

**OFFICIAL RULES**

**OF THE**

**AUSTRALIAN DODGEBALL**

**LEAGUE**

[**www.theadl.com.au**](http://www.theadl.com.au)

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**DEFINITIONS**

***Active Player:*** A player taking part in a Set who has not yet become an Eliminated Player.

***Eliminated Player:*** A player who has

* Thrown a Live Ball that has been caught by an Active Player on the opposing team or;
* Been hit by a Live Ball and then had that ball become a Dead Ball without it being caught by an Active Player on their team or;
* Made contact with any part of their body on or over any of the lines that define their team’s half of the Court Boundary or;
* Been Disarmed

**Disarm:** If player A has a ball knocked out of their control by a Live Ball thrown by an Active Player on the opposing team then Player A has been disarmed if the ball knocked out of their control becomes a Dead Ball without being caught by a team mate.

**Catch:** A Live Ball is caught if, in the Referee’s Opinion, it is under the control of an Active Player (who is on the opposing team to that of the thrower) while that Active Player has at least one point of contact within their team’s half of the Court Boundary.

**Court Boundary:** The Court Boundary is defined by a rectangle 60 feet long and 30 feet wide, divided into 2 equal sections by a centerline and attack lines (10 feet from and parallel to the centre line)

***Live Ball:*** A ball that has been thrown by an Active Player and which has not become a Dead Ball

**Opening Rush:** At the commencement of a Set all Active Players are to be lined up with at least one foot touching the Court Boundary backline. At the Referee’s starting whistle both teams may rush for the 3 balls lined up to their right hand side on the centre line. All balls must be brought back behind the activation line (see Court Boundary) before they become Live Balls.

Once a team has activated all 3 of the balls to their right hand side they may take possession of any balls remaining on the centre line.

***Dead Ball:*** A ball becomes dead once it makes contact with anything other than an Active Player or a ball being held by an Active Player. This includes but is not limited to:

* Ceiling
* Netting
* Floor
* Wall
* Referee
* Eliminated Player
* Dead Ball
* Live Ball
* Any other object that is not an active part of the match

For the avoidance of doubt two live balls that make contact with each other both immediately become dead balls

**Set:** A set begins with the Opening Rush and ends when all the Active Players on one side have become Eliminated Players.

**Match:** A 40-minute contest between two teams, competing for the most number of sets within the time frame.

**Registered Players:** A player who has submitted the required online form via the Australian Dodgeball League Website ([www.theadl.com.au](http://www.theadl.com.au)) and who has paid any relevant registration fees for the season.

**Sudden Death:** When playing under Sudden Death conditions any balls held by all Active Players are considered to be part of the Active Player’s body. As a result blocking a Live Ball will result in the blocking player becoming an Eliminated Player unless the blocked ball is caught by an Active Player on the blocking player’s team before it becomes a Dead Ball.

**Substitute Players:** A team may only play with Substitute Players if they are unable to field a full team of Registered Players.

A player who is not a Registered Player may play for a team as a Substitute Player provided they meet the following criteria:

* They must not be a Registered Player for any other team competing in the same league
* They must not be a Registered Player for any team competing in a higher division league run by the Australian Dodgeball League within the same State
* They must not have been an Active Player for any part of the same round of matches for any of the leagues run by the Australian Dodgeball League within the same State as the team they wish to fill in for

For the avoidance of doubt

* Players registered for the NSWDL but not registered for either the VDL or the VDLF may be a Substitute Player for either a VDL or a VDLF team (but not for both within the same round).
* Players registered for the VDL may not be a Substitute Player for any VDLF teams
* Players registered for the VDLF may only be a Substitute Player for a VDL team if they do not take part as an Active Player in any of that round’s VDLF matches

