

# British Dodgeball Junior Rules and Regulations

*The British Dodgeball Rulesets are designed for junior level play. They are aligned with and written as a stepping stone towards the British Dodgeball Adult Five Ball Rules, made even more accessible to junior age groups.*

*British Dodgeball has three junior age groups in 2018/19:*

- 1) U11s
  - 2) U13s
  - 3) U16s
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## *British Dodgeball U11 Rules*

### **1. The Court**

- 1) For under 11s, the recommended court size is equivalent to a standard badminton court, and therefore the outside badminton lines should be used as outside court lines. A standard badminton court is approximately 13.4m x 6m.
- 2) Where possible there will be at least 1m of space outside of the court between the court and any wall or hard object. Unless playing wall-to-wall, the “back line” of the dodgeball court at each end will be a marked line on the court floor.
- 3) A “centre line” will be marked across the court at exactly halfway between the back lines (or walls if playing wall to wall).
  - a. Markings are recommended at 1.5m, 3m and 4.5m along the centre line to indicate where the three balls should be placed at the start of play.
  - b. “Contested ball lines” are recommended 0.3m either side of the centre line for the central ball, indicating to runners an area that they must not enter.
- 4) A “neutral zone” will be marked with 1.5m total width, by lines that are 0.75m either side of the centre line. These two lines will be called the “neutral zone lines”. Players from both teams are allowed in the neutral zone, but are not allowed on or over the furthest neutral zone line.
- 5) A “player return area” will be marked for each team between 1 and 2 metres away from the court (both teams’ areas will be on the left side of their half of the court). This area will be 1m by 4m and is reserved for one team coach where applicable, plus any players who are “out”.
- 6) A “return line” will be marked on each side of the court, 5.5m away from the centre line. This signifies the point behind which a ball must return beyond once live at the beginning of play and behind which players must enter the court when returning to play.
- 7) For matches not played wall-to-wall, the outside court lines and any back walls or boundaries are not part of the playing court. Therefore, touching these or any surfaces beyond these with any body part at any time during normal play beyond the “opening rush” will result in an “out” for the offending player. When the court is wall-to-wall, the back walls are considered part of the court.
- 8) Where possible a net, barrier, or other hard surface will surround the court, approximately 2.5 metres from the outside court line.
- 9) During match play, only a team’s 6 designated players for that period, and coach, are allowed inside these nets/ barriers/ surfaces.

## **2. Coaches**

- 1) Across all age groups, each team is encouraged to have one designated coach over the age of 16. The coach should remain inside their “player return area” at all times during play and should not interfere with any dodgeballs.
- 2) Any designated coach must have a top sufficiently different to the playing top of the team they are coaching. This will ideally be in a different colour to the team playing top.

## **3. Equipment and Clothing**

- 1) Three size 1 foam British Dodgeball approved dodgeballs will be used in each match.
- 2) Uniform and protective equipment are considered to be part of the player. Any player hit on any part of their uniform or protective equipment will be considered “out”.
- 3) All players competing in the same team should wear tops of the same colour.
- 4) For health and safety reasons the following rules around equipment and clothing apply. Any injuries resulting from the use of particular equipment or clothing are the responsibility of the player who wears them.
  - a) All footwear worn should be suitable for dodgeball and should be non-marking.
  - b) Unsecured headgear such as ball caps and visors may not be worn during tournament play.
  - c) Prosthetics may be worn. All casts, braces, and splints with exposed hard surfaces must be padded.
  - d) Jewellery is strictly not to be worn by players during competition unless suitably secured with tape. Plastic watches are permitted. Officials will ask players to remove any items they believe contravene these rules or to suitably secure them with tape.
  - e) It is recommended that spectacles should not be worn by players during competition, unless secured by a strap.

## **4. Match formats and scoring**

- 1) Teams should have 6 players on court at the start of each period. Teams must have a minimum of 4 players on court in order to compete- otherwise the match will be forfeited.
- 2) Matches will consist of 6 sets of up to two minutes, separated by a half time. The referee will stop play and thus pause the time when a health and safety concern arises.
- 5) All teams may have a squad of up to a maximum of 10 players at each event. Players may only be substituted between sets.
- 6) Teams will change ends at half time.
- 7) A team wins a set (and the next set begins) by getting all of the players on the opposing team out, or by having more players left on the court (“players on”) when the referee signals the end of the set. A set is drawn if the number of players left on court when the referee signals the end of the set is equal for both teams.
- 8) Once a set ends (due to a team being eliminated, or time expiring), teams must be ready to re-set immediately for the next set. A maximum of 20 seconds should be allowed for re-set.
- 9) The winning team is awarded 2 points towards their match score on completion of a set. Where a set is drawn, both teams are awarded 1 point.
- 10) A team wins a match if they have more points than the opposition at the end of the match.

11) In league tables or group tables, 2 match points will be awarded for a match win, 1 match point for a match draw, and 0 match points for a match loss.

12) Where teams finish level on points at the end of all matches in any competition, the team who has won more matches will be placed higher. Where there is still a tie, the following criteria will then be considered in this order:

- The team with the greatest set points for-against difference from all matches will be placed higher
- The team with the most table points from any head-to-head matches will be placed higher
- The team with the greatest set points for-against difference from any head-to-head matches will be placed higher
- The team with the most set points from any head-to-head matches will be placed higher
- If two teams are still equally placed, a two minute set will be played (followed by “overtime” and “sudden death” if necessary), with the winner taking the higher position.

13) In knockout or playoff matches, a drawn match is resolved by playing an overtime set which will last for one minute. Teams will start “overtime” with 6 players, and the team with the most players on court at the end of this one minute set will be declared the winner.

14) If a knockout match is still drawn at the end of the one minute overtime period (both teams have an equal number of players on court), the referee will not stop the game but will shout “sudden death” to inform both teams that the one minute overtime period has expired. In “sudden death” overtime, the next team to eliminate an opposing player will be declared the winning team. All standard rules apply during sudden death circumstances.

## **5. The start of play**

- 1) A referee will signal the start of a period using a whistle or other pre-specified sound. They will initially call for teams to “line up”, instruct all player to be “ready”, and then signal the start of the set.
- 2) Where there is at least 1m between the back line and any wall or hard object, all players must be positioned behind their team’s back line at the start of each period. Players may touch the back line as this is not part of the court.
- 3) Where there is less than 1m between the back line and any wall or hard object, all players should start fully on court at the start of each period, with at least one foot in contact with the back line.
- 4) Three balls will be placed equally spaced apart in the neutral zone, on the “centre line”, before the start of each period.
- 5) The section at the beginning of each period or reset is referred to as the “rush”. Upon the official’s signal, both teams rush to the centre of the court and attempt to retrieve their designated left-most ball, and also to compete for the one ball in the middle (which is open to either team).
- 6) In U11 rules, a maximum of 2 players per team are allowed to rush for the balls – with each player able to rush for up to two balls. Any players who are not rushing must step onto the court at the start of the period before the first rusher from either team reaches the centre line.

7) When rushing for their designated ball, players should not touch or step over the opponent's neutral zone line.

- For the centre, contested ball, contested ball lines are recommended to be marked on the court either side of the centre line.
  - a) Where contested ball lines are in place, the area between these is called the "contested ball zone". Any player competing for these balls may only place hands and forearms into the contested ball zone for health and safety reasons. Where any other body part touches the centre zone, the referee may call the player "out" if they believe this is dangerous play.
  - b) Where contested ball lines are not used, the competing player is not permitted to touch or cross the centre line with any part of their body for health and safety reasons. Where any other body part crosses the centre line, the referee may call the player "out" if they believe this is dangerous play.

8) Players may not slide or dive head first towards the centre line of the court when rushing to gain possession of a ball on the centre line. Any offending players will be called "out".

9) No deliberate physical contact between players is allowed. This includes pushing, grabbing and leaning on an opposition player, and will result in the offending player being called "out". Incidental contact when competing for the centre ball will not be penalised.

10) If two players both have hold of the central ball they may choose to both keep hold of it and try to gain possession, as long as they do not initiate intentional physical contact. If either player is pulled over the centre line, this player will be called "out" so long as the pulling player has not initiated intentional and avoidable physical contact.

12) No dodgeball may be thrown at an opponent until it had passed behind the return line. The ball may pass behind this return line by (known as "making a ball live"):

- a. The player who wins the ball carrying the ball backwards and making contact with the floor behind the ball return line (both feet fully behind the ball return line).
- b. Another player receiving the ball whilst with two feet in contact with the floor behind the ball return line.

13) If a ball that has not passed behind the ball return line is thrown, any hits made with that throw are void as it is a dead ball.

