



PLAYING RULES

INTRODUCTION

AFL 9's is the Australian Football Leagues official alternative version of the game. It has been developed to provide an opportunity for all Australian Football enthusiasts, as well as those new to the game, for the purpose of participating in a match play experience that has strong parallels with the traditional game. Importantly, AFL 9's is easier to play, less physically demanding and provides an environment whereby participation, enjoyment and safety are a priority.

AFL 9's has application across community competitions, school environments and international markets whereby structured competitions can be developed or alternatively, social formats created. Fundamentally, the game enables people of all ages and ability levels to participate in male, female or mixed teams as determined by the individual competition.

The game is played between two teams of nine (9) with interchange players. The field has a maximum length of 100 metres (which can be modified depending on the age and ability level of participants) and is divided into three zones, a mid zone and two scoring zones. Teams score by kicking the football into their attacking scoring zone to designated forwards who are the only players permitted to score. A mark is awarded irrespective of the distance the ball has travelled and if the ball hits the ground it is an automatic turnover. When a dispossessed by a single handed touch. Once a player has been touched, they have to dispose of the ball to their first option or within one second.

REGULATIONS

1. The Playing ground:

The recommended playing field measures a maximum of 100 x 50 metres and is divided into three zones. The zones are advised to be set as 30m / 40m / 30m.



Note: Alternative fields (indoor & outdoor) can utilise different field measurements as suitable for the competition played an appropriate for the skill level, availability of space and players on the field.

2. The Team & Zones:

- Nine (9) players to take the field at any one time with unlimited interchange players.
 - Player numbers can be either reduced or increased dependent on the individual requirements of the competition
- Interchange of players may take place at any time, and be unlimited in number.
- Teams consist of three forwards, three centres and three backs distinguished by either bibs, wristbands or arm bands.
 - Players must be in their zones at the start of the match and after a goal has been scored. Once the game is in progress, players can move freely across all 3 zones.
- In mixed competitions there must be a minimum of three female participants on the ground at any one time, one in each line eg Forward, Centre, Back.

3. The Ball

An AFL 9's football is to be used; this ball has been specially designed to make it easier to handle for recreational participants and limit the kicking length due to the ground size. If an AFL 9's ball is not available a synthetic ball is recommended.

4. Duration of the Game

The game will consist of 2 x 20minute halves with no time on. The halftime interval will be 5 minutes in duration.

5. Start of Play

- Choice of Goal/End – The umpire shall toss a coin, before the toss the away or first named team captain shall call “the fall of the coin”. The captain of the team who wins the toss shall choose the end to which their team kicks.
- The game shall be started by a ball up between two centreline players in the centre of the ground; players must stand shoulder to shoulder in the ball up.
- The two competing players in the ball up cannot grab the ball or take possession of it until it has been touched by one of the centre players not involved in the ball up. The centre players not involved in the ball up may play the ball if the ball hits the ground.

RULES

Touch

A semi-contact version that requires players to implement a touch in place of a tackle. In this form of the game, a one handed touch can be applied to dispossess a player of the ball.

6. Disposal of the Ball

The ball must be disposed of by a handball or kick (as per the Laws of Australian Football). Players are not permitted to throw or hand the ball to another player or a free kick will be awarded to the opposing player.

7. Scoring

Only forward (Fwd) players can shoot for goal within his/her scoring zone. This can be during general play by receiving a kick or handball; or upon marking the ball and taking a set shot for goal. The player standing the mark must be inside the scoring zone. The field umpire will be the sole judge of whether the kick for goal was successful. If a turnover takes place inside the forward zone whereby the defensive team lets the ball touch the ground, a player cannot shoot for goal.

Penalty in the scoring zone– A penalty is awarded when the umpire believes a forward would have taken a mark inside his/her scoring zone however was illegally infringed in the marking contest. The player may take a set shot for goal.

** In selected mixed competitions, a goal scored by the female forward is worth 9 points*

8. Ball Transition

When the ball is in transition from the back zone to the team's scoring zone, it must be possessed by a player in the mid zone. Failure for this to occur will see a free kick awarded to the opposition team at the point in which the ball entered the scoring zone.

9. Out of Bounds

- When the ball goes out of bounds (ball completely over the line) by hand or foot, the nearest opponent shall kick the ball back into play.
- If there is any doubt as to which team last touched the ball before it went out of bounds, the umpire shall call a ball-up five metres in from the boundary line.

10. Restart of play

- After a goal, play is restarted in the centre of the field via a ball up.
- If a behind (1 point) is scored the ball is required to be kicked back into play from between the goals by a defender.

11. Bumping/Tackling/Barging

Touch

There is to be no contact or spoiling, players cannot:

- Hold an opponent with their hands
- Knock the ball out of an opponent's hands
- Push the player in the side

- Steal the ball from another player
- Deliberately bump another player
- Smother an opponent's kick by trying to block the kicking motion at the point of impact.
- Barge, fend off or shepherd opponents
- Touch the ball while another player has possession

12. Gaining possession of the ball

Touch

A turnover occurs when the ball touches the ground as a result of a poor kick or handball and when the ball goes out of bounds.

- If a turnover occurs the game stops and the opposing team gains possession of the ball from where the ball first made contact with the ground/went out of bounds.
- Players may attempt to intercept the ball in flight, however must not make contact with an opposing player.
- Players are not permitted to dive on the ball; a free kick will be awarded against the player diving on the ball.

13. Possession

A player may stay in possession of the ball for a maximum distance involving one bounce unless

- The player is tackled and adjudged holding the ball (tackle)
- the player is touched with two hands (touch)
- the player has the flag correctly removed (tag)
- directed to dispose of the football by the umpire
- player doesn't comply with rule 17F

14. Dispossessing the player in possession

Touch

- When a player in possession of the ball is touched by an opposing player, they must dispose of the ball by hand or foot at their first option or within one (1) second or a turnover will occur. The umpire will count out aloud so that the player in possession is aware of the time allocated to dispose of the ball.

15. Bouncing the ball

Where a player is moving whilst in possession of the ball he/she must bounce the ball or touch it on the ground after fifteen metres, irrespective of whether such a player is running in a straight line or otherwise. A player in possession may bounce the ball only once. He/she must dispose of it by hand or foot and may not touch it again until it has been touch by another player.

16. Mark

Touch

A mark is taken if, in the opinion of the umpire, a player catches or takes control of the football after it has been kicked by another player irrespective of the distance travelled.

- It is not a mark if the ball touches the ground or has been touched by another player during the period when the ball was kicked until it was caught or controlled by the player.
- When a player is awarded a mark or free kick an opposing player may stand at the position on the playing surface where the mark or free kick was awarded know as "the mark".

- No opposition player (except for the player on the mark) may be closer than 5 metres away in any direction.
- There is to be no contact in a marking contest. It is a free kick against the player who initiates contact in a marking contest
- The player taking the mark will have a reasonable opportunity to dispose of the ball or play on. If he/she delay the umpire will place a five-second count for play to resume.

17. Playing On

The umpire shall call "Play On" in the following:

- When a player, after taking a mark, runs around or over the spot "the mark" where he/she caught the ball.
- When a player after a turnover has occurred runs around or over the spot "the mark" where the ball made contact with the ground due to the turn over.
- The ball after being kicked has been touched in transit.

18. Playing the Advantage

- Once a player receives a free kick, they must go back behind the mark to take the kick or handball. There is no playing to advantage.

19. Kicking off the ground

A player is not permitted to deliberately kick the ball off the ground.

20. Field Bounces/Ball Ups

The ball shall be thrown up when the umpire is unsure which team touched the ball before it went out of bounds.

21. Fifteen Metre Penalty

A fifteen metre penalty may be awarded when a player:

- Over steps the Mark
- Engages in time wasting
- Uses abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language or behaviour towards an umpire
- Enters the protected 5 metre area around a player which has been awarded a mark or free kick.
- Has not returned the football directly and on the full to the player awarded the free kick or mark
- Engages in any other conduct for which a free kick would originally be awarded

22. Injured Player

If a player cannot take a free kick that has been awarded due to injury or illness then the teammate that was closest to the incident may take the kick.

23. Player's Boots, Jewellery and Protective Equipment

A player shall not wear during a Match:

- Any form of jewellery
- Boot studs, plates/cleats or protective equipment unless the field umpire is satisfied that the item does not constitute a danger or increases the risk of injury to other player completing in the match.
- A field umpire may inspect a player's boots or hands or any protective equipment that a player intends to wear or use during the match.

24. Send Off Rule

A send off rule will operate as follows:

- A player may be sent off at the discretion of the umpire for any reportable offence. The player sent off may be replaced. They shall take no further part in the remainder of the game. (Umpire issues a Red Card)
- Players may also be sent off by the umpire for minor breaches for a "cooling off" period of 10 minutes (Umpire issues a Yellow card), they may be replaced.
- If a player accumulates two yellow cards over the course of the competition the player will receive an automatic one-match suspension.

25. Set Penalties

Explanation	Penalty
Using abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language towards or in relation to an umpire – grade 1	1 week
For a second offence in the same season the penalty for a grade 1 change	4 weeks
Using abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language towards or in relation to an umpire – grade 2	2 weeks
For a second offence in the same season the penalty for a grade 2 change	6 weeks
Behaving in an abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene manner towards or in relation to an umpire	2 weeks
Using an obscene gesture	
I. Kicking another person	2 weeks
II. Striking another person	2 weeks
III. Tripping another person whether by hand, arm, foot or leg	2 weeks
IV. Engaging in time wasting	1 week
V. Charging other person	2 weeks
VI. Throwing or pushing another player after that player has taken a mark, disposed of the football or after the football is otherwise out of play	1 week
VII. Engaging in rough play against an opponent which in the circumstances is unreasonable	2 weeks 2 weeks
VIII. Spitting at or on another player	
Attempting to kick another person	1 week
Attempting to strike another person	1 week
Attempting to trip another person by hand, arm, foot or leg	1 week
Wrestling another person	1 week

Team captains will be informed of players who are to receive a yellow or red card.

The manager of the competition reserves the right to invoke heavier penalties if circumstances require. Repeat offenders will have their suspensions doubled from the previous time or double the prescribed penalty if a different incident has occurred with the same player.

26. Appeals

The player will have the right to appeal if he/she believes that the umpire has made an error of judgement in his /her dismissal from the field of play. The appeal must be lodged with the competition manager together with a \$50.00 fee within 30 minutes of the game concluding. This fee will be fully refunded if the appeal is successful. The controlling body will inform the player of the time, date and place of the hearing. Such a hearing will take place within 7 days of the appeal being lodged. A player may withdraw the appeal within the 7 day time frame but the fee will not be

refunded. Upon hearing the evidence at such a hearing the Appeals Committee has the following options open to it:

- Upholding the on field decision
- Overturning the on field decision
- Finding the player guilty of a lesser offence and imposing a lighter penalty.
- Finding the player guilty of a more serious offence and imposing a greater penalty.
- Finding the player guilty of the offence but in the light of the circumstances imposing a lighter penalty.

The decision of the Appeal Committee will be final and there will be no further avenue for appeals.

27. Controlling Body

A controlling body includes:

- the AFL;
- any league, association or body responsible for the organisation and conduct of matches of AFL Recreational Football, who has determined to play such matches in accordance with these Laws;
- a league, association or body responsible for the organisation and conduct of matches of AFL Recreational Football and who is affiliated to the AFL (AFL Affiliates); and
- Any league association or body responsible for the organisation and conduct of Matches of AFL Recreational Football who is affiliated to the AFL Affiliates.