



2024 RULES UPDATE



GOAL AFTER WHISTLE

Buzzer beaters! We all love them, but how do you know if the goal counts? In the past, the ball had to pass completely through the ring before the whistle to be counted.

Now, if the whistle to end play or to hold time is blown after the ball has left the hands of the shooter & the shot is successful, the goal will be scored.

WHY HAS THIS CHANGED?

It is easier for the umpire to assess whether the ball has left the player's hands when time is blown and signalled, than to assess whether the ball has passed wholly through the ring.

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If the shot is unsuccessful there's only two reasons that a penalty pass will be awarded for an infringement after the ball has left their hands:



INTERFERENCE WITH GOALPOST

If a defending player has caused the goalpost to move which interferes with the shot.

DOWNWARD DEFLECTION

If a defending player deflects the ball on its downwards path towards the ring.

THE DETAILS

In the situation where the penalty has been awarded and then timekeeper signals for time, the umpire will blow the whistle for time and then advise the players that the penalty can be taken.

If this occurs at the end of a period of play, play will be extended for the penalty pass to be taken including any subsequent infringements at that penalty pass.



SCORING A GOAL HAND SIGNAL



BALL HAS LEFT HANDS = GOAL

If the whistle to end play or to hold time is blown after the ball has left the hands of the shooter & the shot is successful, the goal will be scored.



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PLAYER SAFETY

Player safety is paramount in netball.

We've made some changes in the new rules, most of them to ensure the game of netball is safe & fair. It's important that player safety is taken seriously by players, coaches and umpires in dealing with injury incidents.

HEAD, NECK & CONCUSSION

We've also made some changes regarding head & neck injuries and suspected concussions.



At the elite level, we've introduced an independent concussion observer who may ask the umpires to hold time if there is a suspected concussion.



The new rule clarifies that umpires may hold time without a request being made if there is an obvious or serious injury.

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CALLING INJURY TIME

The new rule clarifies that as well as umpires holding time for injury or illness following a verifiable request by an on-court player, they may also hold time without a request being made if there is an obvious or serious injury which would include an injury to the head or neck and/or suspected concussion.

BLOOD

Players who are bleeding, have an open wound or blood-stained clothing must leave the court and be substituted but we no longer require a player with dried blood on them to be substituted.

Players with dried blood are now permitted to clean up quickly and continue playing. This will usually happen while the bleeding player is being substituted or other players or the ball are being checked for blood. Any clothing that becomes blood-stained must be replaced within the time allowed for the stoppage by the umpires and this may occur away from the playing enclosure.



HOLD TIME HAND SIGNAL

This update includes measures to ensure the game of Netball is safe, fair and fun for netballers of all levels.



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TACTICAL CHANGES

The 2024 Rules Update sees a change to the stoppages rule.

The new rule means teams no longer have to fake an injury to make positional changes during play, they can just request a 'tactical change' immediately after a goal has been scored. This is in addition to the ability to make changes at an interval or at a stoppage for injury, illness or blood.

There are two types of changes:



TEAM CHANGE

When an on-court player changes playing positions with another on-court player.



SUBSTITUTION

When a player moves from the team bench to replace a player on the court.

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WHEN CAN I MAKE TACTICAL CHANGES?



AFTER A GOAL

Immediately after a goal is scored.

IN ADDITION TO MAKING CHANGES AT:



INTERVALS

Quarter time, half time & three quarter time.



INJURY

At a stoppage for injury, illness or blood.

THE DETAILS

Tactical changes, whether team changes or substitutions, must be made without delay. This is to ensure the umpire is able to restart play quickly so the momentum of the match is not affected.

In individually timed games, time will be held for the tactical changes. This will not be possible in centrally timed games, but teams will still need to complete changes efficiently so that they're not penalised for delay.

While you have a right to make as many tactical changes as you like, if the number of changes is becoming overly disruptive to play, the umpire can refuse to allow them, or even penalise the team for delaying play.