14) The ball designated for the opposing team may be collected, if still available, as soon as both of a team's own designated dodgeballs have been made live.

## **7. False Starts**

- 1) Players should be stationary following the call from the referee to be “ready”. If a player moves towards the centre line before any signal, this is a false start.
- 2) A “false start warning” is received by any player or players who commit a false start and continue to compete for the balls during the opening rush (if they advance past the return line). If a false start warning is issued, the period will be re-started. If a team receives two false start warnings, they will no longer be allowed to compete for the middle ball during that period.

## **8. Retrievers and recovering dodgeballs**

- 1) British Dodgeball events will be played “with retrievers” or “without retrievers”. Retrievers are individuals designated to retrieve balls that go out of play. U11 and U13 events will usually be played “without retrievers”.
- 2) In events or matches “without retrievers”, “in” and “out” players are permitted to recover dodgeballs from off the court if they notify the referees that they are doing so by raising one hand above their head and keeping their hand raised until they have left the court (for “in” players) or the player out area (for “out” players). “In” players must leave and re-enter the court behind the return line.
- 3) When recovering dodgeballs from off the court, players must not go beyond the centre zone line which marks the team’s half of the court.
- 4) It is recommended that an “in” player recovering a ball from off court passes that ball back onto the court to a team-mate before returning to court. This ball must be received by a player who has both feet behind the return line before it can be thrown.
- 5) “In” players leaving the court will remain a live target until the moment any part of their body is in contact with a court boundary line or a surface outside the boundaries of the court. They become a target again as soon as they are fully inside the court boundaries. They must not delay returning to court in order to dodge, or leave court in order to dodge.

## **9. Exiting the Court**

- 1) An exiting player is a player who has been deemed “out” by the referee and is in the process of leaving the court.
- 2) Any player who has been hit and is obviously not attempting to or has failed to catch the deflected ball is also classed as an exiting player.
- 3) Upon being deemed “out”, a player should raise both hands above their heads to signal that they are out and should no longer be a target. An exiting player should leave the court without interfering with play as quickly as possible and join the back of the queue of out players in the player return area.
- 4) Any ball that hits an out or exiting player is generally considered to be a “live” ball. Therefore a ball that has hit an out or exiting player which hasn’t been intentionally deflected by that player, and hasn’t been deliberately thrown at the out or exiting player, can be caught or can hit other players out.
  - a. If an out or exiting player deliberately interferes with or deflects any live ball, no catches can be made by their teammates on that live ball.
  - b. Opposition players should not deliberately throw at exiting players. If the referee feels a player has deliberately thrown at an exiting player, the ball will become “dead” as soon as it hits the exiting player.

## **10. Returning to the Court**

- 1) A returning player is a player who was “out” and in the player return area, and is returning to play. They must re-enter the court behind the return line.

2) Players who are “out” must stand in the player return area in the order in which they were out, with the player who was first out stood nearest to the back line of the court. Players must return to play in the order in which they were “out”.

4) Returning players must no longer be in contact with the ground outside of the playing area in order to be able to be hit, or to catch.

### **11. Live and Dead Balls**

1) A ball thrown by an opposing player only becomes “dead” when it makes contact with the floor (or other external surface), or is caught. The thrown ball is still live on contact with another ball or player, including any ball not in a player’s possession. Multiple hits can therefore be made as a result of one throw.

### **12. Hits and Attempts**

1) An “attempt” is the act of throwing the ball at a member of the other team to try to hit them with the ball. The thrown ball should aim to be within 1m of a targeted opposition player at some point in its path to be deemed a “valid attempt”. In U11 events, failure to make a valid attempt will not be called out, unless the referee believes the ball was deliberately thrown without any intent to hit. In this case, a warning for an invalid attempt can be given. A subsequent invalid attempt will result in the player being called “out”.

2) Balls may only be thrown, with the exception of a block attack.

3) Players are not allowed to roll a ball to the opposing team, unless instructed to do so by a match official.

4) A throw may be performed with one or both hands and must involve the ball leaving the throwing player’s hands before it makes contact with the opposing player; players may not be “tagged” out.

5) Players who intentionally kick or spike a ball will be called out.

7) A player is hit out the moment that any part of their body, hair or clothing is hit by a live ball. This includes any ball rebounding off another player or ball (both blocked balls and balls lying on the ground on court), not just being hit by a ball directly thrown by the opposition.

8) Any hit above the shoulders (a “head shot”) is not out. However, the referee can call a player who has been hit above the shoulders out if:

a. The hit player deliberately uses their head to block an opposing throw.

b. The hit player is ducking down whilst the ball strikes them on the head in such a way that the referee believes the head may deliberately be preventing the ball from hitting another part of the body.

The thrower is out if they strike an opponent above the shoulders deliberately.

9) For a player to be hit out the original attempt must be valid and made by an “in” player.

10) A player is out at the moment of contact. When a player has been “hit” they are not permitted to take any further part in the game unless and until they have saved themselves by catching the ball that put them out.

### **13. Catches**

1) A player is out if a live ball that they have thrown is caught by an opposition player. When this happens, the throwing player is out and the catching player also brings back into play one of their team’s out players. If there are not out players, no one is brought back into play.

2) When a player jumps to make a catch, the catch is complete once the player has control of the ball. Any subsequent actions, such as being hit by another ball or landing out of bounds will be seen as a separate action that happens after the catch. In these instances the catch will stand but the catching player will then be out.

3) Where momentum carries a player off court whilst making a catch, the catch will still count providing control of the ball is established before the player makes contact with any ground off court, including the boundary lines.

- 4) A catch made on a player who still continued to throw although already “out” will be considered a valid catch, so long as time has not stopped and the throwing player had at least one foot on court when releasing the ball.
- 5) A player is allowed to fumble a ball while catching. Where a live ball initially hits a player and bounces off them, the ball is still live and may still be “caught”, but the hit player is “out” unless they are the player to catch and secure control of the ball – and this must be before the ball touches another player, surface, or object.
- 6) A catch is only complete when a player has full control of the caught ball – the ball must be stable and in contact with at least one of the player’s hands.
- 7) If a player becomes out during the catching process, before the catcher has full control of the caught ball, the catch does not count.
- 8) A player is allowed to drop a ball in their possession when they are attempting to catch a thrown ball.
- 9) Players are not permitted to use their uniform in a way that assists in the catching of a ball – for instance, pulling out their shirt.

#### **14. Blocking**

- 1) A player can use any live ball or dead ball in their possession to block another ball. The blocked ball remains live following contact with the blocking ball. If the blocked ball deflects off the blocking ball onto the blocking player, a player on their team, or an opposition player, the hit player will be “out”.
- 2) Any hands holding a ball used to block with will be regarded as part of the ball. Any player hit on the hands by a live ball in these circumstances is therefore “not out”.
- 3) When a player uses a ball in their possession to block a thrown ball, the player will be called out if they drop the ball that they are holding as a result of the impact of the thrown ball. The thrown ball must still be “live” for this to result in an “out”, and so must not have hit the floor or other surface before touching the impacted dodgeball.
- 4) A blocked ball can be caught. If the blocked ball is caught by a player not on the blocking player’s team, the blocking player will be out and an out player on the catcher’s team will be brought back into play.
- 5) If the blocked ball is caught by a player on the blocking player’s team, the original thrower of the blocked ball will be out and an out player on the catcher’s team will be brought back into play.

#### **15. Lines and the neutral zone**

- 1) A player should avoid touching with any part of their person, including clothing, any line marking the boundaries of their team’s section of the court, or any surface beyond these boundaries.
  - i. At least one foot must touch the ground within the court boundary lines, with no part of the player’s body touching ground outside of the court boundary lines, for a player to be considered in bounds.
  - ii. A player may be called out by the referee for going out of bounds.
- 2) A player will be called “out” if they step out of bounds to attempt to make a catch or to avoid being hit.
- 3) Players from both teams may enter the neutral zone. Touching the opposition’s neutral zone line or any ground over the opposition’s neutral zone line with any part of their body or clothing will be called “out”.

#### **16. Behaviour**

- 1) It is a requirement that all players competing at British Dodgeball leagues and events abide by the British Dodgeball Code of Conduct.
- 2) A player will be called out if they display poor behaviour (for instance, swearing or abusive language) towards an opposing player, volunteer, spectator, or match official. This includes any undirected swearing that is within earshot of the referee.

