

# AMERICAN FOOTBALL ORIGINS

## Historical Development Timeline

### Pre-1860s

**Mob Football Roots** Early collegiate games resembled a chaotic mix of soccer and rugby with large groups of players and few standardized rules.

### 1869

**The First Intercollegiate Game** Rutgers vs. Princeton. Played with 25 players per side using rules closer to soccer (kicking the ball only).

### 1876

**Massasoit Convention** The Intercollegiate Football Association (IFA) is formed; adoption of rugby-style rules begins.

### 1880

**Walter Camp's Innovations** The Father of American Football introduces the line of scrimmage and the center-to-quarterback snap.

### 1882

**System of Downs** Rules are amended to require a team to gain 5 yards in three downs, preventing teams from stalling.

### 1906

**Legalization of the Forward Pass** Introduced to open up the game and reduce dangerous "mass momentum" plays that caused frequent injuries.

### 1920

**Formation of the APFA** The American Professional Football Association is founded, later renamed the National Football League (NFL) in 1922.