact with that spot is the pivot.

Player

Any of the up to fourteen persons participating in the game at any one time.

Possession of the disc

Sustained contact with, and control of, a non-spinning disc.

Pull

The throw from one team to the other that starts play at the beginning of a half or after a goal. It is not a legal pass for scoring and has many special provisions. The player on the pulling team who possesses the disc and signals readiness is the puller.

Scoring attempt

A scoring attempt starts at the beginning of the game or when the previous goal is scored and ends when the next goal is scored.

Throw

A disc in flight following any throwing motion (including a fake) that results in the thrower losing contact with the disc.

Violation

Any infraction of the rules other than a foul.

# History

Ultimate Frisbee, now commonly known as Ultimate is a limited-contact team sport usually played with a 175 gram flying disc. Ultimate is a fast running game that incorporates characteristics from a number of different sports including basketball, football, and soccer.

In 1968, Ultimate was born on the grounds of Columbia High School located in the city of Maplewood, New Jersey. Joel Silver, was credited for organizing classmates and developing one of the most fascinating sports of modified Frisbee. As the game evolved the first set of rules were developed in 1970. The introduction of Ultimate at the collegiate level occurred at Princeton University and shortly afterwards in 1979, the Ultimate Players Association (UPA) was founded. In 2001, Ultimate made its first appearance as a medal sport in the World Games. Today, ultimate has made its way around the world and is now played in over 40 countries.

# Rules

The rules discussed in this module are the basic and most import necessary to start a game of ultimate. Students should visit the Ultimate Players website at www.upa.org to familiarize themselves with the complete set of rules.

## The objective

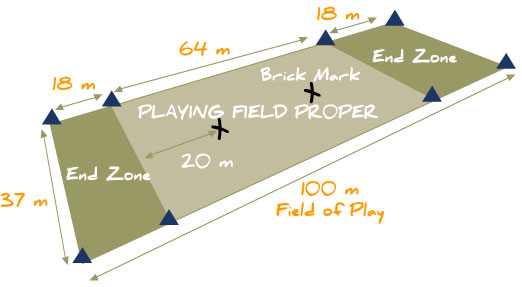
Ultimate is a game played with seven players per team. The objective of ultimate is to score points by receiving a teammate's pass in the opponent's end zone. The first team to 15 points wins. Most games last 90 minutes, however, some leagues impose time limits on games due to field space and number of teams.

## The disc

A regulation Ultimate disc is 175 grams. Discs can vary in size and weight depending on the needs of the players and teams. Disc choice depends on the age of the player.

## The Field/Bounds

Regulation games are played on a field of 70 yards (64 meters) by 40 yards (37 meters) in a rectangular shape, but playing areas can be modified to suit field space. Normally, ultimate is played outdoors on grass. Boundaries are marked by chalk lines and cones. The lines and marks that define the field are not considered to be part of the playing field and are out-of-bounds. If any part of the player’s body touches the line it is considered a dropped disc or turnover. Similar to basketball, players may reach out of bounds to catch a disc in the air, but must land in play for the catch to be good.



## Initiating Play

To start or restart a game, each team lines up on the goal line of their respective end zone. The defending team throws ("pulls") the disc to the offense. Before the opening pull to start a game, a coin toss or toss of the disc can be used to decide which team will receive first.

## Scoring

Each time the offense completes a pass in the opponent’s end zone, the offense scores a point. To restart, the team that just scored stays and the opponents walk to the opposite end to receive the ensuing pull.

## Movement of the disc

The disc may be advanced in any direction by completing a pass to a teammate. The person with the disc ("thrower") has ten seconds to throw the disc. The defender guarding the thrower ("marker") counts out the stall count. Players may not run with the disc at any time.

When catching a disc, a player is granted two deceleration steps. Once a player is in possession and stationary pivoting is permitted. If the opposing team feels the steps taken are abusing the grace rule the player catching the disc should take the appropriate steps back to where the disc was under control after the catch.

## Change of possession

When a pass is not completed (e.g. out of bounds, dropped, blocked, intercepted), the defense immediately takes possession of the disc and becomes the offense.

## Substitutions

Players not in the game may replace players in the game after a score and during an injury timeout.

## Non-Contact

No physical contact is allowed between players. Picks and screens are also prohibited. A foul occurs when contact is made.

