

RULES FOR U9s & U10s COMPETITION FOR COACHES AND UMPIRES 2016

Purpose

To provide children in this age group with a fun, safe and positive experience through a well-structured match program that considers the maturity level of their motor, cognitive, social and emotional skills. The emphasis at this age level is the further development of basic game skills (kicking, handballing, marking, gathering, evasion and checking) group provides further opportunities to develop game skills and learning technical and tactical concepts. The match program for this age group provides further opportunities to develop game skills and the tactical principles of gaining possession, applying pressure, utilising space and positional play.

Spirit of the game

Prior to the commencement of play:

All players, coaches and umpires should gather together on the ground and shake hands; and the umpire and coaches should ensure players are aware of the rules and procedures to be followed in the conduct of the game

The spirit of the game is **to give all available players a game** of football.

Therefore:

where difficulty occurs fielding full numbers, both coaches must agree to even up player numbers; excess players should be given to the opposition team if they are unable to field the required numbers;

The umpire should at all times:

1. Endeavour to apply the rules of the games while awarding free kicks to players in preference to calling for ball-ups;
2. Understand the spirit of AFL Junior match rules for this age group is to enable all players to gather possession and to give **the player in possession of the ball every opportunity to kick or handball**. For this reason, restrictions are placed upon body contact (refer To **Contact/tackling**);

3. Attempt to involve all players as the opportunities arise, particularly when indicating which player is to receive a free kick after the ball has been kicked out of bounds, and by ensuring the effective rotation of players so they can experience playing as a forward, midfielder or backline player; and enforce the **full possession rule** at all ball-ups(see below).
4. In relation to all **ball-ups**, the **full possession rule** applies as follows:
 - a. a player contesting a ball-up may not grab the ball and play on; and
 - b. the player must knock, palm or punch the ball to a teammate or open ground, and may not play the ball again until it has been touched by another player or hit the ground.

The game – premiership points competitions

The football match program offered to players aged 9-10 must comply with the modified match program presented in this document with no premiership points, no finals, no ladders, no match results (no score) and no names of players published. Skill clinics and participation carnival days may be held. No representative teams should be selected.

The ball

A synthetic size 2 or leather football should be used.

The team

Rotate players at least every quarter to provide opportunities in several positions, i.e. players to change from one zone or position on the ground to another – interchange to backs, backs to centres, centres to forwards, forwards to interchange.

Equalise the teams and opponents as much as possible (match sizes, abilities).

Staying in position

To stop congestion, the umpire will instruct players to stay in their correct positions. Coaches should also instruct their players to stay in position and enable all players to play in the different positions through effective, regular rotations (see **The team** above).

The possession rule

The ball is possessed by controlling it, catching it, grabbing it, or laying 2 hands on it when it is on the ground.

Scrimmage and field ball-ups

Conducted between 2 players of equal size selected by the umpire. Before the throw up, the umpire should clear the area by sending players back to their positions or zones (full possession rule applies).

Umpires should “coach” the players to clear the immediate area.

Out of bounds

From a kick: a free kick is awarded against the player who last kicked the ball.

If there is doubt, or if the ball came off hands or a body, the umpire shall call a ball-up 5 metres in from the boundary.

‘Full possession’ at the ball-up is not permitted.

Gaining possession

A player’s prime objective should be to gain possession of the ball (eyes on the ball). Shoulder-to-shoulder contact is permitted when players are contesting a loose ball, provided the ball is within 5 metres. Running with the player, rather than running at them must be the intention. Front-on contact and contact from behind are strictly prohibited.

Once the ball is in possession, an opposition player may apply a modified tackle

Contact/Tackling

A player in possession of the ball may be tackled by an opponent wrapping both arms around the area below the top of the shoulders and on/above the knees.

The tackle may be from either side or from behind, provided the tackle from behind does not thrust the player with the ball forward (i.e. push him/her in the back).

If the player in possession of the ball is taken to the ground in the act of tackling, they will receive a free kick. If the umpire feels the player drops to the ground in order to receive a free kick, they will be penalised for holding the ball.

The player in possession of the ball, when held by an opponent applying the tackle, should be given a reasonable chance to dispose of the ball by kick or handball, or by attempting to kick or handball. If he/she fails to do so a free kick shall be awarded to the tackler for holding the ball.

If the ball is held to the body by an opponent a free kick shall be awarded to the tackler for holding the ball.

The umpire shall allow the play to continue if the ball is knocked out of a player's hands by the opponent in the process of applying the tackle.

No player shall be deliberately dumped or thrown to the ground by a tackle

Players cannot:

1. knock the ball out of an opponent's hands;
2. push the player in the side;
3. steal the ball from another player;
4. bumping an opponent;
5. sling, pull or otherwise apply force when "holding" a player; or
6. deliberately smother an opponent's kick.

Shepherding

A player is not permitted to push, shoulder or block an opponent not in possession of the ball.

Barging

No barging, fending off or chopping past opponents is allowed. A free kick shall be awarded to the nearest opponent

Mark

A mark is awarded, no matter how far the ball has travelled, to any player who catches the ball directly from the kick of another player.

Bouncing the ball

Bouncing the ball is optional but only one bounce is permitted.

Distance run

While a player in possession of the ball is moving, the player must bounce the ball within 10 metres, irrespective of whether that player is running in a straight line or otherwise. As above, only one bounce is allowed then the player must dispose of the ball.

Kicking off the ground

Not permitted unless accidental.

Distance penalty

A player can be awarded a 15 metre advancement towards their goals if after a mark or free kick the umpire is of the opinion an opposing player hinders that player. This could include such acts as overstepping the mark, wasting time, and using abusive language and behaviour.

Order-off rule

Bad language, poor sportsmanship and disputing umpiring decisions should be actively discouraged.
Players can be ordered off the ground and can be reported.

Coaches

The coach is allowed on the ground during play for the sole purpose of providing immediate feedback to players; he/she must not pressure, instruct or make comment to or about officiating umpires or decisions that they make. The coach must not pressure, instruct or make comment to the opposition team.

At the end of the game, all players and coaches should gather on the ground and shake hands. The umpire should also take this opportunity to address the players.

Interchange/Game Time

Interchange may take place at any time, but all players must play at least half the match.