## 17. Stalling

- 1) Players should not intentionally stall the game. Once a team has or can have possession of two or more of (the majority of) the balls in play, they should look to make an attempt with at least one of those balls. The match officials will allow them up to approximately 5 seconds in which to initiate an attack on the other team before instructing them to “play 1” or “play 2” of those balls if the official believes they are still intentionally stalling – after this instruction they will have five seconds to make an attempt with that number of balls.
- 2) A dodgeball is considered to be in a player’s possession if it is in hand or it is within a reachable distance of the player.
- 3) When a team is told to “play n balls” by the referee, they will be told to play 1 ball if they have 2 balls in their possession, and told to play 2 balls if they have 3 balls in their possession at the time that this was called, as when “play ball” is called teams should only retain possession of one of the balls that was in their possession. Where “play n balls” has not been called, teams may retain as many or as few balls as they choose.
- 4) If “play n balls” is called and any players still have possession of more than one dodgeball when the five seconds expires (because they have not made attempts with n or more of the balls), they may be called “out”.
- 5) Teams should gain possession of a dodgeball that is considered to be on their team’s side of the court as soon as they are able to do so.
- 6) Passing a ball to a team-mate will not pause or re-start the five seconds.
- 7) In situations where there are more dodgeballs on a player’s side of the court than there are players and play ball is called, all players must make an attempt within 5 seconds, and this will continue until the opposing team has the majority of the balls.
- 8) Where a player in possession of a ball on a team that has been told to “play ball” becomes hit “out” during the play ball count, the number of balls needed to be “played” by that team is reduced by one as that player’s ball is discounted.
- 9) Where a player in possession of a ball on a team that has been told to “play ball” makes a catch or tries to make a catch (generally by dropping their ball) during the play ball count, the number of balls needed to be “played” by that team within the 5 seconds does not reduce – trying to catch is not an attempt.

## 18. Simultaneous Plays

- 1) Simultaneous play occurs when two or more opposing players are hit and/ or catch balls at the same time, such that the match officials cannot determine which play was completed first. All results are resolved simultaneously; each player hit is deemed “out”, and each catch results in one player returning from the player return area.
- 2) Should a simultaneous play result in all players being eliminated, the set will be concluded and the set result will be declared a draw. Both teams will then take up their positions for the next set.
- 3) When a player is in the act of catching a ball and is hit by another ball simultaneously, such that the referee cannot determine which action was completed first, this is classified as a simultaneous catch and hit. This means that the thrower of the caught ball is deemed “out”, the catching player is deemed “out” for being hit, and one player from the catching player’s team is allowed to return to the court from the player out area for the catch.

## **19. Injury**

1) Where feasible, an injured player is expected to make their way off court as soon as possible. Referees will stop time when a player is injured. The injured player should be substituted for at least the remainder of the set. Where a team has no substitute they must play short-handed.

2) An injured player who is unable to carry on playing and is still "in" may be replaced by a substitute who will take the injured player's place directly by coming straight into play. Where the injured player is "out" the substitute will take the injured player's place in the out queue in the player return area. The injured player is not permitted to participate for at least the remainder of the set.

3) Any player suffering from a blood injury must be replaced, or must leave court for at least the remainder of that set if there are no substitutes. The flow of blood from the injury must have stopped before the player may return to court in any new set.

## *British Dodgeball U13 Rules*

### **1. The Court**

- 1) For U13s competitions, the dodgeball court size is 8m wide and between 16m-17m lengthways. Where possible there will be at least 1m of space outside of the court between the court and any wall or hard object.
- 2) Unless playing wall-to-wall, the “back line” of the dodgeball court at each end will be a marked line on the court floor.
- 3) A “centre line” will be marked across the court at exactly halfway between the back lines (or walls if playing wall to wall).
  - a. Markings are recommended at 2m, 4m and 6m along the centre line to indicate where the three balls should be placed at the start of play.
  - b. “Contested ball lines” are recommended 0.3m either side of the centre line for the central ball, indicating to runners an area that they must not enter.
- 4) A “neutral zone” will be marked with 1.5m total width, by lines that are 0.75m either side of the centre line. These two lines will be called the “neutral zone lines”. Players from both teams are allowed in the neutral zone, but are not allowed on or over the furthest neutral zone line.
- 5) A “player return area” will be marked for each team between 1 and 2 metres away from the court (both teams’ areas will be on the left side of their half of the court). This area will be 1m by 4m and is reserved for one team coach where applicable, plus any players who are “out”.
- 6) A “ball return line” will be marked on each side of the court, 5.5m away from the centre line.
- 7) For matches not played wall-to-wall, the outside court lines and any back walls or boundaries are not part of the playing court. Therefore, touching these or any surfaces beyond these with any body part at any time during normal play beyond the “opening rush” will result in an “out” for the offending player. When the court is wall-to-wall, the back walls are considered part of the court.
- 8) Where possible a net, barrier, or other hard surface will surround the court, approximately 2.5 metres from the outside court line.
- 9) Where a court is wall-to-wall, a player return line will be marked with a dash 1m from the back of the court, to signify the point behind which players must enter the court when returning to play.
- 10) During match play, only a team’s 6 designated players for that period, and coach, are allowed inside these nets/ barriers/ surfaces.

### **2. Coaches**

- 1) Across all age groups, each team is encouraged to have one designated coach over the age of 16. The coach should remain inside their “player return area” at all times during play and should not interfere with any dodgeballs.
- 2) Any designated coach must have a top sufficiently different to the playing top of the team they are coaching. This will ideally be in a different colour to the team playing top.

### **3. Equipment and Clothing**

- 1) Three size 2 cloth British Dodgeball approved dodgeballs will be used in each match.
- 2) Uniform and protective equipment are considered to be part of the player. Any player hit on any part of their uniform or protective equipment will be considered “out”.
- 3) All players competing in the same team should wear tops of the same colour.

4) For health and safety reasons the following rules around equipment and clothing apply. Any injuries resulting from the use of particular equipment or clothing are the responsibility of the player who wears them.

a) All footwear worn should be suitable for dodgeball and should be non-marking.

b) Unsecured headgear such as ball caps and visors may not be worn during tournament play.

c) Prosthetics may be worn. All casts, braces, and splints with exposed hard surfaces must be padded.

d) Jewellery is strictly not to be worn by players during competition unless suitably secured with tape. Plastic watches are permitted. Officials will ask players to remove any items they believe contravene these rules or to suitably secure them with tape.

e) It is recommended that spectacles should not be worn by players during competition, unless secured by a strap.

#### **4. Match formats and scoring**

1) Teams should have 6 players on court at the start of each period. Teams must have a minimum of 4 players on court in order to compete- otherwise the match will be forfeited.

2) Matches will consist of 6 sets of up to two minutes, separated by a half time. The referee will stop play and thus pause the time when a health and safety concern arises.

5) All teams may have a squad of up to a maximum of 10 players at each event. Players may only be substituted between sets.

6) Teams will change ends at half time.

7) A team wins a set (and the next set begins) by getting all of the players on the opposing team out, or by having more players left on the court ("players on") when the referee signals the end of the set. A set is drawn if the number of players left on court when the referee signals the end of the set is equal for both teams.

8) Once a set ends (due to a team being eliminated, or time expiring), teams must be ready to re-set immediately for the next set. A maximum of 20 seconds should be allowed for re-set.

9) The winning team is awarded 2 points towards their match score on completion of a set. Where a set is drawn, both teams are awarded 1 point.

10) A team wins a match if they have more points than the opposition at the end of the match.

11) In league tables or group tables, 2 match points will be awarded for a match win, 1 match point for a match draw, and 0 match points for a match loss.

12) Where teams finish level on points at the end of all matches in any competition, the team who has won more matches will be placed higher. Where there is still a tie, the following criteria will then be considered in this order:

→ The team with the greatest set points for-against difference from all matches will be placed higher

→ The team with the most table points from any head-to-head matches will be placed higher

→ The team with the greatest set points for-against difference from any head-to-head matches will be placed higher

→ The team with the most set points from any head-to-head matches will be placed higher

→ If two teams are still equally placed, a two minute set will be played (followed by "overtime" and "sudden death" if necessary), with the winner taking the higher position.

13) In knockout or playoff matches, a drawn match is resolved by playing an overtime set which will last for one minute. Teams will start "overtime" with 6 players, and the team with the most players on court at the end of this one minute set will be declared the winner.

14) If a knockout match is still drawn at the end of the one minute overtime period (both teams have an equal number of players on court), the referee will not stop the game but will shout "sudden death" to inform both teams that the one minute overtime period has expired. In "sudden death" overtime, the next team to eliminate an opposing player will be declared the winning team. All standard rules apply during sudden death circumstances.

## **5. The start of play**

1) A referee will signal the start of a period using a whistle or other pre-specified sound. They will initially call for teams to "line up", instruct all player to be "ready", and then signal the start of the set.

2) Where there is at least 1m between the back line and any wall or hard object, all players must be positioned behind their team's back line at the start of each period. Players may touch the back line as this is not part of the court.