**1.0 TEAM ROSTERS & SUBSTITUTIONS**

1. A full mixed team consists of 6 Active Players on the court, with a maximum of 4 male players on court as Active Players at any time.
2. A full women’s team consists of 6 Active Players on court all of which are female
3. A full men’s team consists of 6 Active Players on court all of which are male
4. There is no maximum limit to the amount of Registered Players a team can have on their roster. All players MUST fill out & sign a waiver form before playing dodgeball.
5. A team may play with Substitute Players only if that team is unable to field a full team of Registered Players and as long as the Substitute Players meet the relevant criteria. A team may only play with as many Substitute players as are required to field a full team
6. A team must field a minimum of 3 Registered Players. For mixed teams one of these players must be a female.
7. If a team does not have the minimum required players at the commencement of the Match they will lose 1 point for every 3 minutes that elapses. If the team is still unable to field the minimum required players after 20 minutes of match play have elapsed then that team will forfeit the match 10-0.
8. If a team gives more than 48 hours notice that they will be unable to field a team for a scheduled match then that team will forfeit that match 8-0.

**2. EQUIPMENT**

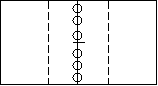
1. Players are encouraged to wear any protective equipment they feel is necessary for their own safety.
2. It is mandatory for all players to wear matching jerseys and shorts throughout the entire season. Teams will be penalized 1 point (by having this point awarded to their opponents) for each jersey or shorts that does not match the team’s uniform. This penalty is applied at the commencement of the match and is not rescinded in the event that any uniforms are delivered after the start of play. The penalty for uniform infringements is capped at 4 points per team per match.

• All game balls are international 7” rubber coated foam balls and are provided by the Australian Dodgeball League.

**THE COURT**

• The court is defined by the Court Boundary as per the diagram below:

**IDEAL MEASUREMENTS: 60’ x 30’ court**



**BOUNDARIES**

• The Court Boundary is typically defined by tape

• Any player who makes contact with the Court Boundary or any area outside the Court Boundary with any part of their body will become an Eliminated Player at the moment of contact.

1. For the avoidance of doubt a player who jumps over the Court Boundary remains an Active Player until they make contact with the ground, nets, eliminated players etc.

**BALL RETRIEVAL**

1. Active Players may not leave the Court Boundary to retrieve balls, if they do they will become Eliminated Players
2. Eliminated Players may retrieve balls along the side lines of the court and pass them to Active Players
3. Only a single designated ball retriever wearing the required uniform (typically a high visibility vest) is able to retrieve balls from behind the back line
4. No ball retriever may directly impact play through the action of returning balls. For example, a ball retriever may not stop a ball from rolling back to the opponents side by rolling a ball in from the side to intercept the ball rolling back

**FIXTURES & LADDERS**

• Fixtures are posted online 48 hours prior to the first match of the regular season.

• Season length is dependent on the amount of teams playing in the season. Each team will play opposing teams once throughout a season.

• Due to unforeseen forfeitures, the fixture may change throughout a season. Teams will be notified if this occurs.

• Due to unforeseen forfeitures, teams may be asked to switch match times throughout a season.

• The Ladder is based on a win/loss/draw system including a percentage system.

• The Australian Dodgeball League will only cancel games if the temperature reaches above 38 degrees.

• In extreme heat conditions, short breaks and water breaks are mandatory. This will be included in the game time.

• Teams will be notified if any changes are made to the fixture or to game times

## GAME FORMAT

• Teams are required to show up 5-10 minutes before game time for stretching and warm-up.

• Each match runs continuously for 40 minutes and is broken into 2 20 minute halves.

•  Each team has one nominated captain. Only the captains may talk to the referees during a dispute.

• The balls will be set up by the players prior to each round.

• At the start of each round, each team will place 3 balls on the right side of their half line (6 Total). The balls are to be spaced out according to the team’s preference.

• To begin each set, the referee will sound by a loud, crisp whistle. Once blown, players may run towards their balls *(The Opening Rush).*

• Teams must rotate halves at half time.

• If players are eliminated, they must exit the Court Boundary as quickly as possible and by the route that will have the least impact on the match.

