

AFL Auskick Rules – Match rules for children aged 5-12

This section provides the rules to be used in match situations. They should be interpreted with common sense, keeping in mind the philosophy and underpinning principles of AFL Auskick Rules.

#	ITEM	5 TO 8-YEAR-OLDS – AS AT JANUARY 1	9 TO 10-YEAR-OLDS – AS AT JANUARY 1	11 TO 12-YEAR-OLDS – AS AT JANUARY 1
1	Playing fields	Divide into three zones. 6-a-side 60m x 40m (3 x 20m zones). 9-a-side 75m x 50m (3 x 25m zones). 12-a-side 90m x 60m (3 x 30m zones).	Divide into three zones. 9-a-side 75m x 50m (3 x 25m zones). 12-a-side 90m x 60m (3 x 30m zones). 15-a-side 105m x 80m (3 x 35m zones).	110m x 80m.
		These field sizes are the optimum size and flexibility is often needed. In particular, smaller field sizes may be required; e.g. a 6-a-side, 9-year-olds' match would need a field less than 75m long.		
2	Ball size	Size 1 NAB AFL Auskick synthetic football – 5 to 8-year-olds.	Size 1.5 NAB AFL Auskick synthetic football – 9 to 10-year-olds.	Size 1.5 NAB AFL Auskick synthetic football –11 to 12-year-olds.
3	The team	6, 9 or 12-a-side preferred – no rucks and rovers. Unlimited reserves. All players must play at least half a game. Teams should play positions in each zone: 6-a-side – 2/2/2, 9-a-side – 3/3/3, 12-a-side – 4/4/4	9, 12 or 15-a-side – no rucks and rovers. Unlimited reserves. All players must play at least half a game. Teams should play positions in each zone: 9-a-side – 3/3/3, 12-a-side – 4/4/4, 15-a-side – 5/5/5	12 or 15-a-side – no rucks and rovers. Unlimited reserves. Smaller-sided games may be played. All players must play at least half a game.
		The spirit of the game is to give all players a game of football. Where there is difficulty fielding full numbers, both coaches must agree to equalise player numbers on each team.		
4	Player rotation	Players must rotate every quarter to provide opportunities in several positions – i.e. interchange>backs>centres>forwards>interchange.	Players must rotate every quarter to provide opportunities in several positions – i.e. interchange>backs>centres>forwards>interchange.	For 12-a-side and 15-a-side, to stop congestion, players will be instructed by the umpire to stay in their correct positions. The coach should instruct players to stay in position and enable all players to experience playing in the different positions through effective regular rotation.
5	Playing times	5 to 6-year-olds = 12 minutes 7 to 8-year-olds = 12 minutes	NAB AFL Auskick centres: 12-24 minutes. Junior clubs: 4 x maximum of 10-minute quarters.	NAB AFL Auskick centres: 30-45 minutes. Junior club: 4 x 15-minute quarters.
6	Start of play	A. Ball-up between two centre players. B. Players should be approx. equal size. C. All players within their zones.	A. Ball-up between two centre players. B. Players should be approx. equal size. C. Within centre zone, max. three players from each team closer than 10m from ball-up.	A. Ball-up between two centre players. B. Players should be approx. equal size. C. Max. three players from each team closer than 20m from ball-up.
7	Ball-up contests	Players contesting a ball-up (ruck play) may not grab the ball and play on, i.e. they cannot take full possession of the ball. Player must knock, palm or punch the ball to a teammate or open ground, and may not play the ball again until it has either been touched by another player or hits the ground.		
8	After a goal	As in 6. Different players each time. Goals can only be kicked by players in forward zone.	As in 6. Different players each time.	As in 6. Different players each time.
9	Out of bounds	A. From a kick. A kick is generally awarded to nearest opponent. This is also an opportunity for the umpire to give a possession to a player who may not have had as many opportunities as others. B. If in doubt as to which team kicked the ball. Ball-up five metres in [rule 7]. C. Off hands or body. Ball-up five metres in.	A. From a kick. A kick is generally awarded to nearest opponent. This is also an opportunity for the umpire to give a possession to a player who may not have had as many opportunities as others. B. If in doubt as to which team kicked the ball. Ball up five metres in [rule 7]. C. Off hands or body. Ball-up five metres in.	A. From a kick. A kick is generally awarded to nearest opponent. This is also an opportunity for the umpire to give a possession to a player who may not have had as many opportunities as others. B. If in doubt as to which team kicked the ball. Ball-up five metres in [rule 7]. C. Off hands or body. Ball-up five metres in.
