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 invented in 1967 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 and women, girls and boys.
Frequently Asked Questions....

Q: How many people play Ultimate in the US?
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 one and a half hours.

Q: How many people are on a team?
A: Teams have only seven players on the field at one time, but may have as many people on their roster as they choose.

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 the 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’s 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 the 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 Ultimate Players Association.

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) offers links to many Ultimate clubs across the country. The UPA has also developed an Ultimate instructional kit (available through 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 an 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 skills and drills that can help improve your game. The Ultimate Handbook (www.ultimatehandbook.com) is also a great resource for beginning and experienced players alike.

Q: Will Ultimate ever become an Olympic sport?
A: The UPA and WFDF (The 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 into continue our emphasis in each home town, each state and national community to build the sport at the grass roots level. We must work steadily to make our games better and stronger for our players which will make us increasingly 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.