3) Where there is less than 1m between the back line and any wall or hard object, all players should start fully on court at the start of each period, with at least one foot in contact with the back line.

4) Three balls will be placed equally spaced apart in the neutral zone, on the "centre line", before the start of each period.

5) The section at the beginning of each period or reset is referred to as the "rush". Upon the official's signal, both teams rush to the centre of the court and attempt to retrieve their designated left-most ball, and also to compete for the one ball in the middle (which is open to either team).

6) In U13 rules, a maximum of 2 players per team are allowed to rush for the balls – with each player able to rush for up to two balls. Any players who are not rushing must step onto the court at the start of the period before the first rusher from either team reaches the centre line.

7) When rushing for their designated ball, players should not touch or step over the opponent's neutral zone line.

- For the centre, contested ball, contested ball lines are recommended to be marked on the court either side of the centre line.
  - a) Where contested ball lines are in place, the area between these is called the "contested ball zone". Any player competing for these balls may only place hands and forearms into the contested ball zone for health and safety reasons. Where any other body part touches the centre zone, the referee may call the player "out" if they believe this is dangerous play.
  - b) Where contested ball lines are not used, the competing player is not permitted to touch or cross the centre line with any part of their body for health and safety reasons. Where any other body part crosses the centre line, the referee may call the player "out" if they believe this is dangerous play.

8) Players may not slide or dive head first towards the centre line of the court when rushing to gain possession of a ball on the centre line. Any offending players will be called "out".

9) No deliberate physical contact between players is allowed. This includes pushing, grabbing and leaning on an opposition player, and will result in the offending player being called "out". Incidental contact when competing for the centre ball will not be penalised.

10) If two players both have hold of the central ball they may choose to both keep hold of it and try to gain possession, as long as they do not initiate intentional physical contact. If either player is pulled over the centre line, this player will be called "out" so long as the pulling player has not initiated intentional and avoidable physical contact.

12) No dodgeball may be thrown at an opponent until it had passed behind the return line. The ball may pass behind this return line by (known as “making a ball live”):

- a. The player who wins the ball carrying the ball backwards and making contact with the floor behind the ball return line (both feet fully behind the ball return line).
- b. Another player receiving the ball whilst with two feet in contact with the floor behind the ball return line.

13) If a ball that has not passed behind the ball return line is thrown, any hits made with that throw are void as it is a dead ball.

14) The ball designated for the opposing team may be collected, if still available, as soon as both of a team’s own designated dodgeballs have been made live.

## **7. False Starts**

1) Players should be stationary following the call from the referee to be “ready”. If a player moves towards the centre line before any signal, this is a false start.

2) A “false start warning” is received by any player or players who commit a false start and continue to compete for the balls during the opening rush (if they advance past the return line). If a false start warning is issued, the period will be re-started. If a team receives two false start warnings, they will no longer be allowed to compete for the middle ball during that period.

## **8. Retrievers and recovering dodgeballs**

1) British Dodgeball events will be played “with retrievers” or “without retrievers”. Retrievers are individuals designated to retrieve balls that go out of play. U11 and U13 events will usually be played “without retrievers”.

2) In events or matches “without retrievers”, “in” and “out” players are permitted to recover dodgeballs from off the court if they notify the referees that they are doing so by raising one hand above their head and keeping their hand raised until they have left the court (for “in” players) or the player out area (for “out” players). “In” players must leave and re-enter the court behind the return line.

3) When recovering dodgeballs from off the court, players must not go beyond the centre zone line which marks the team’s half of the court.

4) It is recommended that an “in” player recovering a ball from off court passes that ball back onto the court to a team-mate before returning to court. This ball must be received by a player who has both feet behind the return line before it can be thrown.

5) “In” players leaving the court will remain a live target until the moment any part of their body is in contact with a court boundary line or a surface outside the boundaries of the court. They become a target again as soon as they are fully inside the court boundaries. They must not delay returning to court in order to dodge, or leave court in order to dodge.

## **9. Exiting the Court**

1) An exiting player is a player who has been deemed “out” by the referee and is in the process of leaving the court.

2) Any player who has been hit and is obviously not attempting to or has failed to catch the deflected ball is also classed as an exiting player.

3) Upon being deemed “out”, a player should raise both hands above their heads to signal that they are out and should no longer be a target. An exiting player should leave the court without interfering with play as quickly as possible and join the back of the queue of out players in the player return area.

4) Any ball that hits an out or exiting player is generally considered to be a “live” ball. Therefore a ball that has hit an out or exiting player which hasn’t been intentionally deflected by that player, and hasn’t been deliberately thrown at the out or exiting player, can be caught or can hit other players out.

- a. If an out or exiting player deliberately interferes with or deflects any live ball, no catches can be made by their teammates on that live ball.
- b. Opposition players should not deliberately throw at exiting players. If the referee feels a player has deliberately thrown at an exiting player, the ball will become “dead” as soon as it hits the exiting player.

## **10. Returning to the Court**

- 1) A returning player is a player who was “out” and in the player return area, and is returning to play. They must re-enter the court behind the return line.
- 2) Players who are “out” must stand in the player return area in the order in which they were out, with the player who was first out stood nearest to the back line of the court. Players must return to play in the order in which they were “out”.
- 4) Returning players must no longer be in contact with the ground outside of the playing area in order to be able to be hit, or to catch.

## **11. Live and Dead Balls**

- 1) A ball thrown by an opposing player only becomes “dead” when it makes contact with the floor (or other external surface), or is caught. The thrown ball is still live on contact with another ball or player, including any ball not in a player’s possession. Multiple hits can therefore be made as a result of one throw.

## **12. Hits and Attempts**

- 1) An “attempt” is the act of throwing the ball at a member of the other team to try to hit them with the ball. The thrown ball should aim to be within 1m of a targeted opposition player at some point in its path to be deemed a “valid attempt”. In U13 events, failure to make a valid attempt will not be called out, unless the referee believes the ball was deliberately thrown without any intent to hit. In this case, a warning for an invalid attempt can be given. A subsequent invalid attempt will result in the player being called “out”.
- 2) Balls may only be thrown, with the exception of a block attack.
- 3) Players are not allowed to roll a ball to the opposing team, unless instructed to do so by a match official.
- 4) A throw may be performed with one or both hands and must involve the ball leaving the throwing player’s hands before it makes contact with the opposing player; players may not be “tagged” out.
- 5) Players who intentionally kick or spike a ball will be called out.
- 6) A player is hit out the moment that any part of their body, hair or clothing is hit by a live ball. This includes any ball rebounding off another player or ball (both blocked balls and balls lying on the ground on court), not just being hit by a ball directly thrown by the opposition.
- 7) Any hit above the shoulders (a “head shot”) is not out. However, the referee can call a player who has been hit above the shoulders out if:
  - a. The hit player deliberately uses their head to block an opposing throw.
  - b. The hit player is ducking down whilst the ball strikes them on the head in such a way that the referee believes the head may deliberately be preventing the ball from hitting another part of the body.The thrower is out if they strike an opponent above the shoulders deliberately.
- 8) For a player to be hit out the original attempt must be valid and made by an “in” player.
- 9) A player is out at the moment of contact. When a player has been “hit” they are not permitted to take any further part in the game unless and until they have saved themselves by catching the ball that put them out.

## **13. Catches**

- 1) A player is out if a live ball that they have thrown is caught by an opposition player. When this happens, the throwing player is out and the catching player also brings back into play one of their team's out players. If there are not out players, no one is brought back into play.
- 2) When a player jumps to make a catch, the catch is complete once the player has control of the ball. Any subsequent actions, such as being hit by another ball or landing out of bounds will be seen as a separate action that happens after the catch. In these instances the catch will stand but the catching player will then be out.
- 3) Where momentum carries a player off court whilst making a catch, the catch will still count providing control of the ball is established before the player makes contact with any ground off court, including the boundary lines.
- 4) A catch made on a player who still continued to throw although already "out" will be considered a valid catch, so long as time has not stopped and the throwing player had at least one foot on court when releasing the ball.
- 5) A player is allowed to fumble a ball while catching. Where a live ball initially hits a player and bounces off them, the ball is still live and may still be "caught", but the hit player is "out" unless they are the player to catch and secure control of the ball – and this must be before the ball touches another player, surface, or object.
- 6) A catch is only complete when a player has full control of the caught ball – the ball must be stable and in contact with at least one of the player's hands.
- 7) If a player becomes out during the catching process, before the catcher has full control of the caught ball, the catch does not count.
- 8) A player is allowed to drop a ball in their possession when they are attempting to catch a thrown ball.
- 9) Players are not permitted to use their uniform in a way that assists in the catching of a ball – for instance, pulling out their shirt.