## Fouls

When a player initiates contact on another player a foul occurs. If a foul disrupts possession, the play resumes as if the possession was retained. If the player accused of committing the foul disagrees with the foul call, the play is redone. Improper body positioning may lead to a player fouling. Be aware of all players’ field positions to reduce the risk of fouling another player.

## Self-Refereeing

There are no officials in ultimate only observers. Players are responsible for calling their own fouls and line calls. Opposing players must agree on the decision for play to resume. Sometimes no matter how honest players are no one can really make a call as a play may have been difficult to see. If a resolution is not possible the observer can intervene to provide an unbiased ruling.

## Spirit of the Game

Ultimate stresses sportsmanship and fair play as each player is responsible to uphold the spirit of the game. Competitive play is encouraged, but never at the expense of respect between players, adherence to the rules, and the basic joy of play. The honor system is highly regarded in ultimate. If a team is not honest and is always stretching the limits of fair play they will not only acquire a bad name for themselves but also lose any support and respect from other teams.

# Throwing and catching skills

## Throwing

Throwing is the most crucial aspect of ultimate. Like any sport involving passing/throwing and receiving/catching there are some simple yet important fundamentals that apply. Every player must have this skill mastered to be successful. Let’s review some important cues for throwing. Keep in mind that every player has a different range around their immediate space they can cover. Ultimately, a good thrower knows what teammates are capable of catching.

* Throw to where the receiving player will be not to where they are at the time of the throw
* Be responsible with the disc and avoid taking risks and throwing for the sake of throwing. Panicking is never a good reason to take risks
* Know your receiver and make the disc catchable for that player

### 1. Backhand (Traditional) Throw

This throw is used by all Frisbee throwers and is seen being used by beginners or non-ultimate players the most. It is excellent for long distance and good for short distance. Although the most widely used throw it is difficult to execute properly particularly at short range. It is important that at the point of release the wrist snaps to initiate good spin of the disc. While reading through these steps try not to over analyze otherwise you start to grip the disc to tight and no matter how fluid your other movements are a tight grip will cause flutter in the disc.

Keep in mind **four key components**: grip, stance, backswing, release. If you are new at ultimate, go through the steps one by one then try to combine them into one fluid motion

* **Grip**: Grab the disc with your thumb on top and fingers under as if you were about to throw a baseball side arm style.
* **Stance**: If you are right handed your right foot will be your leading foot.
* **Backswing**: For a right-handed thrower the disc starts at left side of body and moves to the right as arm swings open.
* **Release**: Be sure to snap the wrist on the follow through (extremely important for short range).

### 2. Forehand Throw

Extremely versatile throw used to elude marker and allows handler to throw from both sides. It is a very difficult throw requiring a lot of practice. It is best for short range throws requiring accuracy. A common mistake throwers make is not keeping the leading edge of the disc down and not snapping forcefully from the wrist at the point of release. Like all throws keep a comfortable grip that is not too tight.

Keep in mind **four key components**: grip, stance, backswing, release.

* **Grip**: Hold disk with the middle and index finger making a “Peace” sign underneath the disc.
* **Stance**: Left or right foot can lead.
* **Backswing**: Elbow of throwing arm is on hip. Leading edge of disc is angled down just before the release.
* **Release**: Hard wrist snap.

### 3. Hammer Throw

When you simply can’t go left or right. The hammer gives the option of going over the defender’s head. This is a difficult throw to execute especially in high wind. Use it conservatively and properly. When done well it will help open up the field as the defense will need to cover both short and long throws all the time.

Keep in mind **four key components**: grip, stance, backswing, release

* Grip: This is just like the forehand.
* Stance: Depending on your circumstance, feet can be side by side but usually your foot opposite to the throwing hand is forward.
* Backswing: Unlike the forehand the disc is vertical and you you’re your hand directly over your head, so that the disk is actually on the non-dominant side of your head.
* Release: Snap wrist at release.

## Catching

There are two main ways to catch the disc: the Sandwich (two handed catch) and the C-Catch (one or two handed).  
No matter how you catch keeping your eyes on the disc is the most important skill.

### 1. The Sandwich Catch

This is a safe catch that can account for a greater margin of flight path changes. The arms and hands swallow the Frisbee resulting in fewer drops.

