

RUGBYSAFE ESSENTIAL GUIDE

Clothing and Footwear

As rugby union grows, so does the amount of different clothing, footwear and protective equipment available to buy. While most items are suitable, it is important to be aware that all clothing and footwear worn during any rugby activity should comply with World Rugby (WR) regulations. The RFU works closely with World Rugby to ensure that clothing and footwear is safe and appropriate for use while training and playing.

Before buying any clothing, especially more bespoke items, it is important to check that it is compliant and can be safely worn during any rugby activity. It is the responsibility of the manufacturer /retailer to ensure the item is compliant; this can sometimes be evidenced with a World Rugby approved label. In general, most major brands ensure that their products are compliant, however not all clothing is appropriate when participating in contact rugby activity.



World Rugby's Law 4 and Regulation 12 cover players' clothing and footwear specifications. Detailed information can be found at: Law 4 -

<http://laws.worldrugby.org/?law=4> and Regulation 12 –

www.worldrugby.org/wr-resources/WorldRugbyDIR/Handbook/English/index.html#/214/

This essential guide provides information and recommendations for clothing and footwear; please see the *Protective Equipment Essential Guide* for specific information on wearable protective equipment items such as: mouthguards, headguards and shoulder pads. This and other Essentials Guides and FAQs on player welfare related topics can be found at: www.englandrugby.com/rugbysafe/guides-and-faqs.



Base Layers



Upper body base layers are allowed in both adult and age grade rugby, providing the design and material complies with the criteria set out in WR regulation 12 and Law 4.

Age grade players are permitted to wear base layers leggings/tights, provided they comply with the WR regulation.

Tights are listed as a recognised additional item of clothing for women for modesty and religious reasons; these must be cotton blend long tights, with a single inside leg seam and be worn under shorts and socks. Base layer leggings/tights are not approved for use in adult men's rugby.

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Fingerless Mitts

Fingerless mitts (not gloves) may be worn, providing the coverage of the fingers and thumbs is no further than the outer joint and the mitt coverage should not continue beyond the wrist. These standards as set out by WR and state that the body of the mitt should be of a stretch type material with the grip material being made of a soft rubber/synthetic compound not exceeding a depth of 1mm. No part of a mitt should contain buttons or potentially dangerous items.



Full finger gloves provided they are safe with no buttons etc. may be appropriate for use in non-contact formats of the game. However, they are not permitted for use in contact rugby.

Headscarves and Religious Head-dress

Headscarves and other religious head-dress can be worn, providing they do not cause a danger to the wearer or other players and do not contravene regulation 12. Any pins or metal/rigid fasteners should be removed.

Banned Items of clothing

World Rugby Law 4.4 (<http://laws.worldrugby.org/?law=4.4>) sets out a number of items of clothing that are banned. A player must not wear any:

- Item that is contaminated by blood.
- Item that is sharp or abrasive (including studs/blades)
- Items containing buckles, clips, rings, hinges, zippers, screws, bolts or rigid material or projection not otherwise permitted.
- Jewellery such as rings or earrings.
- Gloves.
- Shorts with padding sewn into them.
- Other item which does not conform with World Rugby specifications (Regulation 12).
- Item that is normally permitted by Law, but, in the referee's opinion that is liable to cause injury to a player.
- Communication devices attached to the player's clothing or body.



Footwear

It is important that suitable footwear is worn when participating in any rugby activity. The most appropriate footwear will depend on the type of activity and playing



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surface. It is recommended that a specifically designed football/rugby type boot is worn. Both studs and blades are allowed, provided that they comply with World Rugby specification set out in Regulation 12. This also includes moulded rubber multi-studded boots providing they have no sharp edges or ridges.

Boot Studs & Blades

The RFU continues to work with World Rugby and the British Standards Institute (BSI) to ensure safety standards are appropriate for the game. The current standard for boots is BS6366:2011. Boot manufacturers have to self-certify their studs or blades against regulation 12 and most commonplace manufacturers meet these standards; however it would be advisable to check before buying new boots or replacement studs/blades. Information can be found at:

www.worldrugby.org/wr-resources/WorldRugbyDIR/Handbook/English/index.html#/214/

Match Officials should always check footwear, clothing and protective equipment before a game. They should check that all items are safe to be worn and especially that the studs/blades are safe with no sharp edges or ridges etc. A match official has the power to decide at any time, before or during a match, that part of a player's clothing is dangerous or illegal. If a match official decides that an item of clothing (or wearable protective equipment) is dangerous or illegal, the player must not take part in the match until the item is removed.

Players and parents should regularly check that boots, studs/blades, clothing and any wearable protective equipment are safe to use. Studs that have sharp edges or burring etc. should be replaced; the ultimate responsibility is with the players to ensure that they play in safe boots.



Any questions about clothing and footwear and other player welfare related queries can be sent to rugbysafe@rfu.com or call 020 8831 7693.

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