#### **14. Blocking**

- 1) A player can use any live ball or dead ball in their possession to block another ball. The blocked ball remains live following contact with the blocking ball. If the blocked ball deflects off the blocking ball onto the blocking player, a player on their team, or an opposition player, the hit player will be "out".
- 2) Any hands holding a ball used to block with will be regarded as part of the ball. Any player hit on the hands by a live ball in these circumstances is therefore "not out".
- 3) When a player uses a ball in their possession to block a thrown ball, the player will be called out if they drop the ball that they are holding as a result of the impact of the thrown ball. The thrown ball must still be "live" for this to result in an "out", and so must not have hit the floor or other surface before touching the impacted dodgeball.
- 4) A blocked ball can be caught. If the blocked ball is caught by a player not on the blocking player's team, the blocking player will be out and an out player on the catcher's team will be brought back into play.
- 5) If the blocked ball is caught by a player on the blocking player's team, the original thrower of the blocked ball will be out and an out player on the catcher's team will be brought back into play.

#### **15. Lines and the neutral zone**

- 1) A player should avoid touching with any part of their person, including clothing, any line marking the boundaries of their team's section of the court, or any surface beyond these boundaries.
  - i. At least one foot must touch the ground within the court boundary lines, with no part of the player's body touching ground outside of the court boundary lines, for a player to be considered in bounds.
  - ii. A player may be called out by the referee for going out of bounds.
- 2) A player will be called "out" if they step out of bounds to attempt to make a catch or to avoid being hit.

3) Players from both teams may enter the neutral zone. Touching the opposition's neutral zone line or any ground over the opposition's neutral zone line with any part of their body or clothing will be called "out".

## **16. Behaviour**

- 3) It is a requirement that all players competing at British Dodgeball leagues and events abide by the British Dodgeball Code of Conduct.
- 4) A player will be called out if they display poor behaviour (for instance, swearing or abusive language) towards an opposing player, volunteer, spectator, or match official. This includes any undirected swearing that is within earshot of the referee.

## **17. Stalling**

- 10) Players should not intentionally stall the game. Once a team has or can have possession of two or more of (the majority of) the balls in play, they should look to make an attempt with at least one of those balls. The match officials will allow them up to approximately 5 seconds in which to initiate an attack on the other team before instructing them to "play 1" or "play 2" of those balls if the official believes they are still intentionally stalling – after this instruction they will have five seconds to make an attempt with that number of balls.
- 11) A dodgeball is considered to be in a player's possession if it is in hand or it is within a reachable distance of the player.
- 12) When a team is told to "play n balls" by the referee, they will be told to play 1 ball if they have 2 balls in their possession, and told to play 2 balls if they have 3 balls in their possession at the time that this was called, as when "play ball" is called teams should only retain possession of one of the balls that was in their possession. Where "play n balls" has not been called, teams may retain as many or as few balls as they choose.
- 13) If "play n balls" is called and any players still have possession of more than one dodgeball when the five seconds expires (because they have not made attempts with n or more of the balls), they may be called "out".
- 14) Teams should gain possession of a dodgeball that is considered to be on their team's side of the court as soon as they are able to do so.
- 15) Passing a ball to a team-mate will not pause or re-start the five seconds.
- 16) In situations where there are more dodgeballs on a player's side of the court than there are players and play ball is called, all players must make an attempt within 5 seconds, and this will continue until the opposing team has the majority of the balls.
- 17) Where a player in possession of a ball on a team that has been told to "play ball" becomes hit "out" during the play ball count, the number of balls needed to be "played" by that team is reduced by one as that player's ball is discounted.
- 18) Where a player in possession of a ball on a team that has been told to "play ball" makes a catch or tries to make a catch (generally by dropping their ball) during the play ball count, the number of balls needed to be "played" by that team within the 5 seconds does not reduce – trying to catch is not an attempt.

## **18. Simultaneous Plays**

1) Simultaneous play occurs when two or more opposing players are hit and/ or catch balls at the same time, such that the match officials cannot determine which play was completed first. All results are resolved

simultaneously; each player hit is deemed “out”, and each catch results in one player returning from the player return area.

2) Should a simultaneous play result in all players being eliminated, the set will be concluded and the set result will be declared a draw. Both teams will then take up their positions for the next set.

3) When a player is in the act of catching a ball and is hit by another ball simultaneously, such that the referee cannot determine which action was completed first, this is classified as a simultaneous catch and hit. This means that the thrower of the caught ball is deemed “out”, the catching player is deemed “out” for being hit, and one player from the catching player’s team is allowed to return to the court from the player out area for the catch.

## **19. Injury**

1) Where feasible, an injured player is expected to make their way off court as soon as possible. Referees will stop time when a player is injured. The injured player should be substituted for at least the remainder of the set. Where a team has no substitute they must play short-handed.

2) An injured player who is unable to carry on playing and is still “in” may be replaced by a substitute who will take the injured player’s place directly by coming straight into play. Where the injured player is “out” the substitute will take the injured player’s place in the out queue in the player return area. The injured player is not permitted to participate for at least the remainder of the set.

3) Any player suffering from a blood injury must be replaced, or must leave court for at least the remainder of that set if there are no substitutes. The flow of blood from the injury must have stopped before the player may return to court in any new set.

## *British Dodgeball U16 Rules*

### **1. The Court: The 5 ball Dodgeball Court (u16s)**

- 1) The official 5 ball dodgeball court size is 17m by 8m. However, court size may be adjusted where necessary to suit the available space. Where a 17m length is not feasible due to the dimensions of a particular hall, lengths of 16m-17.99m are permitted. No change is permitted to the standard width of 8m.
  - a. If the available length is 19m or above, play with a 17m court length with a minimum 1m retriever area at each end.
  - b. If the available length is between 18m and 19m, play with a 1m retriever area at each end plus the remainder as court length.
  - c. If the available length is less than 18m, use the full length as the court length and play wall to wall.
- 2) Unless playing wall-to-wall, the “back line” of the dodgeball court at each end will be a marked line on the court floor, a minimum of 1m away from a wall or solid barrier. “Side lines” will be marked at each side of the 8m court width.
- 3) A “centre line” will be marked across the court at exactly halfway between the back lines (or walls if playing wall to wall).
- 4) A “neutral zone” will be marked with 1.5m total width, by lines that are 0.75m either side of the centre line. These two lines will be called the “neutral zone lines”. Players from both teams are allowed in the neutral zone, but are not allowed on or over the furthest neutral zone line.
- 5) A “player return area” will be marked for each team 1 metre away from the court (both teams’ areas will be on the left side of their half of the court). This area will be 1m by 4m and is reserved for one team coach where applicable, plus any players who are “out”.
- 6) A “ball return line” will be marked on each side of the court, 5.5m away from the centre line.
- 7) For matches not played wall-to-wall, the outside court lines and any back walls or boundaries are not part of the playing court. Therefore, touching these or any surfaces beyond these with any body part at any time during normal play beyond the “opening rush” will result in an “out” for the offending player. When the court is wall-to-wall, the back walls are considered part of the court.
- 8) Where possible a net, barrier, or other hard surface will surround the court, approximately 2.5 metres from the outside court line (back lines and side lines). The space between any court surround and the side and back lines of the court is called the “court boundary area”.
- 9) A player sin bin of 1m by 1m will be marked on both sides of the court between the player return area and the referee.
- 10) Where a court is wall-to-wall, a player return line will be marked with a dash 1m from the back of the court, to signify the point behind which players must enter the court when returning to play.
- 11) During match play, only a team’s 6 designated players for that period, and coach and retrievers where applicable, are allowed inside these nets/ barriers/ surfaces. This is in addition to any referees/ linesmen/ other authorised tournament officials.

- 12) In matches where retrievers are used, the centre line should be extended beyond the side lines and to the other side of the court boundary area, designating the area within which a team's retrievers may retrieve a ball.

## **2. Coaches**

- 1) Across all age groups, each team is encouraged to have one designated coach over the age of 16. The coach should remain inside their "player return area" at all times during play and should not interfere with any dodgeballs.
- 2) Any designated coach must have a top sufficiently different to the playing top of the team they are coaching. This will ideally be in a different colour to the team playing top.

