**History/Background**

Team handball was invented in Europe around the 1890’s. In parts of Europe, it was played with 7 players per team on an indoor field. In other parts, it was played outdoors with 11 players per team. Most describe the sport as a cross between basketball, hockey, soccer, and water polo.

Official rules were created and it became an Olympic event. Men’s team handball made its Olympic debut at the 1972 Olympics in Munich. Women’s team handball was later added in 1976 at the Montreal Games. The United States has never enjoyed much success in the sport, drawn from the fact neither the men or women’s teams qualified for the Sydney Games. But the women’s team finished 8th at the Atlanta Games in 1996, while the men took 9th.

Source: [http://team-handball.net/](http://team-handball.net/)

**Rules**

Team Handball is played on a 40 x 20 meter court. A 3-meter wide goal is located at each end of the court.

A game lasts one hour (two 30 minute halves). The object of the game is to get the ball into the goal. Because a player cannot hold the ball for more than 3
seconds nor take more than three steps while holding the ball, passing advances the ball. The ball can also be advanced by dribbling the ball (as in basketball). The official rules of handball can be found on the University of Queensland, Australia website. ([http://www.itee.uq.edu.au/~bof/Handball/rules.html](http://www.itee.uq.edu.au/~bof/Handball/rules.html))

Source: [http://team-handball.net/](http://team-handball.net/)

**Terminology**

**Back line**

A line across the end of the court, but not including the goal line; also called the “outer goal line.”

**Center back**

A player centered largely around mid-court who directs the offence and shoots or tries to penetrate the defense; also called a “playmaker.”

**Center line**

A line across the court dividing it into two halves.

**Corner throw**

An offensive player’s throw from a corner at the offensive end of the court, restarting play after the ball went over the back line when a defender other than the goalkeeper touched it.

**Court**

The playing area for team handball.

**Court player**
Any player on the court except a goalkeeper; also known as a “field player.”

**Dribble**

To move the ball by bouncing it on the floor.

**Exclusion**

When a player is ejected from the game with no replacement allowed.

**Field player**

Any player on the court except a goalkeeper; also known as a “court player.”

**Four-meter line**

A line four meters in front of a goal that marks the limit of where a goalkeeper may advance to defend a penalty throw; also known as the “goalkeeper’s restraining line.”

**Free throw**

A fresh start to offensive play without the interference from the defense, awarded for a minor offence by the opponent.

**Free-throw line**

An arching dotted line extending nine meters from the goal, marking where an attacking team resumes play after being fouled outside the line; also known as the “nine-meter line.”

**Goal Area**

The D-shaped area extending six meters from the goal and occupied only by the goalkeeper.
Goal area line

An arching line that defines the goal area; also known as the “six-meter line.”

Goal line

The line the ball must cross to score a goal.

Goal throw

A throw-in from goalkeeper to a teammate, restarting play after the goalkeeper on the opposition last touched the ball before it passed over the back line.

Goalkeeper

The player in charge of defending the goal.

Goalkeeper’s restraining line

A line four meters in front of a goal that marks the limit of where a goalkeeper may advance to defend against a penalty throw; also called the “four-meter line.”

Harpaston

An ancient Roman team sport believed to be a forerunner to handball, in which players threw a small ball to teammates while trying to avoid opposing players.

Jump shot

A shot attempted while leaping.

Line player

An offensive player who plays largely around the six-meter line; also called a “pivot.”
Nine-meter line

An arching dotted line extending nine meters from the goal, marking where an attacking team resumes play after being fouled outside the line; also known as the “free-throw line.”

Outer goal line

A line across the end of the court, but not including the goal line; also called the “back line.”

Penalty line

A one-meter line seven meters in front of the goal where penalty throws are attempted; also called the “seven-meter line.”

Penalty shoot-out

A tie-breaking system where players on each team try to score against the opposing goalkeeper from the penalty line to determine a winner.

Penalty throw

A seven-meter shot at goal defended only by the goalkeeper and awarded for a serious offence or because the defense illegally spoiled a clear chance to score a goal; also called a “seven-meter throw.”

Pivot

An offensive player who plays largely around the six-meter line; also called a “line player.”

Playmaker
A player centered largely around mid-court who directs the offence and shoots or tries to penetrate the defense; also called a “center back.”

**Red card**

A card signifying a referee has ejected a player from the game.

**Referee play**

Similar to a jump ball in basketball, a throw into the air by the referee so a player on each team can jump and try to control the ball.

**Running shot**

A shot attempted while running.

**Seven-meter line**

A one-meter line seven meters in front of the goal where penalty throws are attempted; also called the “penalty line.”

**Seven-meter throw**

A seven-meter shot at goal defended only by the goalkeeper and awarded for a serious offence or because the defense illegally spoiled a clear chance to score a goal; also called a “penalty throw.”

**Shooter**

A player, usually tall and a good jumper, who shoots from the back-court.

**Sideline**

A boundary line marking a side of the court.
**Six-meter line**

An arching line that defines the goal area; also known as the “goal area line.”

**Throw-in**

A throw from the side of the court to restart play after the ball has gone over the sidelines.

**Throw-off**

A throw from the center line to a teammate at least three meters away and behind the line, used to restart play.

**Two-minute suspension**

The penalty for a second warning from the referee or for any severe foul or unsportsman-like behavior.

**Wing**

A player who plays largely along the side of the court.

**Yellow card**

A card signifying the referee has warned a player about an infraction.

Source: [www.handball.gr/glossary.htm](http://www.handball.gr/glossary.htm)

**Potential Benefits**

Team handball is an exciting, fast-paced action sport

It’s easy to play either indoors or outdoors

It’s inexpensive activity that can easily be incorporated into your program
It’s easily modified to fit your space, time, and number of participants.

It can be played by people of all sizes, ages, and genders.

Broadens recreational/club sport base.

It teaches team work and cooperation.

It’s a great fitness activity.

Works on cardiovascular health because you are constantly moving.

Great way to have fun while being physically active.

Source: http://www.runet.edu/~mdumin/pe304/units.htm