10	Ball transition	When the ball is in transition from back zone to forward zone, it must be touched by a player in the mid zone. Failure for this to occur will see a free kick awarded to the opposition team at the point at which the ball entered the zone.	When the ball is in transition from back zone to forward zone, it must be touched by a player in the mid zone. Failure for this to occur will see a free kick awarded to the opposition team at the point at which the ball entered the zone.	When the ball is in transition from back zone to forward zone, it must be touched by a player in the mid zone. Failure for this to occur will see a free kick awarded to the opposition team at the point at which the ball entered the zone.
11	Scrimmage	No diving on ball. Umpire stops play. Free kick awarded to nearest opponent.	Umpire stops play. Send players back to positions and ball-up [rule 7].	Umpire stops play. Send players back to positions and ball-up [rule 7].
12	Possession rule	The ball is possessed by the act of controlling it by catching, grabbing or placing two hands on it when it is on the ground. Once the ball is possessed, all other players must back off to allow the player with the ball to kick or handball uncontested. Decide doubtful cases with ball-ups.	The ball is possessed by the act of controlling it by catching, grabbing or placing two hands on it when it is on the ground. Once the ball is possessed, other players may only attempt to block by standing in the path of, or hold and release, the opponent with the ball. Decide doubtful cases with ball-ups.	The ball is possessed by the act of controlling it by catching, grabbing or placing two hands on it when it is on the ground. Once the ball is possessed, other players may only attempt to block by standing in the path of, or hold and release, the opponent with the ball. Decide doubtful cases with ball-ups.
13	Tackling	There is to be absolutely no contact or spilling whatsoever, except accidental and light shoulder-to-shoulder contact while running to and at the ball. Players to be given every opportunity to deliver the ball.	Players are able to Hold and Release an opposition player in possession of the ball by the "jumper only", with one or two hands. There is strictly no bumping, slinging or deliberately bringing the opposition player to the ground. Grabbing the arms or applying a wrap around tackle is not permitted. Players once held and released have 3 seconds to dispose of the ball. Player safety is paramount.	The hand tackle – for under-11 A player in possession of the ball may be tackled by an opponent who uses both hands to grip the player in the area below the top of the shoulders and on or above the knees. If when applying the tackle, hands cross over, this constitutes a wrap around tackle. Free kick awarded against tackler. The wrap around tackle – for under-12 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 or above the knees.
14	Bumping	No deliberate bumping. No deliberate contact permitted.	No deliberate bumping permitted.	As per AFL Laws of Australian Football.
15	Barging	No barging, fending off or chopping past opponents is allowed. A free kick awarded.	No barging, fending off or chopping past opponents is allowed. A free kick awarded.	No barging or chopping past opponents is allowed. A free kick awarded. Fending off with an open hand to the body (not above the shoulders or in the back) is allowed.
16	Stealing/smothering	Not allowed.	Not allowed.	Both stealing and smothering are allowed.
17	Shepherding	Player not permitted to push, shoulder or block opponent not in possession of the ball.	Player not permitted to push, shoulder or block opponent not in possession of the ball.	Player is allowed to shepherd within five metres of the ball.
18	Mark and playing on	Any reasonable attempt to catch the ball directly from a kick, irrespective of distance travelled. Set mark after mark. No playing on allowed.	Catch ball directly from kick. Playing on is allowed.	Catch ball directly from kick. Ball must travel 10 metres.
19	Bouncing the ball	Player is permitted to bounce the ball only once, then must dispose of the ball.	Player is permitted to bounce the ball only once, then must dispose of the ball.	Player is permitted to bounce the ball up to two times, then must dispose of the ball.