## **3. Equipment and Clothing**

- 1) For under 16 and adult competitions, five size 3 (7 inch) cloth dodgeballs will be used
- 2) Uniform and protective equipment are considered to be part of the player. Any player hit on any part of their uniform or protective equipment will be considered "out".
- 4) All players competing in the same team should wear tops of the same colour.
- 5) For health and safety reasons the following rules around equipment and clothing apply. Any injuries resulting from the use of particular equipment or clothing are the responsibility of the player who wears them.
  - a) All footwear worn should be suitable for dodgeball and should be non-marking.
  - b) Unsecured headgear such as ball caps and visors may not be worn during tournament play.
  - c) Prosthetics may be worn. All casts, braces, and splints with exposed hard surfaces must be padded.
  - d) Jewellery is strictly not to be worn by players during competition unless suitably secured with tape. Plastic watches are permitted. Officials will ask players to remove any items they believe contravene these rules or to suitably secure them with tape.
  - e) It is recommended that spectacles should not be worn by players during competition, unless secured by a strap.

## **4. Match formats and scoring**

- 1) Teams should have 6 players on court at the start of each period. Teams must have a minimum of 4 players on court in order to compete- otherwise the match will be forfeited.
- 2) Matches will consist of 6 sets of up to two minutes, separated by a half time. The referee will stop play and thus pause the time when a health and safety concern arises.
- 5) All teams may have a squad of up to a maximum of 10 players at each event. Players may only be substituted between sets.
- 6) Teams will change ends at half time.
- 7) A team wins a set (and the next set begins) by getting all of the players on the opposing team out, or by having more players left on the court ("players on") when the referee signals the end of the set. A set is drawn if the number of players left on court when the referee signals the end of the set is equal for both teams.
- 8) Once a set ends (due to a team being eliminated, or time expiring), teams must be ready to re-set immediately for the next set. A maximum of 20 seconds should be allowed for re-set.

9) The winning team is awarded 2 points towards their match score on completion of a set. Where a set is drawn, both teams are awarded 1 point.

10) A team wins a match if they have more points than the opposition at the end of the match.

11) In league tables or group tables, 2 match points will be awarded for a match win, 1 match point for a match draw, and 0 match points for a match loss.

12) Where teams finish level on points at the end of all matches in any competition, the team who has won more matches will be placed higher. Where there is still a tie, the following criteria will then be considered in this order:

- The team with the greatest set points for-against difference from all matches will be placed higher
- The team with the most table points from any head-to-head matches will be placed higher
- The team with the greatest set points for-against difference from any head-to-head matches will be placed higher
- The team with the most set points from any head-to-head matches will be placed higher
- If two teams are still equally placed, a two minute set will be played (followed by “overtime” and “sudden death” if necessary), with the winner taking the higher position.

13) In knockout or playoff matches, a drawn match is resolved by playing an overtime set which will last for one minute. Teams will start “overtime” with 6 players, and the team with the most players on court at the end of this one minute set will be declared the winner.

14) If a knockout match is still drawn at the end of the one minute overtime period (both teams have an equal number of players on court), the referee will not stop the game but will shout “sudden death” to inform both teams that the one minute overtime period has expired. In “sudden death” overtime, the next team to eliminate an opposing player will be declared the winning team. All standard rules apply during sudden death

## **5. The start of play**

1) A referee will signal the start of a period using a whistle or other pre-specified sound. They will initially call for teams to “line up”, instruct all player to be “ready”, and then signal the start of the set.

2) Where there is at least 1m between the back line and any wall or hard object, all players must be positioned behind their team’s back line at the start of each period. Players may touch the back line as this is not part of the court.

3) Where there is less than 1m between the back line and any wall or hard object, all players should start fully on court at the start of each period, with at least one foot in contact with the back line.

4) Five balls will be placed equally spaced apart in the neutral zone, on the “centre line”, before the start of each set. The balls will be positioned 1m, 2.5m, 4m, 5.5m, 7m along the centre line.

6) The section at the beginning of each period or reset is referred to as the “rush”. Upon the official’s signal, both teams rush to the centre of the court and attempt to retrieve their designated left-most balls, and also to compete for the one ball in the middle (which is open to either team).

7) In U16, a maximum of 3 players per team are allowed to rush for the balls – with each player able to rush for up to three balls. Any players who are not rushing must step onto the court at the start of the set before the first rusher from either team reaches the centre line, or they will be called “out”.

8) When rushing for either of the two designated balls, only one foot of the rushing player is allowed to cross the centre line. The player’s other foot must remain entirely behind the centre line. Any contraventions to this rule will result in the offending player being called “out”.

9) When rushing for the centre, contested ball, neither of the player's feet, or any other body part or clothing item are allowed to touch or cross the centre line. Any contraventions to this rules will result in the offending players being called "out".

10) Players may not slide or dive head first towards the centre line of the court when rushing to gain possession of a ball on the centre line. Any offending players will be called "out".

11) No deliberate physical contact between players is allowed. This includes pushing, grabbing and leaning on an opposition player, and will result in the offending player being called "out". Incidental contact when competing for the centre ball will not be penalised.

12) If two players both have hold of the central ball they may choose to both keep hold of it and try to gain possession, as long as they do not initiate intentional physical contact. If either player is pulled over the centre line, this player will be called "out" so long as the pulling player has not initiated intentional and avoidable physical contact.

13) No dodgeball may be thrown at an opponent until it has passed behind the ball return line. The ball may pass behind this return line by (known as "making a ball live"):

- a. The player who wins the ball carrying the ball backwards and making contact with the floor behind the ball return line (both feet fully behind the ball return line).
- b. Another player receiving the ball whilst with two feet in contact with the floor behind the ball return line.

14) If a ball that has not passed behind the ball return line is thrown, any hits made with that throw are void as it is a dead ball.

15) Balls designated for the opposing team may be collected, if still available, as soon as both of a team's own designated dodgeballs have been made live.

16) Running for an opponent's designated balls is not permitted. Clearly running for an opponent's designated ball or touching an opponent's designated ball prior to their own allocated balls both being made live will be seen as a 'retrieving error'. The non-offending team captain will be able to decide on the distribution of dodgeballs.

## **6. False Starts**

1) Players should be stationary following the call from the referee to be "ready". If a player moves towards the centre line before any signal, this is a false start.

2) If a player or players commit a false start and continue to compete for the balls during the opening rush (if they advance past the ball return line), the set will be re-started, with the centre ball automatically given to the non-offending team, who will start at the reset with this ball off court in their possession. If officials are unable to determine which team initiated the false start the set will just be re-started.

3) When a set is re-started following a first false start, the offending team will be allowed a maximum of two runners to rush for their two designated balls.

4) In the event of any additional false starts from either team (where players advance past the player return line), the remaining dodgeballs will be given one at a time to the non-offending team in the order of outside to inside, starting with the non-offending team's dodgeballs first.

5) Any balls given to a non-offending team in this manner are live from the moment the player in possession of them steps on court.

## **7. Retrievers and recovering dodgeballs**

1) Retrievers are individuals designated to retrieve balls that go out of play. Active players may not go out of bounds during a set, including to collect a ball that has gone out of bounds.

2) All matches at British Dodgeball 5 ball events will require the use of retrievers –a minimum of one and maximum of two per team. Teams are encouraged to provide their own retrievers for their matches. These may be substitutes, coaches or supporters.

3) Where a team or teams in a match are not able to provide their own retrievers, a total of two players from the team line refereeing that fixture will be available to offer a basic level of retrieving.

- a. Where one team has provided two of their own retrievers and the opposing team have no retrievers, the team without their own retrievers may use both of the basic retrievers on offer.
- b. Where one team has provided one of their own retrievers and the opposing team have no retrievers, the team without their own retrievers may use one of the basic retrievers on offer. In this instance both teams will play with one retriever.
- c. Where both teams have provided one of their own retrievers, each team must also use one of the basic retrievers on offer. In this instance both teams will play with two retrievers.

4) In matches with retrievers:

- d. Retriever may not enter the court at any time.
- e. Retriever may not wear jerseys of the same colour as their team uniform.
- f. Retriever are only allowed to retrieve balls that are out of bounds (they may not touch or retrieve a ball that is on court), and in their own team's retriever area. They may not retrieve balls that are past the off-court centre line and in the opposing team's retrieving area.
- g. Retriever must not hoard dodgeballs, and should put balls back into play as soon as is possible.

5) In order for a ball to be playable on its return to the court, retrievers must put balls back into play by one of the following:

- h. Passing a ball to any active player on their team who has both feet in contact with the ground and fully behind the ball return line.
- i. Placing the ball on court behind the ball return line.
  - i. Any ball passed to a player who does not have both feet in contact with the ground and fully behind the ball return line will not be live for the purpose of making a hit until it has been in the possession of a player who does have both feet in contact with the ground behind the ball return line. A ball returning to court that has not yet been made live can still be caught if thrown, and can still be used to block.