* Keep your eyes on the disc and watch the disk into your hands.
* Get one hand on top (palm down) and one hand on bottom (palm up).
* Keep your hands big and spread your fingers.
* Clap your hands together like “Jaws

### 2. C-Catch

Timing is the key. Grasping too late and the disc will bounce off the palms and too soon your fingertips will be sore. The likelihood of dropping the disc is greater with a C catch. However, when a receiver needs extended range, the C can lead to some spectacular one handed catches.

* Hand forms a “C” just like you were going to grab a soda can.
* If the disk is high keep the thumb low and fingers up.
* If the disk is low keep the thumb high and fingers down.
* Clamp on disk like grasping the handles of a bike.

# Attacking tools

## Handling

Often a team will have a designated handler whom the disc gets dumped to after each catch. The handler is the person who receives the discs and also who has the opportunity to take control of the game and be creative on offense. A handler can also be referred to as a “point guard” or a “quarterback.” The handler usually works hand in hand with a good cutter, has great communication skills, and is the person that the team most trusts with throwing the disc.

There are two mains tasks of the handler:

* Controls and structures the offensive flow. The handler takes the responsibility for running a smooth offense. Handler’s should know each player’s strengths and structure the offense around these strengths.
* Execute strategies continually on the go. Plans change and a quick dump or swing pass may be needed to beat a zone. Alternately a fake to beat a poaching defender to go long instead of short may be necessary. Handlers must utilize deception frequently to be successful.

[http://www.mhlearningsolutions.com/georgia_pe/modules/tennis/images/icon_video.gif](javascript:CargarFoto('/georgia_pe/modules/ultimate-frisbee/videos/PE_Project_Ultimate_frisbee_faking_a_pass.swf','320','285px'))Click here to view a video of Handling.

The handler has three types of passes regularly employed that allow for strategies to be executed smoothly and efficiently.

1. In-flow pass is a leading pass to gain yards at a minimal risk.
2. Repositioning pass allows a hander to receive the disc in a strategic location.
3. Reset pass is usually a dump backwards to get out of trouble and create more space.

## Cutting

Before players can think about catching the disc they must learn to get themselves open with enough separation between them and their defender for the handler to feel confident about delivering the disc. A good cutter will become an easy target for the thrower by creating separation. There are some skills that will help make you a good cutter even if you are not the fastest person on the field.

* **Think ahead** and know the space available for you to move into to make a catch.
* Timing: It is important to know when the space will be open and when to make a cut to get to that space. Players are all over the field running here and there. But when you are aware of your teammate’s runs and what the defense is doing you can time your runs perfectly and run into space that used to be cluttered with players.
* Deception: Even if you are not fast fake cuts to what looks like open space will cause a defender to bite and fall out of position.
* Change of pace: You must vary your speed of runs: walk to run, jog to stop to run, etc.

## Stack

The stack is executed when players line up downfield from the handler and systematically make cuts to become free. The stack is ideal for short distance throws to gain entry into the endzone. As players peel off from the stack the handler is provided with multiple options at once. Just like football, there is usually a player who has been predetermined to receive the pass. After a few seconds if the player is not open a designated dump is used.

## Zone

The main purpose of a zone is to spread out defense, keeping the field more open and spacious for individual runs. Zones are used for the simple reason that it puts everyone on the same page. Since each player is assigned a duty, and the handler knows where everyone is and when they will be there. Each player has a specific area and responsibility. The objective is to give guaranteed options to the handler, keep space, and spread out the defenders.

There are a variety of different zones, but in ultimately it is up to the team to decide how they will disperse and execute no matter what kind of zone a team uses some specific goals of the zone should be kept in mind.

* Spread the defenders out to create space. The more space you have the more time there is to throw and receive the disc. It is particularly important for wingers to stay wide and keep the middle open.
* Push forward and avoid dumping. Dumping and losing ground collapses the zone as players retreat to help. Dumping too often forces the zone to reset and wastes time and energy.
* Coordinate runs effectively to maintain zone shape. Runs should be done in a sequence not all at once in order to maintain space and give the handler plenty of options.
* Constantly change attacking points between short, medium, and long. Doing the same thing over and over will only allow the defense to predict your team’s tactics.

# Defensive skills

## Marking

The marker is the defensive player who covers the thrower/handler. Like any defender if the marker does a good job the thrower will not be able to execute a good pass. There are some important actions a marker can do to help force a turnover.

