

### DEFINITION

A maul begins when a player carrying the ball is held by one or more opponents, and one or more of the ball carrier's team mates bind on the ball carrier. A maul therefore consists, when it begins, of at least three players, all on their feet; the ball carrier and one player from each team. All the players involved must be caught in or bound to the maul and must be on their feet and moving towards a goal line. Open play has ended.



*Maul*

## Law 17 Maul



*Maul not formed*

## 17.1 FORMING A MAUL

- (a) **Where can a maul take place.** A maul can only take place in the field of play.

## 17.2 JOINING A MAUL

- (a) Players joining a maul must have their heads and shoulders no lower than their hips.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick
- (b) A player must be caught in or bound to the maul and not just alongside it.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (c) Placing a hand on another player in the maul does not constitute binding.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (d) **Keeping players on their feet.** Players in a maul must endeavour to stay on their feet. The ball carrier in a maul may go to ground providing the ball is available immediately and play continues.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (e) A player must not intentionally collapse a maul. This is dangerous play.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (f) A player must not jump on top of a maul.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

## 17.3 OTHER MAUL OFFENCES

- (a) A player must not try to drag an opponent out of a maul.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick
- (b) A player must not take any action to make the opposing team think that the ball is out of the maul while it is still in the maul.  
**Penalty:** Free Kick

## 17.4 OFFSIDE AT THE MAUL

- (a) **The offside line.** There are two offside lines parallel to the goal lines, one for each team. Each offside line runs through the hindmost foot of the hindmost player in the maul. If the hindmost foot of the hindmost player is on or behind the goal line, the offside line for the defending team is the goal line.
- (b) A player must either join a maul, or retire behind the offside line immediately. If a player loiters at the side of a maul, the player is offside.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the offending team's offside line
- (c) **Players joining the maul.** Players joining a maul must do so from behind the foot of the hindmost team-mate in the maul. The player may join alongside this player. If the player joins the maul from the opponents' side, or in front of the hindmost team-mate, the player is offside.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the offending team's offside line
- (d) **Players not joining the maul.** All players in front of the offside line and who do not join the maul, must retire behind the offside line at once. A player who does not do so, is offside. If any player who is behind the offside line oversteps it and does not join the maul, the player is offside.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the offending team's offside line
- (e) **Players leaving or rejoining the maul.** Players who leave a maul must immediately retire behind the offside line, otherwise, they are offside. If the player rejoins the maul in front of the hindmost team-mate in the maul, they are offside. The player may rejoin the maul alongside the hindmost team-mate.  
**Penalty:** Penalty Kick on the offending team's offside line

- (f) When players of the team who are not in possession of the ball in the maul voluntarily leave the maul such that there are no players of that team left in the maul, the maul may continue and there are two offside lines. The offside line for the team in possession runs through the hindmost foot of the hindmost player in the maul and for the team not in possession it is a line that runs through the foremost foot of the foremost player of the team in possession at the maul.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

- (g) When players of the team who are not in possession of the ball in the maul voluntarily leave the maul such that there are no players of that team left in the maul, players of that team may rejoin the maul providing that the first player binds on the foremost player of the team in possession of the ball.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

### 17.5 SUCCESSFUL END TO A MAUL

A maul ends successfully when the ball or a player with the ball leaves the maul. A maul ends successfully when the ball is on the ground, or is on or over the goal line.

### 17.6 UNSUCCESSFUL END TO A MAUL

- (a) A maul ends unsuccessfully if it remains stationary or has stopped moving forward for longer than 5 seconds and a scrum is ordered.
- (b) A maul ends unsuccessfully if the ball becomes unplayable or collapses (not as a result of foul play) and a scrum is ordered.

- (c) **Scrum following maul.** The ball is thrown in by the team not in possession when the maul began. If the referee cannot decide which team had possession, the team moving forward before the maul stopped throws in the ball. If neither team was moving forward, the attacking team throws in the ball.
- (d) When a maul remains stationary or has stopped moving forward for more than 5 seconds, but the ball is being moved and the referee can see it, a reasonable time is allowed for the ball to emerge. If it does not emerge within a reasonable time, a scrum is ordered.
- (e) When a maul has stopped moving forward it may start moving forward again providing it does so within 5 seconds. If the maul stops moving forward a second time and if the ball is being moved and the referee can see it, a reasonable time is allowed for the ball to emerge. If it does not emerge within a reasonable time, a scrum is ordered.
- (f) When the ball in a maul becomes unplayable, the referee does not allow prolonged wrestling for it. A scrum is ordered.
- (g) If the ball carrier in a maul goes to ground, including being on one or both knees or sitting, the referee orders a scrum unless the ball is immediately available.
- (h) **Scrum after a maul when catcher is held.** If a player catches the ball direct from an opponent's kick, except from a kick-off or a drop-out, and the player is immediately held by an opponent, a maul may form. Then if the maul remains stationary, stops moving forward for longer than 5 seconds, or if the ball becomes unplayable, and a scrum is ordered, the team of the ball catcher throws in the ball.

'Direct from an opponent's kick' means the ball did not touch another player or the ground before the player caught it.

If a maul moves into the player's in-goal, where the ball is touched down or becomes unplayable, a 5-metre scrum is formed. The attacking team throws in the ball.