6) Any unsportsmanlike behaviour or infringements by a team's own retrievers will be classed as a "retrieving error". This will result in the non-offending team captain being able to decide on the distribution of dodgeballs (for instance, they may choose to be passed all five balls). This includes retrieving a ball from outside of that team's retrieving area, touching a ball that is on court or deliberately or repeatedly returning a ball to court such that it passes to the opposition's side of court. Serious or repeated infringements may result in a yellow card or further sanctions for the offending retriever.

7) Individuals from the team or club line refereeing who are providing "basic retrieving" are expected to retrieve out of play balls from their designated team's retriever area and place these back on court behind the ball return line as quickly as they can, and at at least walking pace. They cannot be required by their designated team to pass balls to particular active players, or to chase down or leave balls that are moving at speed towards the off-court centre line - though may do so if they wish.

8) Any unsportsmanlike behaviour or infringements by a basic retriever will be recorded by the referee. Serious or repeated infringements may result in a yellow card or further sanctions for the offending basic retriever.

9) Where a team has more than two available retrievers, retrievers may be changed during the reset between each set.

## **8. Exiting the Court**

- 1) An exiting player is a player who has been deemed “out” by the referee and is in the process of leaving the court.
- 2) Any player who has been hit and is obviously not attempting to or has failed to catch the deflected ball is also classed as an exiting player.
- 3) An out player should leave the court without interfering with play as quickly as possible and join the back of the queue of out players in the player return area.
  - a. Where an out player was in control of a ball at the time that they were deemed “out”, they are permitted to transfer this ball to a teammate if this does not cause any delay to them leaving the court. An out player is not permitted to interfere with any ball that was not under their control at the time that they were deemed “out”, or delay transferring a ball. Any violations may result in a penalty set for the offending player.
- 4) Where a player has been “hit” and is attempting to catch the deflected ball, subsequent plays made against that player are resolved as follows:
  - i. The player may be hit and deemed out by additional throws.
  - ii. Catches made by the player are void, unless the player first catches the deflected ball, saving themselves from being out.
  - iii. A “hit” player is not permitted to do anything to try to eliminate the opposition unless they have first caught the deflection. All plays made by the player between the deflection and catch of the deflected ball are void and the player will be called out, including any catch of another ball made between the initial hit and the catch of the deflected ball.
- 5) Upon being deemed “out”, a player should raise both hands above their heads to signal that they are out and should no longer be a target. Any player who is adjudged to have deliberately thrown at a player who is out and indicating that they should no longer be a target will be called out.
- 6) Any ball that hits an exiting player is considered to be a “live” ball. Therefore a ball that has hit an exiting player which hasn’t been intentionally deflected by that player, and hasn’t been deliberately thrown at the out or exiting player, can be caught or can hit other players out.
- 7) An exiting player must not intentionally obstruct a live ball that is in flight while leaving the playing area. This includes shielding other players, catching, or otherwise altering the path of a live ball. Where an official determines an exiting player has intentionally attempted to impact play, the non-offending team captain will be able to decide on the distribution of dodgeballs (for instance, they may choose to be passed all five balls). Time will not be stopped.

## **9. Returning to the Court**

- 1) A returning player is a player who was “out” and in the player return area, and is waiting to return to play as a result of a catch.
- 2) Players who are “out” must stand in the player return area in the order in which they were out, with the player who was first out stood nearest to the back line of the court. Failing to stand in the correct order may result in players being denied the right to return to play as a result of a catch.
- 3) Players must return to play in the order in which they were “out”. Any violation of this rule will result in the player who incorrectly returned to court being called “out”, and the player who should have returned stays at the front of the player return area queue but is not allowed to enter until the next opportunity. Where the violation is considered purposeful and unsporting, the referee may issue a yellow card to the offending player.
- 4) Returning players must no longer be in contact with any surface outside of the court in order to be able to be hit, or to catch.

## **10. Live and Dead Balls**

1) A ball thrown by an opposing player only becomes “dead” when it makes contact with the floor (or other external surface), or is caught. The thrown ball is still live on contact with another ball or player, including any ball not in a player’s possession. Multiple hits can therefore be made as a result of one throw.

## **11. Hits and Attempts**

1) An “attempt” is the act of throwing the ball at a member of the other team to try to hit them with the ball. The thrown ball must be within 1m of the targeted player at some point in its trajectory to be deemed a “valid attempt”. Failure to make a valid attempt with the thrown ball will result in the throwing player being called out.

2) Balls may only be thrown, with the exception of a block attack.

3) Players are not allowed to roll a ball to the opposing team, unless instructed to do so by a match official.

4) A throw may be performed with one or both hands and must involve the ball leaving the throwing player’s hands before it makes contact with the opposing player; players may not be “tagged” out.

5) Any intentional transfer of a ball to the opponent’s half by any means other than a valid attempt or a block can be considered an invalid attempt. The transferring player can be called out at the point at which the ball enters the opponent’s half (beyond the far neutral zone line) and no opposition player may be a hit by a ball used in this way.

6) Intentionally kicking or spiking a ball will result in an out for the offending player.

7) A player is hit out the moment that any part of their body, hair or clothing is hit by a live ball. This includes any ball rebounding off another player or ball (both blocked balls and balls lying on the ground on court), not just balls thrown by the opposition.

8) For a player to be hit out the original attempt must be valid and made by an “in” player.

9) A player is out at the moment of contact. Although the hitting ball remains “live”, the player may no longer make any plays other than to save themselves (and make a catch) by catching the ball that put them out.

10) Any hit above the shoulders (a “head shot”) is not out. However, the referee can call a player who has been hit above the shoulders out if:

a. The hit player deliberately uses their head to block an opposing throw.

b. The hit player is ducking down whilst the ball strikes them on the head in such a way that the referee believes the head may deliberately be preventing the ball from hitting another part of the body.

The thrower is out if they strike an opponent above the shoulders deliberately.

## **12. Catches**

### **12. Catches**

1) A player is out if a live ball that they have thrown is caught by an opposition player. When this happens, the throwing player is out and the catching player also brings back into play the first of their team’s out players. If there are not out players, no one is brought back into play.

2) Any catch made on an attempt by the opposition will be deemed a catch. This attempt does not have to be valid, or made by an “in” player- provided it is an attempt made by a player on the opposing team whilst that player has at least one foot on court.

3) When a player jumps to make a catch, the catch is complete once the player has control of the ball. Any subsequent actions, such as being hit by another ball or landing out of bounds will be seen as a separate

action that happens after the catch. In these instances the catch will stand but the catching player will then be out.

- 4) Where momentum carries a player off court whilst making a catch, the catch will still count providing control of the ball is established before the player makes contact with any ground off court, including the boundary lines.
- 5) A catch on a ball thrown before it is “live” (for instance, following the opening rush or following a retriever returning a ball to the court) will be considered a valid catch.
- 6) A catch made on a player who still continued to throw although already “out” will be considered a valid catch.
- 7) A player is allowed to fumble a ball while catching. Where a live ball initially hits a player and bounces off them, the ball is still live and may still be “caught”, but the hit player is “out” unless they are the player to catch and secure control of the ball – and this must be before the ball touches another player, surface, or object.
- 8) A catch is only complete when a player has full control of the caught ball – the ball must be stable and in contact with at least one of the player’s hands.
- 9) If a player becomes out during the catching process, before the catcher has full control of the caught ball, the catch does not count.
- 10) A player is allowed to drop a ball that they had control of when they are attempting to catch an incoming ball. However, players who drop a ball in order to try to catch must take reasonable care to ensure the ball does not roll onto the opposition’s side of the court.
  - a. Where a player drops a ball in their control in order to attempt to catch, but does not successfully complete the catch (including not making any contact with the incoming ball), they will be called out if the dropped ball rolls onto the opposition’s side of the court. They are out at the point the ball crosses the far neutral zone line.
  - b. Where a player drops a ball in their control in order to attempt to catch, and successfully completes the catch, if the dropped ball rolls onto the opposition’s side of the court they will only be called out if it is clear that the player could have prevented the ball from rolling across the line and still made the catch.
- 11) Trapping is the act of stopping an in-flight ball by pinning it between a wall, floor, or other object that would otherwise render it a dead ball. Trapping is not considered a valid catch and the player executing the trap is deemed hit out.
- 12) Players are not permitted to use their uniform in a way that assists in the catching of a ball – for instance, pulling out their shirt.

