

The Rugby Six Nations

The Rugby Six Nations is the world's oldest rugby competition. Every year, men's and women's national teams battle it out to become the champions.

History

The championship began in 1882 when it only included the four countries of the United Kingdom (England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales). Later, in 1910, France joined and it became called 'The Five Nations'.



Much later, in the year 2000, Italy joined and in 2007 it changed to include the women's Six Nations championship making it the Six Nations Championship that we know today.

How Does it Work?

In spring each year, from February to March or April, there are five weekends of matches when each nation plays every other nation once. Each year, they take it in turns to play at their national home ground.

Teams gain points for winning or drawing matches as well as gaining bonus points for scoring five or more tries during a match. You can even gain points from losing a match if you lose by seven points or fewer as well as being able to gain the bonus point for five tries or more. The bonus points system was introduced in 2017 in order to encourage teams to score more tries.

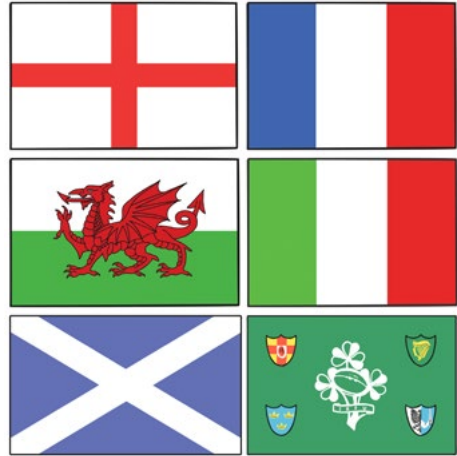
Rugby Fact File:

- A try is the name for the five points scored when the ball is placed over the try line.
- The England women's team won every year from 2006 to 2012!
- There are 15 players on a rugby union team.
- The matches last 80 minutes and have two halves.
- The Millennium Stadium in Wales has a full roof.
- 82 000 people can fit into England's Twickenham Stadium.

The Rugby Six Nations

The Rugby Six Nations is the world's oldest rugby union competition. It is an annual men's and women's competition held in the UK and neighbouring countries.

History - The championship began in 1882 when it was named 'Home Nations' which was the four countries of the United Kingdom (England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales). Later, in 1910, France joined as the UK's closest neighbour it became 'The Five Nations'.



Much later in the year 2000, Italy joined and in 2007 the organisation officially changed to include the already established women's six nations championship making it The Six Nations Championship that we know today.

How Does it Work? - In spring each year, from February to March or April, there are five weekends of matches when each nation plays every other nation once. Each year, they take it in turns to play at their national home ground.

In 2017 a new points scoring system was put into place where teams win more points for scoring tries. The basic scores are: win = 4 points, draw = 2 points, lose = 0 points. However, there is 1 bonus point for a win, lose or draw where you have scored more than 4 tries during the game. Also, if a team loses by 7 points or fewer during the match, then they can also gain a bonus point. If a losing team also scores 4 tries or more then it is 2 points.

Rugby Union Glossary:

Try	The ball is placed over the try line and 5 points are scored.
Conversion	After a try, an extra 2 points may be earned by kicking the ball between the posts from opposite where the try was scored.
Scrum Down	After a foul, players push against each other in a formation to try and get the ball on their side to carry on playing.
Line Out	When the ball goes off the pitch at the side, it is thrown back in and players line up to try and catch it. Some jump high.
Knock-On	The ball must always be passed backwards in rugby, so a knock on is when it accidentally goes forwards.

Did You Know? England women were unbeatable at one point and won the Six Nations every year from 2006 to 2012!

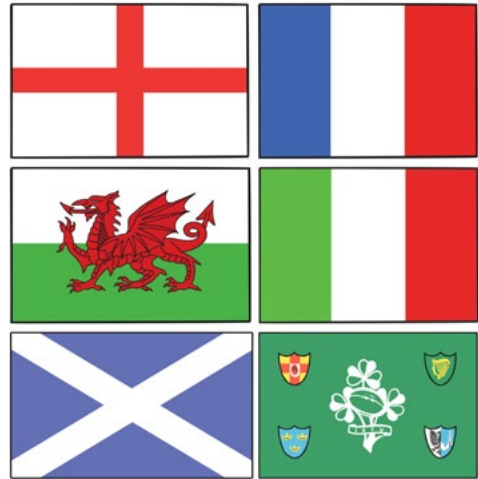
The Rugby Six Nations

The Rugby Six Nations is the world's longest running rugby union championship. It is an annual men's and women's competition held in the UK and neighbouring countries.

