

This Week in Real Estate: Fifteen Football Historical Fun Facts

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This Week in Real Estate paid homage to Major League Baseball's Opening Day. Therefore, *This Week in Real Estate* would be remiss to take the opportunity to honor the National Football League's Opening Weekend of the 2021 football season and must take a time out from its regularly scheduled program to discuss some historical football Fun Facts (courtesy of mentalfloss.com).

1. Football was essentially rugby until 1882, when new rules were established that gave each team three tries to advance the ball five yards.
2. That's also why the field looks like a gridiron. Lines had to be established so teams knew how far they had to go.
3. Kickers got more respect in those early days. Originally, touchdowns were only worth four points, while field goals were worth five.
4. In football's early days, the forward pass was illegal, so most plays were variations on a theme of "ball carrier smashes into the line of scrimmage." Unsurprisingly, this limited playbook led to a lot of injuries.
5. As president, Teddy Roosevelt threatened to ban football unless new rules were established to ensure player safety. The revised rules introduced the forward pass.
6. The new rules also cut the time of the games by ten minutes. Games were originally 70 minutes long.
7. The huddle was first used in the 1890s by quarterback Paul Hubbard, who was deaf. Hubbard was concerned the other team could interpret his hand signals, so he brought his teammates into a round formation to call plays.
8. The first professional football player was William "Pudge" Heffelfinger. He was paid \$500 to play in a game in 1892.
9. The first televised professional football game took place in 1939. It wasn't quite the huge spectacle that pro football has become—that first broadcast only appeared on approximately 500 TV sets.
10. If you're talking to a mathematician, the shape of a football is best described as a "prolate spheroid." But everyone will know what you're talking about if you just say "football-shaped."
11. Fans who pay attention to the ball itself will notice a subtle difference between the pro and college balls. While both levels use identically sized balls, college games are played with balls that have white stripes painted on either end. These markings supposedly make a passed ball easier to spot while it's in flight.
12. The longest field goal made in pro football history was 64 yards. The longest attempted field goal in pro football history was 76 yards. It missed.
13. The name "football" was originally fitting since the game was largely played with players' feet. The first college game took

place in 1869, but modern fans likely wouldn't have recognized the action. Each team had 25 men, and players weren't allowed to pick the ball up. Instead, they advanced towards the goal by kicking it or swiping at it with their hands.

14. When future president Herbert Hoover attended Stanford in the early 1890s, he was a student manager of the football team. According to team lore, when Stanford and the University of California met on the field for the first time in 1892, there was a delay after Hoover forgot to bring the ball.
15. Modern games don't have this problem: Pro rules dictate that the home team has to have 36 balls (for outdoor games) or 24 balls (for indoor games) ready for inspection by the referee two hours before a game's starting time.