TACTICAL CHANGE HAND SIGNAL

HOW TO MAKE A TACTICAL CHANGE

1

On-court player asks the umpire to hold time.

2

Players quickly change positions.

3

Play restarts.

Tactical changes may be made by both the requesting team and the opposing team.

TOSS UP REMOVAL

The good old toss up! It's gone!

A toss up was previously used if an infringement occurred simultaneously. However, due to improved umpire education and training, the use of toss ups has become much less frequent and umpires are instead, correctly, penalising the infringement that occurred first.

This means that the skill of the toss up has been lost for both players and umpires.

WHAT NOW?

If a simultaneous infringement occurs the umpire awards possession to the team that was last in possession of the ball, where the ball was when play stopped.

Any player from that team may take the ball for the restart of play. It does not have to be the player who actually had the ball last.

If it is in a team's goal circle, the GS or GA may shoot for goal.

NEW RULE IN ACTION:

Some moments it might be used are:

1

Two opposing players gain possession of the ball simultaneously with one or both hands.

2

At a centre pass, two opposing players enter the centre third before the whistle and one or both touch or catch the ball.

3

Any other mutual infringement.

Because the new action only applies in the same situations where a toss up would have been awarded under the previous rules, it is expected that it will not be used frequently.

DIFFERENT FROM POSSESSION CLARIFICATION

Please note this is different from a situation where possession is called as a clarification when two players gain possession of the ball in quick succession.

NOTE:

We expect this to be used as often as we would've seen a toss up - so not very often!

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SHORT PASS

The short pass! Yes, it's always been a rule. We've just changed it a little.

It is a fundamental principle of netball that every pass should be capable of being legally contested. The previous wording of the rule was being interpreted in a way that led to the use of passes so short that defenders had no opportunity to even attempt to gain possession.



THE UPDATED RULE

RULE 12.1: SHORT PASS

"When a player passes the ball there must be sufficient space on the court for an opposing player to be able to deflect or intercept the ball as it moves from the hands of the passer to those of the receiver."

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NEW RULE IN ACTION:

The difference between the old rule "intercept by a hand" and the updated rule "deflect or intercept" is that the umpire must consider whether the defending player can make a genuine attempt, considering not just a hand, but a hand connected to an arm and body.

SPORT FOR ALL

In keeping with the philosophy of netball as a "sport for all", the rule refers to the umpire's assessment of the player's action, rather than to body size or shape.



SHORT PASS HAND SIGNAL

CENTRE PASS CHECKS

In the game of Netball, the team taking the centre pass alternates.

Most umpires use a hair tie or band on their hand to keep track of whose pass it is, but because we're all human, we can all make mistakes.

CENTRE PASS



INDICATE

After a goal is scored, both umpires & the reserve umpire indicate the direction of the centre pass with their arm.



CALL

The controlling umpire calls the name of the team with the next pass.



RESTART

The controlling umpire blows the whistle to restart play when the Centre steps into the circle.

HOW TO APPEAL A CENTRE PASS:

ON-COURT PLAYERS ONLY

If a team believes the centre pass is being signalled incorrectly, an on-court player may appeal to the umpires before the centre pass is taken.

SCORECARD CHECK

The umpires will then check with the scorers who will confirm the correct centre pass.

THE DETAILS

The updated rule allows an on-court player to appeal to the umpires **before** the centre pass is taken if they believe it is being signalled incorrectly.

Once the centre pass has been taken, any mistakes cannot be rectified - **it's too late**.

It is important to note that the appeal can only come from an on-court player, not the bench or coach and the appeal must be made before the centre pass is taken. Once it's taken, it is too late.

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CENTRE PASS DIRECTION HAND SIGNAL

KEY POINTS

- 1 ONLY an on-court player can appeal the centre pass.
- 2 Appeal must be made before the centre pass. Once the pass is taken, it's too late.



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GAME MANAGEMENT

Game management is crucial to keeping our game safe and fair.

Cautions have been removed and umpires can now advance or escalate a sanction. Normally an umpire will work through these game management actions in order unless an offence is serious enough to require a higher level of game management to be applied immediately.

