

Spirit Scoring System 2025

Frequently Asked Questions



These are some of the frequently asked questions about the current Spirit Scoring System, as updated in 2025.

Is this a brand new Spirit of the Game?

No, Spirit of the Game remains what it always has been: a core part of Ultimate and a crucial part of self-officiation. This is not redefining Spirit of the Game.

Spirit of the Game remains as [defined in the rules](#):

"A set of principles which places the responsibility for fair play on the player. Highly competitive play is encouraged, but never at the expense of mutual respect among competitors, adherence to the agreed upon rules, or the basic joy of play."

Is this a brand-new version of the Spirit scoring system?

This is an improved, simpler Spirit scoring system that takes into account what USAU has gathered and received from many sources about the Spirit scoring system.

What is new about the Spirit Scoring System 2025?

- There are fewer categories (3 instead of 5).
- There is a different average score (6 instead of 10).
- There are updates to the standard examples that teams and Spirit Captains use to assign scores to themselves and their opponents.

What are the new categories?

- **Rules Knowledge and Use** - same as before
- **Fouls and Body Contact** - same as before
- **Communication and Conduct** - replaces Fair-mindedness, Attitude, and Communication

What is the new total possible score?

The scoring system is still 0-4 in each category, with 2 being a “Good” game. Therefore, a “Good” game will now have a total score of 6 instead of 10. The maximum score for a game will now be a 12 instead of a 20.

Are there new examples for each category?

Yes, there are new examples to help you assign scores.

[USAU Spirit Score Examples](#)

If you have thoughts to share about your experience with the new examples or the revision in general, we are collecting feedback with this form:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc_xT0cU511Hj7POIB1OXgclRHPM0yZcmudlYh1iuTfleZQgQ/viewform

Who did the work to create and test this new system?

The Spirit of the Game working group did most of the work. There was assistance from the SOAR committee, the EDI committee, the LGBTQ+ advisory council, the BIPOC Advisory Working Group, and various past surveys that USAU has done.

Why were these changes made?

The three main goals in this set of revisions were:

- To simplify the overlapping categories of Fair-Mindedness, Attitude, and Communication so that scoring could be more streamlined and less confusing
- To address concerns that have been raised about how bias can sometimes impact Spirit of the Game and Spirit ratings
- To clean up and modernize some of the more minor issues in the examples and in guidance around Spirit Scoring

It's also hoped that this revision will lead to additional improvements in how Spirit of the Game is scored, taught, used and adopted.

Spirit of the Game has never simply been “sportsmanship” – itself a dated term – and it is hoped that these changes will bring attention and better understanding to how influential and special Spirit of the Game is to the sport of ultimate.

I have more questions.

That isn't a question.

What if I have more questions?

Contact Nep (Travis) Smith or Cotton (Sebastian) Miner with questions about the process, the examples, or the technical details.

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If you have broad questions, ideas or feedback, you can also reach out to Kate Kingery, chair of the SOTG Working Group.

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