* Pressure the thrower quickly and prevent the early pass. The quicker you can close the thrower down the less chance your team will be caught by a quick pass.
* Position yourself to force the thrower to one direction. This direction may be the thrower’s weak side or your team’s strong side. Either way you need to know what your team has decided or will benefit from most.
* Make yourself big and stay mobile. Keep your arms active and stay on your toes. You should be able to move.
* Be aggressive, but controlled. Over committing or fouling the thrower does not help your team. Over committing or diving in is a common error made by an overzealous defender. Defenders need to maintain composure as much as a thrower does
* Communicate to your team what is happening. Yell out to your team if the disc is short, long, right or left. Your teammates aren’t watching you they are watching their marks.

## Guarding: one vs. one defending

Guarding takes place when the offensive player you are marking does not have the disc. One v. one defending is demanding and exhausting, however there are some important steps a players can take to get the best results for the team.

* Match defenders to offensive players with similar abilities and characteristics. Make sure fast players are matched with fast and tall with tall. Failing to do this will lead to mismatches.
* Watch the hips and the direction they are facing. The hips always face the direction the player will go. The feet and shoulders are used frequently to misdirect defenders and focusing only on them can be disastrous.
* The eyes give clues to disc location. Even the best attackers have to focus on the disc before catching. When going long and the attacker has an extended focus behind you, this is your clue to also locate the flight of the oncoming disc.
* Get your arm in the passing lane whenever possible. Since all the guard needs to do is knock the disc down, even when a step behind the attacker an arm in the passing lane can make all the difference.

## Poaching

Poaching is a tactic in which a defender will cheat in front of an attacker in effort to discourage or intercept a pass. Poaching requires keen awareness and anticipation. A good defender will employ certain skills to execute a good poach.

* Watch what the handler is doing. Knowing where the handler has faked and where the handler is looking will give clues to where the throw will go. You know as well as the handler who is not open and who is or will be open. Try to anticipate this.
* Timing is imperative to avoid detection. If your goal is to intercept, you must poach at the precise moment of release. Too soon will cause the thrower to balk and now you are out of position
* Poach selectively to maintain surprise. Poaching too often will cause attackers to anticipate when you will poach. The handler will expect it, wait for it and beat you with a long throw over your head.
* Be all in or not at all. When you decide to poach do it fully and suddenly. Pulling back will put you out of position.

## Switching

When two defenders switch attackers they are guarding instead of following their assigned attacker. This tactic is extremely useful in crowded circumstances, when a team is playing a zone, or defenders get caught and the attacker gets a jump on the defenders. In order to switch successfully, defenders must trust each other and communicate well. There are some helpful actions and commands defenders can use to execute a good switch.

* Eye contact with your defending teammate.
* Call out your teammate’s name followed by “help” or “coming to you.”
* Finally, call out “switch”. Once both defenders are aware and on the same wavelength switches become a natural part of their game.

Switching is usually reserved for experienced players or players who have played together for a while. It is not wise to call a switch with someone who is not expecting it, does not normally switch, and has no prior communication about the possibility of switching. Be sure to communicate with new players.

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| **Ultimate Frisbee - Assessment** |  |  |

**1. Guarding means that a defender is guarding the offensive player with the disc**

True

**False** *(answer)*

**2. Ultimate is a game played with**

Four players per team

Six players per team

**Seven players per team** *(answer)*

Nine players per team

**3. When catching a disc, a player is granted**

One deceleration step

**Two deceleration steps** *(answer)*

Three deceleration steps

Five deceleration steps

**4. The first team to \_\_\_\_\_ points wins the game.**

10

**15** *(answer)*

20

21

**5. When a player initiates contact on another player, a foul occurs**

**True** *(answer)*

False

**6. To start a game, the**

**Defending team throws the disc to the offense** *(answer)*

Offensive team throws the disc to the defense

The disc is first thrown to a teammate and then to the opposing team

None of the above

**7. A turnover occurs if:**

The Disc drops on the ground

The Disc goes out of bounds

The Disc is intercepted

**All of the statements above** are correct *(answer)*

**8. For a C-Catch,**

Clap your hands together like "Jaws"

**Clamp on disc like grasping the handles of a bike** *(answer)*

Use both your arms and hands

Use only your arms

**9. Which one is not one of the four key components in throwing a disc**

Grip

Stance

Backswing

**Forehand swing** *(answer)*

**10. Players can move their \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ once stopped.**

**Non-pivot foot** *(answer)*

Pivot foot

Both feet

Both arms and feet