• If a Set ends in the first half with less than 2 minutes remaining until half time the teams will switch sides early and play through the half time buzzer

* If a set ends in the second half with less than 2 minutes but more than 30 seconds remaining the teams will play a final set of Sudden Death. This set will commence without the Opening Rush.
* If a set ends in the second half with less than 30 seconds remaining the match will end.

If either the half time or full time buzzer sounds while a Set is still underway then all Active Players at the time of the buzzer will return to their respective back lines. Each team will be given control of 3 balls and the referee will restart the Set under Sudden Death rules. This Sudden Death will continue until all of the Active Players on one side are Eliminated.

**DODGEBALL MATCH RULES**

**ELIMINATING PLAYERS**

• Players are eliminated if they:

* Throw a Live Ball which is then caught by an Active Player on the opposing team
* Are hit by a Live Ball anywhere on their body (hair, clothing etc included) and then have that Live Ball become a Dead Ball without it being caught by an Active Player on their team
* Make contact with any part of their body on or over any of the lines that define their team’s half of the Court Boundary
* Are Disarmed
* Receive 2 yellow cards or one red card from the referee.

Note: Players may cross the centre line during the Opening Rush

• ***INTERFERENCE*** - No player who has been eliminated may interfere with current gameplay.  If a referee believes an eliminated player has intentionally interfered with gameplay, they can eliminate specific players based on the situation

**THE OPENING RUSH**

• A game begins by placing 6 dodgeballs along the half line; 3 on the right side of a teams half line and 3 on the other. Players then take a position behind the baseline, with at least one foot touching the back line. Following the starting whistle by the referee, teams may approach the centerline to retrieve the balls.

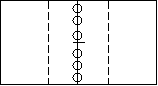
• ONLY during the opening rush, players may cross the centre line but must maintain at least one point of contact with their half of the court.

• Teams may only retrieve the 3 balls to the right of the center hash on the opening rush. Once a ball is retrieved it must be taken behind the activation-line (see dotted lines on “The Court” below) before it can be legally thrown.

•For the avoidance of doubt a player does not need to travel over the activation line to active a ball

• Any ball thrown before it crosses the activation-line is considered a Dead Ball and cannot eliminate a player. Depending on the circumstances unintentionally throwing an un-activated ball may be considered unsportsmanlike conduct by the referee and result in a yellow or red card.

• Once a team has activated their 3 balls, they may take possession of any balls that remain on the centre line. These balls still need to be activated by taking them behind the activation line.



**NOTE: All players must have at least one foot touching the baseline when the referee blows the whistle at the start of each set. At the discretion of the referees, teams may be penalized for false starting or if they are deemed to have blatantly cheated by not having at least one foot on the baseline. Teams shall receive one warning for false starting per half and any subsequent violation may result in a yellow card violation.**

**THROWING**

• No balls can be thrown by spiking, bumping, slapping off the ground or otherwise accelerating the ball without gripping it first

• *KAMIKAZE THROW* - This occurs when any player jumps over the half line into the opposing teams court in an attempt to knock out an opponent.  The airborne player must release their ball before they land on the ground or their throw will not count. If the Kamikaze thrower releases their ball before touching the ground, any opponent they hit will be eliminated instantly, despite when the Kamikaze thrower lands on the ground. Upon landing in the opponent’s zone, the Kamikaze thrower will be eliminated unless the situation is 1 vs. 1, in which case a successful Kamikaze throw instantly eliminates an opponent.

• If two opposing players throw a ball at each other at the same time and both players are hit with each other’s balls; both players are eliminated once/if the balls become dead. If this situation occurs during a 1-on-1 situation it is the referee’s discretion on which player was eliminated first. If the referee is unable to decide which player was eliminated first then both players will play a set of Sudden Death to determine which team wins the Set.

• Unnecessary squeezing of the balls is not permitted. You may have a firm grip, however, if the referee sees air being released from a ball once thrown, or any ball moving unnaturally through the air; the referee can eliminate that player and/or re-instate a player that was eliminated by that ball OR give that player a yellow/red card depending on the circumstances.