20	Distance run	While a player in possession of the football is moving, the player must bounce the ball within five metres, irrespective of whether that player is running in a straight line or otherwise. As above – one bounce only.	While a player in possession of the football 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 – one bounce only.	While a player in possession of the football is moving, the player must bounce the ball at least once every 15 metres, irrespective of whether that player is running in a straight line or otherwise. As above – max of two bounces.
21	Kicking off the ground	Not permitted to deliberately kick the ball off the ground.	Not permitted to deliberately kick the ball off the ground.	Not permitted to deliberately kick the ball off the ground.
22	Order-off rule	Not applicable to this age group. Bad language, poor sportsmanship and disputing umpiring decisions should be actively discouraged, through a counselling process carried out by the umpire and the coach.	To be applied. Penalty time up to umpire's discretion or local rule. Bad language, poor sportsmanship and disputing umpiring decisions should be actively discouraged.	To be applied. Penalty time up to umpire's discretion or local rule. Bad language, poor sportsmanship and disputing umpiring decisions should be actively discouraged.
23	Distance penalty	Not applicable to this age group. Umpiring and coaching processes to be used. Overstepping the mark is a coaching matter that should be addressed by the coach or umpire on the ground. For wasting time, using abusive language/behaviour, etc., see order-off rule.	A player can be awarded a 10-metre advancement towards their goals if, after a mark or free kick, the umpire is of the opinion that an opposing player hinders that player. This includes: overstepping the mark, wasting time, using abusive language/behaviour, etc. The teaching role of coaches and umpires should still be paramount at this age group.	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 that an opposing player hinders that player. This includes overstepping the mark, wasting time, using abusive language/behaviour, etc.
24	Staying in position	To stop congestion, umpire to instruct players to stay in their zone.	To stop congestion, umpire to instruct players to stay in their zone.	To stop congestion, umpire to instruct players to stay in their position. Coaches have a responsibility to teach players about positions.
25	Coaches	Coach allowed on ground to teach.	Coach allowed on ground to teach and ensure players are aware of positional play.	Coach not allowed on ground. Runners may be used to deliver messages and return directly to the coach.
26	Spirit of the game	Umpires to instruct players on rules and procedures. Players, coaches and umpires to shake hands. Umpires to be acknowledged and thanked by teams.	Umpires to instruct players on rules and procedures. Players, coaches and umpires to shake hands. Umpires to be acknowledged and thanked by teams.	Umpires to instruct players on rules and procedures. Players, coaches and umpires to shake hands. Umpires to be acknowledged and thanked by teams.
27	The game	No premiership points, no finals, no ladders, no match results, names of players published, skill clinics, carnival gala days. No representative teams.	No premiership points, no finals, no ladders, no match results, names of players published, skill clinics, carnival days. No representative teams.	No premiership points, no finals, no ladders, no match results (no score) and names of players published. Skill clinics, carnival days to be held. No representative teams.
28	Awards	Participation, effort, skill and goal achievement.	Participation, effort, skill and goal achievement.	Participation, effort, skill and goal achievement.
29	Clearances	Automatic clearances.	Automatic clearances.	Automatic clearances.
30	Tribunals	No tribunal. Discipline left in hands of club.	No tribunal. Discipline left in hands of club.	No tribunal. Discipline left in hands of club.
31	Other rules and laws	As per AFL Laws of Australian Football.	As per AFL Laws of Australian Football.	As per AFL Laws of Australian Football.
	General	Matches for this age group must be conducted as part of an NAB AFL Auskick program or conducted within club structures. Fun, maximum participation, individual movement activities and skill development are the major priorities. NAB AFL Auskick Codes of Conduct for coaches, officials and parents must be applied and enforced.	Matches may be part of the NAB AFL Auskick program or conducted within club or competition structures. Fun, maximum participation and skill development are again overriding priorities. NAB AFL Auskick Codes of Conduct for coaches, officials and parents must be applied and enforced.	Players in this age group may participate in NAB AFL Auskick programs, club teams or school teams. Although team play is now important, individual participation in all games, skill development and teaching are priorities. NAB AFL Auskick Codes of Conduct for coaches, officials and parents must be applied and enforced.

Please note: Slight variations to these rules may be trialled in some states in 2007.