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GAME MANAGEMENT ACTIONS



PROACTIVE ADVICE

For low-level incidents that do not compromise player safety, an umpire can provide specific feedback to a player to change their behaviour.



ADVANCE / ESCALATE

A sanction may be advanced up to 5m. If an infringement is in the goal third, it can be advanced into the circle. A free pass may be escalated to a penalty pass, as a stand-alone action or in combination with the sanction being advanced.



WARNING

This lets a player know that if they continue to infringe the foul play rules they will be suspended.



SUSPENSION

The player will be sent from the court for 2 minutes of playing time. After 2 minutes, the suspended player may return to the court or they may be replaced with a different bench player.

*This is an important change as it means coaches have more choice, especially if they think the suspended player isn't going to be able to adjust and may end up being ordered off.



ORDERING OFF

The player must leave the court and takes no further part in the match. The suspended player may be replaced by another player after 4 minutes of playing time.

REMEMBER

It's important to remember that umpires work as a team to control the game. Warnings, suspensions and ordering off are all immediately binding on the co-umpire.



As an example: if one umpire gives a player a warning and that player continues to infringe the foul play rules at the other umpire's end of the court, they would then suspend that player.

THE PROCESS

1. Hold time using hand signal.
2. Use the specific term & hand signal for the game management action.
3. Advise the player of the behaviour the game management action is being applied to.



WARNING
HAND SIGNAL

SUSPENSION
HAND SIGNAL

ORDERING OFF
HAND SIGNAL

FOUL PLAY

Foul play - not cool in our books!

Foul play has been split into three categories which attract increasingly serious game management action.

1

UNFAIR PLAY

Delaying play.
Intentional infringing.
Repeated infringing.
Intimidation.
Disputed ruling by a player.



PENALTY PASS WHICH IS ADVANCED

A penalty pass is awarded, which is advanced up to half a third (5m).



2

UNSPORTING BEHAVIOUR

Retaliation.
Abusive behaviour.
Any actions contrary to good sporting behaviour.



PENALTY PASS + WARNING OR SUSPENSION

A penalty pass is awarded where the infringement occurred and the player is either given a warning or suspended. In a serious case the player will be ordered off.



3

DANGEROUS PLAY

Players must not take action that could affect the safety of another player.



PENALTY PASS + SUSPENSION OR ORDERING OFF

A penalty pass is awarded where the infringement occurred & the player is either suspended or ordered off. Players must always be ordered off for intentional or highly reckless dangerous play.



PLAYER RESPONSIBILITY

There is a strong emphasis on the seriousness of dangerous play, which is why it goes straight to a suspension or ordering off. This puts increased responsibility on players to use good judgment in making decisions on court and understanding that they will be held accountable for actions that might result in the injury of an opponent.

By the time the umpire takes the action, the incident has already happened, and it is too late - but having a more serious consequence hopefully has a deterrent effect and makes that player, and others, reconsider their behaviour for next time.

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ADVANTAGE

Advantage...or is it?

This is not a rule change but a 'refresh' of the existing rule to make it clear to everyone what umpires are considering in making the decisions to apply advantage rather than blow the whistle for an infringement.

OVERVIEW



A team should not be disadvantaged when an opponent infringes. If an infringement occurs and the non-infringing team would be disadvantaged by the umpire blowing their whistle, they will refrain and instead call advantage, allowing play to continue.

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THROW-IN

Waiting for everyone to be on court for the throw-in? Not any more!
If you're ready to take a throw-in, you don't have to wait for everyone to be on court!

THE UPDATE

Just like any other sanction, the player taking the throw-in can play the ball as soon as they are in position without waiting, **even if not everyone is on the court!**

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PRINCIPLES FOR APPLICATION



ADVANTAGE HAND SIGNAL



MOVE FORWARD

The ball should be able to move forward towards the attacking team's goal end.



TACTICALLY SIDE & BACK

If the ball travels sideways or back, it is a tactical choice and the team has not been forced to do so by the infringement.