**CATCHING & BLOCKING**

• If an Active Player catches a live ball then the player who threw the ball is eliminated. In addition, the team who caught the ball returns an Eliminated Player to the game. Players who re-enter the game must enter in the order in which they were eliminated (first player eliminated is the first player to re-enter the court). Players must re-enter the court from the base line and upon stepping within the Court Boundary become an Active Player.

• A player must have full control of a caught ball and at least one point of contact with the court in order for it to be deemed a catch. The referee has final say on whether a player had proper control.

• A single Live Ball can eliminate multiple players if it ricochets from Live Player to Live player before becoming a Dead Ball

• You may catch a ball while in possession of another.

• Players may use a ball in their possession to block/deflect another ball thrown at them (however, a ball is still live off a deflection).

• Players may drop a ball in their possession in order to catch an incoming ball from the opposing team.

**PASSING**

• Players may pass their balls to other teammates with their hands, feet or by handing it off.

• Players may have more than one ball in their possession at one time.

• Absolutely NO kicking of any balls into the air of the opposing teams court.  A kicked ball cannot eliminate an opponent. **However**, if caught will result in an elimination of the kicker.

• If a player is eliminated they may pass any balls in their possession to their teammates but they may not interfere with any other balls on the court, if this occurs, then those balls will be forfeited to the opposing team.

**ADVANTAGE RULE**

* A team in possession of 4 or more balls has the advantage.
* If both teams are in possession of 3 balls then the team with more Active Player has the advantage
* If both teams are in possession of 3 balls and have the same number of Active Players then the team who threw last does not have the advantage

If at any point during a Set play slows down the referee will call advantage and will identify the appropriate team either verbally or by with a raised arm.

If a ball does not cross the centre line, leaving the control of one team and entering the control of the other team within 5 seconds of the advantage call the referee will begin counting down from 5. If the referee reaches 0 without a ball crossing the centre line and moving from the control of one team to the other then the side with the advantage will forfeit all of the balls in their possession to the opposition.

For the avoidance of doubt a throw from either side will reset the advantage.

If after the Opening Rush neither side throws a ball and both sides have 3 balls in their possession the advantage goes to the side who won the previous set.

Prior to the beginning of a match team captains should toss a coin to decide which side will start with the advantage. In the absence of a coin this may be decided by a game of paper scissors rock.

**SCORING**

• The team with the most sets won (points) at the end of the match wins. A point is awarded to the team who successfully eliminates the other team during one set. Each set is worth one point.

• If both teams have the same score at the end of the match, it will be recorded as a draw.

**FINALS & GRAND FINALS**

• The top 8 teams at the end of the regular season will enter the finals series

• Any finals matches that end in a draw will be decided by a 4 minute tie breaker set. If this tie breaker set is not decided after 4 minutes all remaining Active Players will complete the Set under Sudden Death Rules. The Sudden Death component of the Set will commence with all Active Players at their respective base lines and with each team in control of 3 balls

• Only Registered Players who have participated as an Active Player in 30% or more of the regular league matches may play in finals matches

• The top 8 teams will compete in the finals. Finals are based on the AFL Finals System.

