

Gaelic Football – The Basics

Often described as a mixture between rugby and soccer, the game also appears to have elements of basketball and volleyball in it. The game is more free flowing and faster than rugby and more skilful. It is more physical than soccer but is safer. Gaelic football is older than both soccer and rugby. Here is a simple explanation:



Players: There are 15 players on each team. (This is sometimes reduced in Europe due to smaller pitch size). They consist of a goalkeeper, six defenders, two midfielders and six forwards.

Ball: The ball is round like a soccer ball but slightly smaller (see image).

Handling the ball: You can catch the ball in your hands but only carry it for a maximum of 3 steps, then

you must **bounce** it or kick it back to yourself (called a ‘**solo**’) or pass it.

Passing: You can pass the ball with your foot or with your fist but you cannot throw it.

Scoring: Goalposts are similar to rugby and soccer combined; there is a net and a goalkeeper. If the ball goes into the goal you get three points. If it goes above the bar between the two posts you get one point.

Tackling: You cannot tackle below the waist. You can try to take the ball from the opponents hands but only using one hand. Shoulder to shoulder contact is permissible (this is the physical aspect I spoke of). You can block someone kicking the ball with your hands.

Gaelic Football is played throughout Europe and the world. If you would like to play Gaelic Football then contact the European Board for details of your local club.

More images are presented below:

