

Competition Rules

7-a-side Soccer

In this competition the emphasis is on enjoyment, social atmosphere and skill development/maintenance. While competitiveness is not discouraged, it should be remembered that novice players need some encouragement and the "win at all costs" philosophy is not appropriate. All rules are open to the interpretation of the Referee and their decision is final.

Clarification of Common Misinterpretations

Hand-ball – the ball touching the hand of a player will not necessarily constitute a free-kick. The Referee will call a hand-ball if a player intentionally makes contact with the ball by a hand or arm (not shoulder or chest). Usually this is by moving the hand or arm towards the ball, but it could also be holding the arm stationary in position where contact would advantage the player's team.

Free Kicks – if a free kick is called, the team awarded the kick can take this kick straight away without the need for a whistle from the Referee, unless the Referee asks the kicking team to wait. The Referee will do this if they need to caution or discuss an issue with a player or move defensive players back the minimum distance of five (5) metres. Players should assume that all free kicks are direct free-kicks, unless the Referee holds one hand straight up above their head to signal an indirect free kick.

Dangerous Play – A Referee can award an indirect free kick against a player at any time if in the opinion of the Referee the player performs a dangerous act even if contact is not made with any other player. Examples of dangerous play include, but are not limited to, raising your foot above waist height to kick a ball, raising your studs at a player to challenge for the ball, and shoulder charging.

1. Responsibility of Players

All players are responsible for reading and understanding the rules contained herein.

Players and their associated spectators are not permitted to drink, or be under the influence of, alcohol (or other banned substances), during the games or at the venue.

If there are any rules that are not clear please discuss these with the Referee prior to the commencement of the game or at half time. Because of time constraints, the Referees may not discuss rules or rulings during the game.

Should any player be found to consistently damage equipment, venue apparatuses or other associated materials, they shall be suspended from the competition and be required to pay for damages incurred.

2. Responsibility of Officials

Referee

The Referee is directly responsible for the game and ensuring the described rules are adhered to. They are responsible for the safety of the players and the timing and conduct of the games. They have a duty to be respectful and considerate to teams, act in an unbiased manner and ensure the game remains social and enjoyable for everyone involved.

Convener

The Convener is responsible for the management of all the games, teams, venue, equipment and administration. They will be present at all games to ensure First Aid treatment is administered, information is provided and that all players and officials are conducting themselves in an appropriate manner. The Convener may observe the game and help the Referee to make the correct decision regarding the infringements or player behaviour during game play.

3. Conduct of Players

It is the responsibility of all the players to conduct themselves in a way that is respectful and considerate to team members, opposing teams, the officials and any other person concerned. Any behaviour, act or language that is considered inappropriate by the officials and/or the convener will not be tolerated. Poor conduct either on or off the field will be determined by the officials and/or convener and action will be taken based upon the offence. This can include warnings or the removal of a player, or team from the competition, should they be deemed dangerous or offensive to players or officials.

Zero Alcohol: There is no consumption of alcohol at the Netball courts by players or spectators. The Convener or Umpires have the right to remove a player from the court, or from the venue if they are suspected to be under the influence of alcohol. Security will be notified if there is any lack of cooperation shown towards the Convener or Umpires.

4. Location

The location for 7 a Side Soccer may change each season depending on availability and conditions of the fields. Please check each season individually for locations.

5. Game Commencement

- (a) Teams should arrive ten (10) minutes prior to the commencement of their match to allow for smooth transition of games.
- (b) Any teams that have not registered illegible players and are not ready to commence play with a minimum of five (5) appropriate players (see Rule 6) ten (10) minutes after the Referee has signaled the game can start will incur a 0-5 loss.
- (c) A game may go ahead after ten (10) minutes; however the 0-5 loss will stand regardless of the actual score.

6. Number of Players & Substitutions

There is no limit to the numbers of players that a team can register. However, team members can only play in the finals (quarter final, semi-final and grand final) if they have signed in and played two (2) or more games during the normal rounds. This must be indicated via the data from the Social Sport QR Code.

- (a) A team is allowed a maximum of seven (7) registered/eligible players (including a goalkeeper) on the field. Five (5) registered/eligible players is the minimum number of players that a team can have without a forfeit resulting.
- (b) A full team of seven (7) must have a minimum of two (2) and a maximum of five (5) members of either sex on the field at all times in the mixed competition. If only five (5) players are available, at least one of these players has to be from either sex.
- (c) Teams are allowed unlimited substitutions, which may only be made once the ball is out of play. Substitutions may not be made when the ball is not out of play. The substitute player must enter the field from the same location as the substituted player exits.
- (d) Teams may commence games with five (5) players provided rule 6(b) is satisfied.
- (e) In the event that rule 6(a), (b) or (d) are broken, at any time the Referee notices an extra player on the field a red card will be applied to any chosen player. The team will continue to play with a player down for the rest of the game. It is the responsibility of individual players and team captains to ensure that they maintain the appropriate number of players on the field in accordance with Rule 6. It is NOT the responsibility of the Referee to monitor this.
- (f) During finals matches (quarter final, semi-final and grand final), each player on field must have signed in and played a minimum of two (2) games to be eligible. If it is found that a player is on field that is ineligible for finals, this will result in an immediate 5-0 forfeit by that particular team. It is the responsibility of individual players and team captains to ensure that all their players are eligible for finals matches. While the Referee, Convener, and Competitions Coordinator will try to prevent such situations via the QR Code form, the responsibility ultimately rests with the individual players and team captains.
- (g) Continually breaching these rules may result in the offending team receiving an official warning. Persistent infringement may involve further disciplinary actions applicable to each case.
- (h) In the men's competition, female players are not allowed. All members of the teams must be male.

7. Required Uniform and Jewellery

It is HIGHLY RECOMMENDED that ALL player wear shin guards (covered by long socks) and mouth guards at all times, however if players do not wish to wear shin guards or mouth guards, they do so at their own risk.

Teams do not require a specific uniform, however, all players from a team must be wearing the same colour shirt and be identifiable to the referee and convenor that they belong on the same team.

If out-field players choose to wear a cap or hat during the game, it must be secured to their head and not fall off during play. The player also forfeits the right to head or challenge the ball in the air. An indirect free kick will be awarded for either of these infringements. If the goal keeper leaves the goal area they are considered an outfield player.

It is compulsory for all players to wear appropriate enclosed sports shoes – for more information regarding the appropriate footwear, please refer to the Synthetic Turf Field Do's and Don'ts. No player can take the field with bare feet or while wearing jewellery of any kind. Jewellery, including, but not limited to watches, necklaces, earrings, bracelets, arm / wrist bands, and rings, must be removed prior to the game. Medical bands are allowed to be worn.

All watches, necklaces, dangling earrings, bracelets, rings which are not bands MUST be removed prior to the game. Medical bands are allowed to be worn. The Referee will ask any player breaking this rule to remove the piece of jewellery.

Only prescription glasses will be allowed. Other types of glasses are not permitted.

8. Game Length

Games consist of two (2) equal halves of no more than twenty (20) minutes with players entitled to a five (5) minute half time break. No clock stoppages will be made except under exceptional circumstances. Such circumstances will be at the sole discretion of the Referee. No time outs are allowed. Intentionally delaying the restart of play will result in a caution (yellow card).

If a game commences late (and is not deemed a forfeit) then it still must finish at the scheduled time. If such a circumstance arises, the halves may be shortened. This is up to the discretion of the Referee. If a drink break is required, all players must stay on the field whilst quickly have a drink; the Referee will not delay the restart for players not returning to the field.

9. Start & Restart of Play

To either start play, or restart play (after a goal) a kick-off is used. Note that a shot at goal cannot be taken directly at the kick-off.

The ball must be placed on the half-way line and is in play when it is kicked either forward or backwards and moves. The kicking player may not touch the ball again until it has been touched by a different player.

10. The Playing and Goal Areas

Players are permitted to touch the ball when it is in the goal area (allowed to go inside the 'D') and no offside rule is in play.

Goal Kicks

In the event that the ball is kicked over the goal line (line in which the goal is placed) by an attacking player a goal kick is awarded to the defending team. A player of the defending team must place the ball on the ground inside the 'D' marked out on the field, and then kick it to a team mate. The player cannot "kick it to themselves" nor have a team-mate pass the ball back to the keeper to pick up (see rule 12).

If the player taking the goal kick touches the ball a second time before another player, the Referee will blow his whistle and instruct the player that they must kick it to another player before they can touch it again. The goal kick is then retaken. If this rule is broken again, an indirect free kick shall be awarded to the attacking team from where the player touched the ball a second time. A goal can be scored directly from a goal-kick.

Corner Kicks

In the event that the ball is kicked over the goal line (line in which the goal is placed) by a defending player. A corner kick will be awarded to the attacking team. A player of the attacking team must place the ball on the ground in the corner of the field which the Referee indicates, where the goal line and the sideline intersect (the corner of the field), and then kick it to another player. This player cannot 'kick it to themselves'.

If the player taking the corner kick touches the ball a second time before another player, the Referee will blow his whistle and instruct the player that they must kick it to another player before they can touch it again. The corner is then retaken. If this rule is broken again, an indirect free kick shall be awarded to the defending team from where the player touched the ball a second time. A goal can be scored directly from a corner kick.

Pass-Ins (a.k.a. Kick-in)

In the event that the ball is kicked over the sideline by a defending player a pass-in is awarded to the attacking team. If an attacking player kicks the ball over the sideline, the kick in is awarded to the defending team. A pass-in is taken by placing the ball on the sideline at the place where the ball was kicked out. A goal cannot be scored directly from a pass-in.

Players must be five (5) metres away from the ball when corners and side kick ins are taken.

The player taking the pass-in must kick it to another player before he/she can touch the ball again. If he/she touches the ball again before another player, the Referee will blow their whistle and instruct the player that another player must touch the ball after they have kicked it, before he/she can touch it again. If this rule is broken again, an indirect kick shall be awarded to the opposing team to be taken from where the infringement occurred.

11. Goals

Goals can be scored from anywhere on the field. A shot at goal cannot be taken at the kick off or a kick-in, without another player touching it first.

12. Goal-Keeper

The goal-keeper is the only player who can touch the ball with their hands. If the goal-keeper distributes the ball to an outfield player and the ball is passed back to the goal-keeper who picks the ball up in the goal area without the ball going to at least another team-mate OR being touched by an opponent an indirect free kick to the opposition team will be awarded where the goal keeper touches the ball with his hands.

In all instances, when in the goal area, the keeper must distribute (get rid of) the ball within five (5) seconds of gaining control of it or an indirect free kick to the opposition team will be awarded.

When substitutions occur, the player coming onto the field may assume any position on the field including the goal keeper position. If an outfield player or substitute assumes the goalkeeper position, then the player who was goalkeeper must either immediately remove themselves from the field (if they are the player being substituted off) or immediately assume another position on the field (if another outfield player is being substituted off). Changing the goal keeper may only be done when the ball is out of play, and the Referee must be notified of this change.

13. Free Kicks, Kick-Offs, etc.

Players must be five (5) metres from the ball for all free kicks, kick-offs etc.

For a direct six (6) metre penalty, the keeper and all players are to adhere to Futsal rules: the kicker is to aim at goal, with the intention of scoring. All players must be out of the penalty area, and the players of the opposing team must also be at least five (5) metres from the penalty spot.

All players must be behind the ball.

14. Slide Tackles

Due to safety concerns, NO slide tackles will be tolerated. If a player loses their footing in order to make a tackle and as a result ends up with even part of their body on the ground, a direct free kick shall be awarded to the other team. A warning may be given to the offending player upon their first offence if adjudged inadvertent. If they commit the same offence again, the Referee shall show them the yellow card. If, in the opinion of the Referee, a player intentionally makes a slide tackle a minimum yellow card will be issued. If the player commits a slide tackle after receiving the yellow card, they shall be immediately sent from the field without a replacement.

15. The Sin Bin & Disciplinary Sanctions

This competition is social. Any rough play, abusive language, back-chat or challenge to the Referees authority by word or action will not be tolerated. Rough play includes, but is not limited to, any form of aggressive slide tackle, tackling a player from behind, shoulder charging and any other act or omission that, in the Referees opinion, places the safety of players at risk.

In most instances, the following process will apply for the above infringements; however the Referee is perfectly entitled to send off any player at any stage for any reason for any period of time if they feel it necessary to do so for player safety or their ability to effectively control the game:

First offence – Verbal warning administered by the Referee. Yellow Card may be given by the Referee. The Referee can impose a forced substitution if deemed necessary.

Second offence – Time of five (5) minutes in the sin bin for a second infringement or a single incident that the Referee feels is sufficiently dangerous to warrant its award. No substitute player is allowed to replace a player who is sent off. The Referee will signal this with a yellow card and signalling 5 with an open hand.

Third offence – A Red card will be signalled and the player is sent off for the remainder of the game. Should the behaviour be deemed excessive, then the player may be asked to leave the venue. This can be awarded for a third infringement or a single incident that a Referee feels is sufficiently violent, anti-social or dangerous enough to warrant its award. Again, no substitute is allowed to replace a player who is sent off.

16. Finals

All players must sign in using the Social Sport QR Code and play two (2) games during the normal rounds to be eligible to play in the finals (quarter final, semi-final and grand final). If a team uses a player who is not eligible to play in the final rounds an automatic forfeit and disqualification will be recorded to the offending team. See Section 6 (f).

All players are also required to bring a form of PHOTO ID for the Convener to check player eligibility for every finals game.

If a draw results during any of the finals, a coin is tossed to decide who kicks off and then an extra five (5) minutes is played in which the golden goal rule applies. This means that the first team to score in this time shall be declared the winner.

If the teams are still even at the end of extra time, a "best of five (5)" penalty shoot-out shall take place to determine the winner of the match (In the mixed competition, at least 2 of the initial 5 penalties must be taken by either sex). If there is no winner after the five (5) penalties, each team shall take a single penalty until one-team scores and the other misses – determining the winner of the game (the scoring team). The scoring team will be deemed the winner. No single player can take more than one penalty, unless every team member has taken a penalty themselves.

The player playing in the goal keeper position at the end of the extra time must be the one in goals for the penalty kicks. No substitutions will be allowed.

17. Team Draws

It is the responsibility of the team captain and individual team members to read the draw and ensure players register and arrive at the correct field in time for kick-off. All correspondence will be forwarded via e-mail to the team contacts and will be available through the website.

Please ensure that you check the fixtures right up until game day as changes can be made to the fixtures.

18. Scorecards and Points

Referees will keep a record of all goals scored during a game on the official scorecard. The final result recorded by the Referee is final. However, captains from each team are encouraged to verify the final result and sign the scorecard to acknowledge that the game was accurately recorded.

Competition points will be allocated as follows -

- Win – 3 points
- Draw – 2 points each team
- Loss – 1 point

Should teams finish with equal competition points at the end of the regular season, For/Against will be used to separate the teams ie. (Team A goals scored – Team A goals scored against). If it is still a tie, the result of the game between those two teams during the season will determine the final position of the teams on the table. If the teams in question did not play each other, or, there is still a tie, the team with greater goals scored finishes above the other team.

19. Unforeseeable Acts

The following formula is to be used to determine the result for a game that cannot be completed for whatever reason (eg. Serious injury requiring ambulance attention, fields unsafe, power outages, etc).

A game called off anytime in the first half will be declared a draw, unless one team is leading by a margin of 5 or more points. In this instance, the result will stand at the score line when the game is called off.

A game called off anytime in the second half will be determined based on the score when the game was called off.

20. Injury and Insurance

A player may call for a stoppage due to an injury or illness, although the decision to stop play shall be at the sole discretion of the Referee. If a player is injured, it is their or their team mate's responsibility to immediately inform the Referee. The Referee may stop the game at any time.

For a minor injury, the Referee should send the injured player or a bystander to the Soccer Convenor for first aid treatment and to collect an Incident Report Form (this must be completed by the injured or another responsible person before they return to the field of play or leave the venue for further treatment). A bond (e.g. student card) may be required if an ice pack is borrowed.

If a player has a minor injury or blood on their clothing or their person, they have a maximum of two (2) minutes to be treated and/or remove all signs of blood on field, or they will be substituted with another player. After two (2) minutes have elapsed, the Referee should immediately restart the game. Time for injury will not be added on to the final half during grading or round games. The Referee can stop a game for any period of time to deal with an emergency.

For a medical emergency, the Referee is to remain with the injured player and send somebody else to inform the Soccer Convener of the emergency.

Time for medical emergencies will not be added on to the final half during grading or round games. See section 19 for information regarding the protocol for games that cannot continue due to injury.

During time for injury, all players must remain on the field unless involved in a substitution. In the event that a player is bleeding, they must leave the field immediately (for health and safety reasons) and not return until the wound has been cleaned and all blood and blood stained items have been removed and covered. If necessary, the ball and court surface shall be cleaned before play resumes.

During finals matches the above injury rules apply with injury time added to the final half. This includes any time taken for an emergency. However the injury time able to be accumulated is to be a maximum of ten (10) minutes.

Many injuries that occur during officially sanctioned and managed UQ SPORT activities are covered by our insurance policy. For further information regarding insurance please email insurance@uqsport.com.au or call 3365 6612. Alternatively you can contact the Competitions Coordinator at socialsport@uqsport.com.au or call (07) 3365 6612.

21. Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures

Should any person or team be conducting themselves in a manner that is felt to be inappropriate, discriminatory, disrespectful or dangerous, action will be taken by UQ SPORT officials and management.

If you feel that a player, team or official has conducted themselves in such a manner, you may lodge a formal grievance report to socialsport@uqsport.com.au

Disciplinary Procedures are in place to ensure that action is taken against any player, team or official who has acted in an inappropriate manner. Any action(s) taken will be at the sole discretion of UQ SPORT Officials and Management.

Please note that the Competitions Coordinator reserves the right to withdraw a team from the competition, without a refund, should the team:

- Forfeit more than two (2) games and do not provide a valid reason
- Continually display inappropriate behaviour towards UQ Sport staff and other customers

In these instances, what is deemed “valid” and “inappropriate” shall be at the sole discretion of the Competitions Coordinator.