NOTE:



The team with the ball should genuinely be able to play it in a way they want to, and should not be under undue pressure as a result of the infringement.



There are instances where advantage cannot be called, including foul play or incidents where an injury has occurred.



If the whistle is blown for an infringement, the sanction must be awarded.

TO CALL ADVANTAGE THE UMPIRE WILL:

1. Call "advantage" and state the infringement and playing position of the infringer.
2. Use the umpire hand signal for advantage.

REMEMBER



You can't have your toe on the line when taking a throw-in.



You must be within 1.5cm (0.6 in) of the line when taking a throw-in.

WHY HAS THIS CHANGED?

The previous rule was very difficult for the umpires to apply because players may move off court to reposition.

Also, we want to speed up the game and ensure momentum isn't lost!



THROW-IN (goal line) HAND SIGNAL



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PLAYING THE BALL

Replayed ball is one of the most confusing rules in netball.

This is not a rule change but a 'refresh' of the existing rule to make it clear to everyone how you can gain possession of the ball and what you can do while in possession.

TO GAIN POSSESSION A PLAYER MAY:

- Catch the ball with one or both hands.
- Roll the ball to oneself.
- Catch the ball if it rebounds from the goalpost.
- Bat the ball once, then catch it.
- Bounce the ball once, then catch it.
- Touch the ball in an uncontrolled manner once or more than once, then catch it.

WITHOUT POSSESSION A PLAYER MAY:

- Bat or bounce the ball to another player.
- Bat the ball once, and then either bat or bounce the ball to another player.
- Bounce the ball once, and then either bat or bounce the ball to another player.
- Touch the ball in an uncontrolled manner once or more than once, and then either bat or bounce the ball to another player.



Any player in possession of the ball may pass it with one or both hands.



A shooter in possession of the ball may pass or shoot for goal.



A player must pass or shoot for goal within three seconds.

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A PLAYER MAY NOT:

- Kick the ball.
- Strike the ball with a fist.
- Roll the ball to another player.
- Pass the ball or shoot for goal while lying, sitting or kneeling on the ground.
- Fall on the ball to gain possession.
- Use the goal post for support.

= INCORRECT PLAYING OF THE BALL

REPOSSESSION:

A player, after having possession and releasing the ball, **may not** touch the ball again before it touches another player or if it rebounds from the goalpost.



REPOSSESSION HAND SIGNAL



INCORRECT PLAYING OF THE BALL HAND SIGNAL

CONTACT

Is netball a non-contact sport? Let's discuss.

A key principle of netball is equal contest and the ability of players to compete fairly for playing position and possession of the ball. The contact rule deals with situations where players use physical contact improperly to stop this from happening.

There are two types of contact:



INTERFERENCE

A player must not engage in physical contact that unfairly interferes with an opponent's play.



CAUSING

Causing contact has two sections: moving player and player in the air.

INTERFERENCE:

For physical contact to interfere it must result in:

BALL LOST

Loss of the ball by an opponent in possession.

PASSING OR SHOOTING

Interference with the passing or shooting action of an opponent in possession.

BODY POSITION

A change in the body position of an opponent, regardless of whether the opponent is in possession of the ball, which limits their ability to move freely and places them at an unfair disadvantage in attacking, defending or playing the ball.

CAUSING:

Two sections: moving player & player in the air:

PLAYER IN THE AIR

- A player **can** jump and land in their own space or any vacant space on court.
- A player **cannot** jump into a stationary opponent.
- A player **cannot** move into the landing space of an opponent who has jumped.

MOVING PLAYER

The moving player rule now states that a player must not take up a position so near to or so quickly in the path of a moving opponent that the opponent does not have enough time or space, either to stop or change direction. This is dependent on the speed of the opponent.



CONTACT HAND SIGNAL

RIGHT OF WAY

When two players jump in the air to contest, the player who gains possession has "right of way" and must be given space to land, relative to where the ball was travelling. A player who does not yield the space will be penalised, and no other player may move into the landing space.

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