History - The championship began in 1882 under the title 'Home Nations' and included the four countries of the United Kingdom. Later, in 1910, France was included as the UK's closest neighbour and the name changed to 'The Five Nations'.

More recently in 2000, Italy joined and in 2007 the organisation expanded to include the Six Nations championship of the women's teams who had in fact been having their own championship since 1996. Thus it became The Six Nations Championship with which we are familiar today.

How Does it Work? - In 2017 a new points scoring system was put into place where teams win more points for scoring tries to encourage more ball carrying, attacking play. Now a team gains 4 points for a win, but 5 points if they win with 4 tries or more. There are 2 points for a draw, but 3 points for a draw with 4 tries or more. You even gain 2 points for a lose if you score 4 tries or more and lose by fewer than 7 points during the match and either of these to score 1 point for a lose.



Glossary of Rugby Union Terminology:

Try	When the ball is placed over the try line scoring 5 points.
Conversion	After a try, an extra 2 points may be earned by kicking the ball between the posts from opposite where the try was scored.
Scrum Down	After a foul, players crouch and push against each other in a formation to try and gain possession of the ball.
Line Out	When the ball goes out of play via the side lines (touch), it is thrown back in. Each team line up to try and catch it, with some players lifted high by teammates.
Knock-On	When the ball accidentally goes forwards (not by a kick) as the key rule in rugby is that the ball must always be passed backwards.

Did You Know? England women were reigning Six Nations champions for seven championships starting in 2006!

Questions

1. Which countries are in the Six Nations?
2. After the 2021 competition, how many competitions will Italy have been involved in?
3. Which countries will Wales have to play during the competition?
4. How many minutes does one half of a match last?
5. If Wales scored five tries during a match, how many points will they have scored?
6. When two teams are playing each other, how many people are on the pitch including the referee?
7. In which month does the competition start each year?
8. In the 'How Does It Work?' section, what does the author mean by the phrase 'home ground'?

1. If England play Scotland at home in England in 2021, where will England play Wales in 2012? Explain how you know.
2. Why do you think they built a roof on the Millennium Stadium?

Questions

1. Which countries are in the women's Six Nations?
2. After the 2021 competition, how many competitions will there have been?
3. How many matches will France need to play during the competition?
4. How many points do you get in total after converting a try?
5. If Wales win their first match and score three tries and also win their second match by scoring four tries, how many points would they gain from the two wins?
6. What is the points difference from the 2015 match that finished: Italy 3 Ireland 26
7. Why has the author used an exclamation mark at the end of the text?
8. In the 'How Does It Work?' section, what does the author mean by the phrase 'home ground'?

1. If Italy play Wales at home in Italy in 2021, where will Italy play Wales in 2022?

Explain how you know.

2. Was there a women's Six Nations competition before 2007? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

Questions

1. Which countries were the four 'Home Nations' of the first competitions?
2. In 2021, how many of these competitions will France have taken part?
3. How many matches will need to take place for all the six countries to play one another?
4. If the ball goes into 'touch', how does it get back into play?
5. If Wales win their first match and score three converted tries and also win their second match by scoring four converted tries and one non-converted try, how many match points from tries and conversions would they have earned in each match and how many points would they gain from the two wins?
6. Why do you think a trail points system has been introduced? What difference do you think bonus points will have to the way matches are played?
7. Why has the author used an exclamation mark at the end of the text?
8. In the terminology section, what does the word 'possession' mean?

1. If Scotland play Ireland at home in Scotland in 2021, where will Ireland play Scotland in 2022? Explain how you know.

2. When the players are in a scrum down, are they standing up? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.