



SOUTHERN FOOTBALL LEAGUE - UNDER 8 RULES & GUIDELINES

1. Purpose of Under 8 Junior Football

- a) To provide the 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.
- b) The emphasis is on the development of FUNdamental movement skills (the ABCs of athleticism – Agility, Balance, Coordination and Speed) and basic game skills (kicking, handballing, marking, and gathering).
- c) The match program for this age group provides an introduction of basic roles (forward, centre and back) and tactical principles of gaining possession, moving forward, passing to a teammate.

2. Spirit of the game

- a) The spirit of the game is to give all available players a game of football. Therefore:
where difficulty occurs fielding full numbers, both coaches and team managers must agree to even up player numbers;
- b) excess players on one team should be given to the opposition team if they are unable to field the required numbers.

The Umpire should at all times:

- c) endeavour to apply the rules of the games while awarding kicks to players in preference to calling for ball-ups;
- d) 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);
- e) 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;
- f) At the end of the game all players and coaches should gather together on the ground and shake hands. The umpire may also take the opportunity to address the players.

3. The Game

The following apply:

- a) No premiership win or loss points will be awarded or recorded
- b) No finals series to be played
- c) No publication of premiership ladders
- d) No publication of match results
- e) Names of players are not to be published
- f) A special Carnival Day can be held during the season

4. Officials

- a) A field Umpire and two Goal Umpires are required, but there are no boundary throw-ins so no boundary umpires are needed;
- b) Sports Trainers – Both competing Clubs must supply a Trainer for their own team. The Trainer from each Club must be in attendance, clearly visible for the duration of that game.

5. Playing Ground

The playing ground to be approximately 80 metres X 60 metres.

6. The Ball : Synthetic Sherrin Size 1 football



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7. The Team

The following apply:

- a) A maximum of 12 players to take the ground at any one-time.
- b) There shall be no rucks or rovers. (when playing full 12 – 4 players in each zone)
- c) The interchange of players may take place at any time. Players replaced due to serious injury are not to take any further part in the game.
- d) The team on the ground shall be divided into three groups (forwards, centres & backs) with each group occupying a zone. To stop congestion players should remain in their zone.
- e) Rotate players during the course of a game and over the course of the season to provide opportunities in all positions (including interchange). All players should play at least half a game. .
- f) As per the Spirit of the Game, both Coaches and Team Managers must agree to assist to equate player numbers. Excess players should be given to the opposition team if they are unable to field the required numbers. The spirit of the game is to give all available players a game.

8. Zones The following apply:

- a) The playing ground should be divided into three equal zones with lines marked or cones placed across the oval;
- b) Backs are restricted to the back zone. Centres are restricted to the centre zone and must be identified by wristbands. Forwards are restricted to the forward zone. Rotate players to provide opportunities in several positions (as per Rule 7 e));
- c) When the ball is in transition from the back zone to the forward zone, it must be touched by a player in the centre zone. Failing this, a free kick will be awarded to the opposition team at the point where the ball entered the end zone;
- d) Only players in the forward zone are able to score. When the ball is kicked into the forward zone and fails to be gathered by a forward and goes through for a score, the score shall not count and a free kick will be awarded to the opposition team in the full back region.

9. 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. Once the ball is possessed, only one player may hassle the player in possession but no contact, tackling or deliberate smothering is permitted so that he or she can kick or handball uncontested. Decide doubtful cases with ball-ups.

10. Playing time

The game shall consist of 4 quarters of a maximum of ten (10) minutes each. NO TIME ON .

11. Start of play and restarting after a goal.

The following apply when all players are inside their own zones:

- a) A ball-up between two centre-line players in the centre of the oval will start the game.
- b) Players contesting the ball-up should be of similar size.
- c) A player may not grab the ball at ball-ups and play on. He must knock, palm or punch the ball to a team mate or open ground, and may not play the ball again until it has either been touched by another player or hits the ground. This is known as the "Full possession" rule and applies to all other ball-ups during the game.

12. Restarting after a Goal : Play is restarted as in Start of Play



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13. Scrimmage and field ball-ups:

Where a scrimmage develops, if a free kick is not possible under the spirit of the game:

- a) the umpire shall stop play, send players back into their zones and call a ball-up between two opponents of approximately equal size.
- b) ' Full possession' at the ball-up is not permitted (full possession rule applies)
- c) Players should be encouraged to pick-up the ball and can be penalised for diving on the ball.

14. Out of bounds

The following apply:

- a) Where the ball goes out of bounds from a kick, a free kick should be awarded against the player who last kicked the ball.
- b) If there is a doubt as to which team kicked the ball out of bounds, the umpire shall call a ball-up 5 metres inside the boundary.
- c) When the ball goes out of bounds off hands or body the umpire shall call for a ball-up, 5 metres in from the boundary. (Full Possession Rule applies)

15. Contact/tackling

No contact or spoiling is permitted unless it is accidental and light shoulder-to-shoulder contact made while running to and at the ball. Players cannot:

- > hold an opponent with their hands;
- > knock the ball out of an opponent's hands;
- > push an opponent in the side;
- > steal the ball from another player;
- > deliberately bump another player (only incidental contact is permitted);
- > barge
- > deliberately smother an opponent's kick.

16. Shepherding

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

17. Barging

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

18. Mark

Any player catching a ball, or making a realistic effort where the ball touches both hands, directly from the kick of another player shall be awarded a free kick irrespective of the distance travelled by the ball.

19. Bouncing the ball

A player in possession may bounce the ball only once. The player must then dispose of the ball by hand or foot and may not touch it again until it has been touched by another player.

20. Distance run

While a player in possession of the ball is moving, the player has 10 metres in which to dispose of the ball, irrespective of whether they are running in a straight line or otherwise. As per Rule 19, a player may bounce the ball once within the 10 metre limit he or she can run.



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21. Kicking off the ground

A player is not permitted to deliberately kick the ball off the ground. A free kick will be awarded.

22. Distance penalty

Not applicable to this age group. Umpiring and coaching processes to be used. Acts such as overstepping the mark, wasting time, using abusive language or behaviour are matters that should be addressed by the coach or umpire on the ground.

23. Order-off rule

To be applied at the Umpires discretion. The use by a player of bad language, bad sportsmanship and the questioning of the umpire's decision should be actively discouraged. Player/s may be sent off and will stand out of the match for five (5) minutes and be counseled by the Coach / Team Manager, who have the discretion to extend the time penalty. The offending player can be replaced.

24. Coaches

The coach is allowed on the ground during play for the sole purpose of providing immediate feedback to players; he or she must not

- a) pressure, instruct or make comment to or about officiating umpires or decisions that they make;

ZERO TOLERANCE;

- b) pressure, instruct or make comment to the opposition team;

ZERO TOLERANCE;

- c) No Magnetic Boards or folders to be taken on the ground during the game by Coach

25. Awards:

Participation, effort and skill achievement awards to be the only individual awards given.

- 26. **Clearances:** Automatic clearances to be given between competitions. It is recommended that children play the season with the club they are first registered with.

- 27. **Tribunals:** No tribunal systems to be used. Discipline is to be left to the Club.

28. Safety:-

- a) Moulded boots compulsory for Mini League Players.
- b) It is recommended all children participating in any form of the game should wear an appropriately fitted mouthguard.
- c) It is recommended that the distance between the boundary line and oval fencing should be a minimum of 5 metres
- d) In all games, permanently fixed goal and point posts must be suitably padded to a height that can reasonably be expected to prevent injury

29. Other Rules and Laws

All other rules are as per the Laws of Australian Football.