



SOUTHERN FOOTBALL LEAGUE UNDER 12 RULES & GUIDELINES

1. Purpose of Under 12 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 consolidation of basic game skills is still the focus at this age level rather than competition and winning, while further developing technical and tactical concepts.
- c. These concepts include positional skills and basic performance enhancing techniques, e.g. warm-up, cool-down, nutrition, hydration, recovery and goal setting. .

2. Spirit of the game

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

- a) 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- e- Names of players are not to be published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 should 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 140 metres X 110 metres.

6. The Ball: Synthetic or Leather Sherrin Size 3 football should be used.



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7. The Team

The following apply:

- a) A maximum of 18 players to take the ground at any one-time.
- b) 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.
- c) 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. .
- d) 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. 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.

9. Playing time:

The game shall consist of 4 quarters of a maximum of fifteen (15) minutes each. NO TIME ON.

10. Start of play

The following apply when all players are in position:

- 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

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 positions and call a ball-up between two opponents of approximately equal size. (Full possession rule applies)

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)



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15. Bumping

As per the Laws of Australian Football

Law 15.4.3 Permitted Contact – Page 51

Law 15.4.5 Prohibited Contact and Payment of Free Kick – Page 52 and 53

Note: A player can bump an opponent's body from side-on but any contact forward of side-on will be deemed to be front-on.

A player with their head down in anticipation of winning possession of the football or after contesting the football will be deemed to have their head down over the football for the purpose of this law.

16. Tackling

Players can hold an opponent with their hands, use a wrap-around tackle, bump the player in the side, knock the ball out of the opponent's hand, steal the ball out of the opponent's hands or push a player in the side.

The wrap-around tackle:

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, providing the tackle from behind does not thrust the player with the ball forward (i.e. push him or her in the back).

- a) A player in possession of the ball, when held by an opponent applying the wrap-around tackle, should be given a reasonable chance to dispose of the ball by kick or by handball, or by attempting to kick or handball. If he or she fails to do so, a free kick shall be awarded to the tackler for holding the ball.
- b) The field umpire shall conduct a ball-up when the player with the ball has it held to the body by an opponent, unless the player has had a reasonable time to dispose of it prior to being tackled. In that case, a free kick shall be awarded to the tackler for holding the ball.
- c) The field umpire shall allow play to continue if the ball is knocked out of a player's hands by an opponent.
- d) A player, who is held by an opponent when not in possession of the ball, shall be awarded a free kick.
- e) **NO PLAYER SHALL BE DELIBERATELY DUMPED, THROWN OR SLUNG TO THE GROUND BY A TACKLE**

17. Shepherding

- a) The Shepherding rule in this grade is designed to encourage the skill of "blocking" without an aggressive movement. The shepherding motion should be seen as an intention to impede the progress of an opponent in reaching the immediate play.
- b) A Shepherd is using the body or arm to push, bump or block (a) a Player who does not have possession of the football and who is no further than 5 metres away from the football at the time when the push, bump or block occurs; and (b) where such contact is otherwise not Prohibited Contact. - Law 15.4.5 Prohibited Contact and Payment of Free Kick – Page 52 and 53.

17. Barging

No barging or chopping past opponents is allowed. A free kick is awarded. Fending off with an open hand to the body, provided it is not above the shoulders or in the back, is allowed.

18. Mark

Any player catching a ball directly from the kick of another player shall be awarded a mark provided the ball has travelled at least 10 metres,



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19. Bouncing the ball

A player in possession may bounce the ball twice only. 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, they have 15 metres in which to dispose of the ball, irrespective of whether he or she is running in a straight line or otherwise. As per Rule 19, a player may bounce the ball twice within the 15 metre limit he or she can run.

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

A player can be awarded a 25 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.

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 not allowed on the ground during play. Messages may be delivered by a Runner. (Please see SFL Runner Position Description) Coaches 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 the Runner.

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