



# ABOUT ULTIMATE...

*“When a ball dreams, it dreams it’s a frisbee.” - Stancil Johnson*

Combining the non-stop movement and athletic endurance of soccer with the aerial passing skills of football, a game of Ultimate is played by two seven-player squads with a high-tech plastic disc on a field similar to football. The objective of the game is to score by catching a pass in the opponent’s end zone. A player must stop running while in possession of the disc, but may pivot and pass to any of the other receivers on the field.

Just like basketball, Ultimate is a transition game in which players move quickly from offense to defense on turnovers that occur with a dropped pass, an interception, a pass out of bounds, or when a player is caught holding the disc for more than ten seconds.

Although Ultimate resembles many traditional sports in its basic athletic requirements, the rules are simpler which allows the game to be self-officiated. The concept of Spirit of the Game™ is integrated into the basic philosophy of the sport, is written into the rules, and is practiced at all levels of the game from local leagues to the World Games.

Ultimate was developed in 1968 by a group of students at Columbia High School in Maplewood, NJ. The first official rules of the game were recorded in 1970.

One of the fastest growing sports in the world, Ultimate is played in more than 42 countries by hundreds of thousands of men, women, boys and girls.



## ULTIMATE IN 10 SIMPLE RULES

- The Field** – A rectangular shape with end zones at each end. A regulation field is 70 yards by 40 yards, with end zones 25 yards deep.
- Initiate Play** – Each point begins with both teams lining up on the front of their respective end zone. The defense throws (“pulls”) the disc to the offense. A regulation game has seven players per team.
- Scoring** – Each time the offense completes a pass in the defense’s end zone, the offense scores a point. Play is initiated after each score.
- Movement of the Disc** – The disc may be advanced in any direction by completing a pass to a teammate. Players may not run with the disc. The person with the disc (“thrower”) has ten seconds to throw it. The defender guarding the thrower (“marker”) initiates a stall count.
- Change of Possession** – When a pass is not completed (i.e., out of bounds, drop, block, interception), the defense immediately takes possession of the disc and becomes offense.
- Substitution** – 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. When a foul disrupts possession, the play resumes as if the possession was retained. If the player committing the foul disagrees with the foul call, the play is redone.
- Self-Refereeing** – Players are responsible for their own foul and line calls. Players resolve their own disputes.
- Spirit of the Game** – Ultimate stresses sportsmanship and fair play. Competitive play is encouraged, but never at the expense of respect between players, adherence to the rules and basic joy of play.



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## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: How many people play Ultimate in the United States?**

A: It's estimated that over 100,000 people play Ultimate in the United States.

**Q: How long does a game usually last?**

A: A typical game is played to 15 points and usually lasts about 1 1/2 - 2 hours.

**Q: What's the difference between an observer and a referee?**

A: Observers are non-players whose role is to carefully watch the action of the game and to perform any or all of the following duties: track time limits, resolve player disputes, censure or eject players for sportsmanship infractions, and render opinions on things such as line calls, and off-side calls. The difference between an observer and a referee is that in general observers only make rulings on infractions called by players and only after players have failed to resolve the issue themselves.

**Q: What equipment do you need in order to play?**

A: Ultimate is one of the least expensive sports to play, as all that is required for a game is field space and a disc. Most players opt to wear cleats as well, and cones are helpful for marking the boundaries of the playing field.

**Q: Are all discs the same?**

A: No. Ultimate is played with a 175 gram disc, which is heavier and sturdier than the recreational discs most people are familiar with. The weight, diameter, shape of rim, and plastic all factor in to how the disc handles. The UPA has developed very rigorous disc standards to ensure that players have access to the highest quality discs possible. The Discraft Ultra-Star 175 gram disc is currently the official disc of the UPA.

**Q: How can I start playing?**

A: Most cities have Ultimate leagues and pickup games that are open to new players. The UPA website ([www.upa.org](http://www.upa.org)) offers links to many Ultimate clubs across the country. The UPA has developed the Ultimate Instructional Kit (available through [www.wrightlife.com](http://www.wrightlife.com)) that includes 14 instructional discs covering the basics of the game, a skills and drills manual, and many other items that can help you start and Ultimate program in your community.

**Q: Where can I find more info to improve my playing skills?**

A: The UPA website includes links to various sites that can help improve your game. The skills and drills section ([www.upa.org/ultimate/skills](http://www.upa.org/ultimate/skills)) is a great resource for beginning and experienced players alike.

**Q: Will Ultimate ever become an Olympic sport?**

A: The UPA and WFDF (World Flying Disc Federation) have been working to achieve the best presentation of Ultimate and other disc sports on the worldwide sport scene for some time. A major milestone in this effort occurred in 2001 when Ultimate was included in the World Games for the first time as a full medal sport. The current climate for inclusion of new events in the Olympic Games is not encouraging. The best possible scenario for disc sports is to continue our emphasis in each hometown, each state, and national community to build the sport at the grass roots level. We must work steadily to make our game better and stronger for our players which will make us increasingly more attractive to various global sports organizations.



## SPIRIT OF THE GAME

Spirit of the Game is a spirit of sportsmanship that places the responsibility for fair play on the player himself. Highly competitive play is encouraged, but never at the expense of the bond of mutual respect between players, adherence to the agreed upon rules of the game, and the basic joy of play. For many players, Spirit of the Game is as important as who wins the game.

