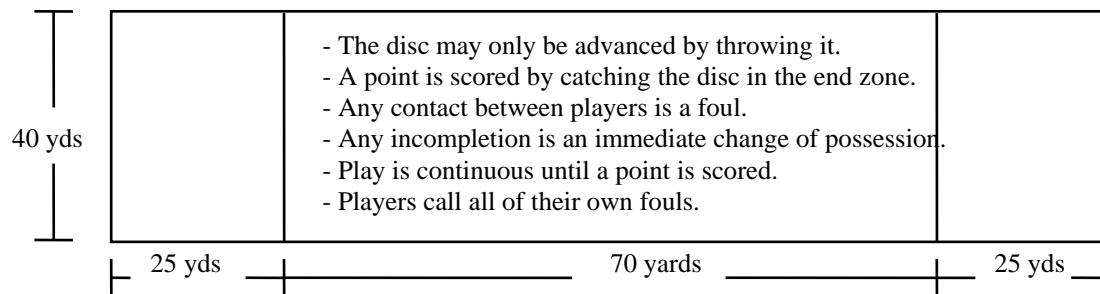


# *Spectator's Guide to Ultimate Frisbee*



Each team has 7 players on the field - substituting only between points. There is more running in Ultimate than in any other team sport, and it requires a combination of skills. Ultimate is like a combination of soccer, basketball, and football and requires the players to perform skilled maneuvers when exhausted.

The Disc is what separates Ultimate from other sports. An official disc is 175 grams.

## **Offense**

**The thrower** has 10 seconds to throw, but a lot of fakes can happen in that 10 seconds. The two basic throws are the backhand and the forehand. The backhand is easier to learn because the back of the hand acts as a wind break during release. The forehand has a shorter, quicker windup, and is actually more common in tournament play. Players will throw various passes: for example, a short pass backwards is a “dump”, a long throw up field is a “huck”, and a throw that travels upside-down is called a “topper” or “hammer”. While the disc will float for most throws, a topper travels more like a thrown football.

**The receiver's** job is just like in football. Look for cuts, fakes, buttonhooks, long breaks, and players dragging their feet to keep in bounds. In Ultimate, the first point of contact determines in bounds - not both feet.

**Catching the disc** is really pretty easy - if you can get your hand on it. Spectacular diving catches are common, especially since the disc floats in the air so long.

**Set plays** are used by most teams at this level of the game, especially whenever play stops. The rest of the time teams use what's called flow offense, which tends to be guided by experience and field sense.

**Offensive styles** vary between teams. Some teams throw the disc up field at every opportunity, while others swing the disc across the field before gaining yardage. Throwing up the field is more efficient - it takes fewer passes to score - but it requires harder throws.

## **Defense**

**Defenders** are governed by two rules: 1. any contact between players is a foul, and 2. any incomplete pass is a change of possession (so a knock-down is as good as an interception). Look for lots of spectacular diving blocks.

**The marker** is the player guarding the thrower. Their goal is usually to deny one throw (either forehand or backhand) so that their teammates have less area to cover (it is virtually impossible to block all of a thrower's throws). The marker's ultimate goal is to block the throw (a “point block”) without letting the thrower “break the mark”, i.e. make the throw that the marker is trying to stop.

**Person-to-person** is the most common defense. Each defender covers one offensive player all over the field. This scheme varies with changes in the marker - most teams will either force the thrower towards a sideline (a “side trap”) or towards the middle.

**Zone defense** is based on letting the offense swing the disc across the field, but blocking all of the up field throwing lanes. Most offenses try to go around a zone with lots of easy throws until the zone gets tired - or until the offense makes a mistake. An alternative is to try to throw over the zone with a vertical throw called a hammer, an effective but risky throw into the wind.