* Round 1 of the finals (Preliminary Finals)
  + Preliminary Final 1: [1] vs [4]
  + Preliminary Final 2: [2] vs [3]
  + Preliminary Final 3: [5] vs [8]
  + Preliminary Final 4: [6] vs [7]
  + The losers of Preliminary Finals 3 and 4 are eliminated from the finals
  + The winners of Preliminary Finals 1 and 2 are straight through to the Semi Finals
* Round 2 of the finals (Elimination Finals):
  + Elimination Final 1: [Loser of Preliminary Final 1] vs [Winner of Preliminary Final 3]
  + Elimination Final 2: [Loser of Preliminary Final 2] vs [Winner of Preliminary Final 4]
  + The losers of Elimination Finals 1 and 2 are both eliminated from the finals
* Round 3 of the finals (Semi Finals):
  + Semi Final 1: [Winner of Preliminary Final 1] vs [Winner of Elimination Final 2]
  + Semi Final 2: [Winner of Preliminary Final 2] vs [Winner of Elimination Final 1]
  + The winners of Semi Finals 1 and 2 will progress to the Gold Medal Match
  + The losers of Semi Finals 1 and 2 will progress to the Bronze Medal Match
* Round 4 of the finals (Medal Matches)
  + Gold Medal Match: [Winner of Semi Final 1] vs [Winner of Semi Final 2]
  + Bronze Medal Match: [Loser of Semi Final 1] vs [Loser of Semi Final 2]
  + The Winner of the Gold Medal Match will be the Victorian Dodgeball League Champions
  + The Loser of the Gold Medal Match will be the Victorian Dodgeball League Silver Medalists
  + The Winner of the Bronze Medal Match will be the Victorian Dodgeball League Bronze Medalists

**FACILITIES**

• The Australian Dodgeball League hires facilities from Indoor Sports Centre and school gymnasiums across Melbourne.

• Players are expected to clean up after themselves.

• Any player to receive a complaint may face possible ejection from the league.

• Players are responsible for property damage.

**REFEREES**

• Referees are employees of the Australian Dodgeball League.

• They are trained referees. Their role is to encourage sportsmanlike play, call out eliminations and to help keep games flowing smoothly.

• Players are asked to abide by the honor system. Dodgeball is a fast-paced game and the referee cannot see everything; therefore it is important that everyone plays fair and calls him or herself out when hit. The roles of the referee include:

- Game Set-Up  
- Managing game times  
- Keeping score  
- Calling players out  
- Having final calls on disputed plays

- Preventing any possible altercations from occurring

**TIMEOUTS & SUBTITUTIONS**

• Substitutions can only be made at the end of each round and/or if a player has been injured.

• If a player has been injured, a substitution of the same sex may take the place of the injured player.

**CONDUCT DURING MATCHES**

Even though the nature of sport of dodgeball is fast-paced and competitive, it is expected that each and every player act with sportsmanship and conduct that upholds the integrity of the game. A blatant case of poor conduct or sportsmanship will result in a player’s expulsion from a match after which his/her team must carry out the rest of the sets in the match one player down.

Behavior constituting misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

* Fighting or attempting to assault another player
* Racist, sexist, or homophobic comments directed at the other team
* Rude verbal taunting
* Throwing a ball at an opposing player despite having been clearly called out
* Intentionally inflicting pain or throwing a ball excessively hard at close distance at another player’s face
* Excessive use of foul language
* Cheating
* Causing constant distraction to the game by a player that is not on court
* Squeezing and crumpling the ball before throwing it
* Kicking or spiking the ball

Misconduct during matches will lead to a YELLOW CARD or a RED CARD for the player.

Yellow cards act as a warning for the player for his/her conduct on court. Any team receiving 2 yellow cards will play one player short for the remainder of the match.

Red cards are for serious misconducts during the match, and may be given without prior warning to the offense. Should a player get a red card during a match, he/she is ejected from the match and the team will continue playing one player short for the rest of the match. The player receiving the red card shall further be suspended for his/her next match.

2 yellow cards to the same player in the same match, equate to a red card, and that player will be ejected from the match.

**RULE ENFORCEMENT**

Rules will be enforced primarily by the "honor system". Players will be expected to act honestly and rule whether or not a hit was legal or whether they were legally eliminated. However, because of the fast-paced nature of the sport, sometimes a player would not feel a ball skim their clothing or hair.

**THE REFEREES DECISION IS FINAL – NO EXCEPTIONS!**

Blatant dishonesty or failing to adhere to the referees decision may result in penalties either during or after the match upon review.

If you have any queries, please contact us via email at info@theadl.com.au

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