Rugby is a popular sport in Northern Ireland. Teams of up to fifteen athletes play rugby on outdoor fields with an oval, spheroid-shaped ball.

Players score points by carrying or kicking the ball through the other team's goalposts. They may run, kick, or throw the ball, but unlike in American football, the ball must go backwards or laterally from one player to another before it may be carried forward.

The Irish Rugby Football Union Ulster Branch, also known as Ulster Rugby, was founded in 1879. Ulster Rugby oversees the sport throughout Ulster—the six counties that make up Northern Ireland, as well as three counties that are part of the Republic of Ireland.

Rugby was named after an elite English school, where it developed in the mid-nineteenth century. In Northern Ireland, it was historically associated with upper-class Protestant communities; however, in recent years, Ulster Rugby has worked hard to broaden its cross-community appeal.

The Smithsonian Institution thanks Ulster Rugby for assistance with this display.