### 13. Blocking

- 1) A player can use any live ball or dead ball in their possession to block another ball. The blocked ball remains live following contact with the blocking ball. If the blocked ball deflects off the blocking ball onto the blocking player, a player on their team, or an opposition player, the hit player will be “out”.
- 2) Any hands holding a ball used to block with will be regarded as part of the ball. Any player hit on the hands by a live ball in these circumstances is therefore “not out”.
- 3) When a player uses a ball in their possession to block a thrown ball, the player will be called out if they lose control of the ball that they are holding as a result of the impact of the thrown ball. The thrown ball must still be “live” for this to result in an “out”, and so must not have hit the floor or other surface before touching the impacted dodgeball. Control is lost if the impacted dodgeball is dropped, or is moved such that there is a clear gap/ air between the player’s body and the ball.
- 4) A player may also be called out for “loss of control” if, during the motion of throwing a ball in their possession, the ball is knocked from their hand(s) whilst there is still contact between the throwing player and the ball.
- 5) A blocked ball can be caught. If the blocked ball is caught by a player not on the blocking player’s team, the blocking player will be out and an out player on the catcher’s team will be brought back into play.
- 6) If the blocked ball is caught by a player on the blocking player’s team, the original thrower of the blocked ball will be out and an out player on the catcher’s team will be brought back into play.
- 7) A player may choose to drop a ball they have just used as a blocking ball in order to catch the blocked ball.
- 8) A player is allowed to drop a second ball that they had control of when they are attempting to block an incoming ball. However, players who drop a ball in order to try to block must take reasonable care to ensure the ball does not roll onto the opposition’s side of the court.
  - a. Where a player drops a ball in their control in order to attempt to block, but does not successfully complete the block (including not making any contact with the incoming ball), they will be called out if the dropped ball rolls onto the opposition’s side of the court. They are out at the point the ball crosses the far neutral zone line.
  - b. Where a player drops a ball in their control in order to attempt to block, and successfully completes the block, if the dropped ball rolls onto the opposition’s side of the court they will only be called out if it is clear that the player could have prevented the ball from rolling across the line and still made the block.

### 14. Lines and the neutral zone

- 1) A player is out if they touch with any part of their person, including clothing and hair, any line marking the boundaries of their team’s section of the court, or any surface beyond these boundaries. This includes touching the far neutral zone line or crossing over the other side of the neutral zone.
  - i. At least one foot must touch the ground within the court boundary lines, with no part of the player’s body touching ground outside of the court boundary lines, for a player to be considered in bounds.
- 2) A player will be called “out” if they step out of bounds to attempt to make a catch or to avoid being hit.

- 3) Players from both teams may enter the neutral zone, but may not touch the opposition's neutral zone line or any ground over the opposition's neutral zone line with any part of their body or clothing, or the offending player will be called "out".
- 4) Players may reach across the neutral zone into the opponent's court to retrieve a ball, but may not make contact with the ground on the neutral zone line or on the opposition's side of the court.
- 5) No physical contact should be made between opposing players. Any intentional and avoidable physical contact will result in an immediate "out" and a yellow card for any player initiating contact. The sanctions committee will review whether further sanctions for dangerous play are appropriate.

## **15. Behaviour**

- 1) It is a requirement that all players competing at British Dodgeball leagues and events abide by the British Dodgeball Code of Conduct.
- 2) A player will be called out if they display poor behaviour (for instance, swearing or abusive language) towards an opposing player, volunteer, spectator, or match official. This includes any undirected swearing that is within earshot of the referee.
- 3) Referees may call out or if necessary further sanction any player who shows unsportsmanlike conduct. This includes but is not limited to feigning being out or feigning injury or any other form of deceit.

## **16. Stalling**

- 1) Players are not allowed to intentionally stall the game. Once a team has or can have possession of three or more of (the majority of) the balls in play, they should look to make an attempt with at least one of those balls. The match officials will allow them up to approximately 5 seconds in which to initiate an attack on the other team before instructing them to "play n of" those balls if the official believes they are still intentionally stalling.
- 2) When a team has possession of three or more balls, they will be regarded as the team who must be active, and will have five seconds to make an attempt with at least n of the balls in their possession from the moment the match official has called on them to "play" "n" of those balls.
- 3) A dodgeball is considered to be in a player's possession if it is in hand or it is within a reachable distance of the player. This includes any dodgeball which is off the court but can be reached by an on-court player or a retriever.
- 4) A minimum of 3 balls must be on court (on any side of the court) before an official will call for either team to "play" balls.
- 5) If "play n balls" is called, teams are allowed to retain possession of only one of the balls that was in their possession at the time that they were called to "play ball". Where "play n balls" has not been called, teams may retain as many or as few balls as they choose.
- 6) If "play n balls" is called and any players still have possession of a dodgeball or could have possession but have declined to pick up the ball when the five seconds expires (where possession is only lost if the dodgeballs are thrown through valid attempts), they will be called "out".

- 7) Where a ball has to be retrieved from off court, the ball will be considered to be in the team's possession as soon as a player or retriever touches the ball (where the ball is within the 1m area around the court boundaries).
- 8) The referee may call "play n balls" at any point when a team has possession of three or more balls and the referee considers the team to be intentionally stalling the game. The referee is not required to notify teams of how many seconds have passed once they have called "play n balls".
- 9) When "play n balls" has been called by an official, the team with the majority of the balls must make attempts which can get a member of the opposing team out. Their attempts must be seen as "valid attempts" by the officials.
- 10) Teams must gain possession of a dodgeball that is considered to be on their team's side of the court as soon as they are able to do so. Where the referee believes a player has deliberately delayed or declined gaining possession of a dodgeball that was already on their side of the court, such as a dodgeball rolling or bouncing across the width of the court that is not picked up but is within reachable distance of a player, or an off court ball on their side of the court that has not been retrieved in a reasonable timeframe, the referee may consider this ball to be in possession of that player for the purposes of the no stalling rule.
- 11) Where a player's deliberate actions cause a ball to move towards the opposition's side of the court, the ball is considered to be on this player's side of the court and they must gain possession of the ball as quickly as possible. Where there is no deliberate action affecting the movement of the ball towards the opposition's side (including deflections or bouncing back off solid surfaces) the player's team is not expected to gain possession of this ball.
- 12) Passing a ball to a team-mate will not pause or re-start the five seconds.
- 13) Players do not have to be holding a dodgeball to be called "out" for possessing a dodgeball in violation of the no stalling rule. Where a dodgeball is not being held at the end of the five seconds, the last player on that team to have made contact with the ball within those five seconds will be called "out". Where no players were in contact with a ball, the player that the referee considers to be the closest player to that dodgeball is considered to have possession of it, and will be the player to be called out.
- 14) In situations where there are more dodgeballs on a player's side of the court than there are players and play ball is called, all players must make an attempt within 5 seconds, and this will continue until the opposing team has the majority of the balls. For example, if a team has 2 players left on court and all 5 balls in their possession, those players must between them throw two balls within the first set of five seconds. The players would still have the majority of balls, so providing both players were still "in", they would have to throw two more balls within another set of five seconds.
- 15) If each team has 2 balls and a ball is stationary in the neutral zone, the side with the majority of the balls is the side with the player nearest to the stationary ball.
- 16) Where a player in possession of a ball on a team that has been told to "play ball" becomes hit "out" during the play ball count, the number of balls needed to be "played" by that team is reduced by one as that player's ball is discounted.
- 17) Where a player in possession of a ball on a team that has been told to "play ball" makes a catch or tries to make a catch (generally by dropping their ball) during the play ball count, the number of balls needed to be "played" by that team within the 5 seconds does not reduce – trying to catch is not an attempt.

## **17. Simultaneous Plays**

- 1) Simultaneous play occurs when two or more opposing players are hit and/ or catch balls at the same time, such that the match officials cannot determine which play was completed first. All results are resolved simultaneously; each player hit is deemed “out”, and each catch results in one player returning from the player return area.
- 2) Should a simultaneous play result in all players being eliminated, the set will be concluded and the set result will be declared a draw. Both teams will then take up their positions for the next set.
- 3) When a player is in the act of catching a ball and is hit by another ball simultaneously, such that the referee cannot determine which action was completed first, this is classified as a simultaneous catch and hit. This means that the thrower of the caught ball is deemed “out”, the catching player is deemed “out” for being hit, and one player from the catching player’s team is allowed to return to the court from the player out area for the catch.

## **18. Injury**

- 1) Where feasible, an injured player is expected to make their way off court as soon as possible. Referees will stop time when a player is injured. The injured player should be substituted for at least the remainder of the set. Where a team has no substitute they must play short-handed.
- 2) An injured player who is unable to carry on playing and is still “in” may be replaced by a substitute who will take the injured player’s place directly by coming straight into play. Where the injured player is “out” the substitute will take the injured player’s place in the out queue in the player return area. The injured player is not permitted to participate for at least the remainder of the set.
- 3) Any player suffering from a blood injury must be replaced, or must leave court for at least the remainder of that set if there are no substitutes. The flow of blood from the injury must have stopped before the player may return to court in any new set.