



British Dodgeball Junior Rules and Regulations

At British Dodgeball we are providing many opportunities for junior dodgeball players to take part in events and develop their skills. Our vision is to create a sensible pathway at our events that focuses on inclusion and development. Our rules are appropriate for each age group and refereeing directives are there to encourage and nurture new and developing players into the sport.

British Dodgeball has four junior age groups in 2018/19:

- 1) U9s
- 2) U11s
- 3) U13s
- 4) U16s

British Dodgeball U11 & U9 Rules

1. Age Categories

1.1) Children are permitted to compete in the Under 11's age category if they were aged 10 or younger on the 31st August 2018. In England and Wales this is children in school years 6 and below, in Scotland this is children in school year Primary 6 and below and in Northern Ireland this is children in school year P6 and below.

1.2) Children are permitted to compete in the Under 9's category if they were aged 8 or younger on the 31st August 2018. In England and Wales this is children in school years 4 and below, in Scotland this is children in school year Primary 4 and below and in Northern Ireland this is children in school year P4 and below.

2. The Court

2.1) 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.

2.2) 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.

2.3) 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 where it is recommended they stop for safety when contesting the middle ball. Players will not be called out for stepping on or going over the "contested ball lines".

2.4) 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.

2.5) 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 where possible). This area will be 1m by 4m and is reserved for one team coach where applicable, plus any players who are "out".

2.6) 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.

2.7) For matches not played wall-to-wall, the outside court lines and any back walls or boundaries are not part of the playing court. When the court is wall-to-wall, the back walls are considered part of the court. Players who touch the outside lines or step over these in the Under 11's and Under 9's game will not be called out, they must however be encouraged to get back onto court immediately by the referee and/or team coach. Players who remain off court for an unnecessary length of time will be called out. Referees are recommended to allow up to 3 seconds for a player to return to inside the court boundaries. If a player is outside the court beyond this length of time (unless leaving court to retrieve a ball) they may be called "out".

2.8) Where possible a net, barrier, or other hard surface will surround the court, approximately 2.5 metres from the outside court line.

2.9) During match play, only a team's 6 designated players for that period, and coach, are allowed inside these nets/ barriers/ surfaces.

3. Coaches

3.1) 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.

3.2) 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.

3.3) Coaches must at all times adhere to the British Dodgeball [Code of Conduct](#)





4. Equipment and Clothing

4.1) Three size 1 foam British Dodgeball approved dodgeballs will be used in each match.

4.2) 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".

4.3) All players competing in the same team should wear tops of the same colour.

4.4) 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.

5. Match formats and scoring

5.1) 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.

5.2) 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.

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

5.4) Teams will change ends at half time.

5.5) 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.





5.6) 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.

5.7) 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.

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

5.9) 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.

5.10) 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:

1. The team with the greatest set points for-against difference from all matches will be placed higher
2. The team with the most table points from any head-to-head matches will be placed higher
3. The team with the greatest set points for-against difference from any head-to-head matches will be placed higher
4. The team with the most set points from any head-to-head matches will be placed higher
5. 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.

5.11) 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.

5.12) 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.

6. The start of play

6.1) 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.

6.2) 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.

6.3) 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.





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

6.5) 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).

6.6) For safety it is recommended that a maximum of 2 players per team rush for the balls – with each player able to rush for up to two balls. If more than 2 players rush for the balls the team will be asked to refrain from doing so by the referee, no players are called “out” for this infraction. Any players who are not rushing should step onto the court at the start of the period before the first rusher from either team reaches the centre line.

6.7) When rushing for their designated ball, players should not touch or step over the opponent’s neutral zone line, players are permitted to step over the centre line when rushing for their designated ball.

- For the centre, contested ball, contested ball lines are recommended to be marked on the court either side of the centre line, these lines are in place as guidelines to encourage players to stop before the centre line for health and safety reasons. Players will not be called out for stepping on or over the contested ball lines.
- The competing player is not permitted to touch the centre line or the floor beyond it with any part of their body, and in doing so will be called “out”.

6.8) 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”.

6.9) 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.

6.10) 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.

6.11) 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.

6.12) 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.

6.13) 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

7.1) 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.

7.2) 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

8.1) British Dodgeball U9 and U11 events will be played without retrievers.

8.2) 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. Players must leave and re-enter the court behind the return line.

8.3) When recovering dodgeballs from off the court, players must not go beyond the centre line which marks the team’s half of the court. If a player retrieves a ball from beyond the centre line this ball must be handed over to the opposition team – the ball is not live until it has been handed over to the opposition team and any plays made with a ball recovered beyond the centre line prior to it being handed over to the opposition will not count. A player is not called “out” for retrieving a ball beyond the centre line.

8.4) “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

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

9.2) 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.

9.3) 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.





9.4) 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

10.1) 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.

10.2) 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”.

10.3) 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

11.1) 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

12.1) 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 U9 and 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”.

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

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





12.4) 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.

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

12.6) 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.

12.7) Any hit to an opponents face or side of the head is not out. Hits to an opponents head can be called out by the referee if:

- a). The hit player deliberately uses their face 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.
- c). A player is hit on the back of the head
- d). The thrower may be called out if they strike an opponent above the shoulders deliberately.

12.8) For a player to be hit out the original attempt must be valid and made by an "in" player.

12.9) 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

13.1) 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.

13.2) 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 over the furthest neutral zone line 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.

13.3) 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 when releasing the ball.

13.4) 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.

13.5) 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.





13.6) If a player becomes out during the catching process, before the catcher has full control of the caught ball, the catch does not count.

13.7) A player is allowed to drop a ball in their possession when they are attempting to catch a thrown ball.

13.8) 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

14.1) 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”.

14.2) 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”.

14.3) 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.

14.4) 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.

14.5) 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

15.1) Players 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. 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.

15.2) Players who touch the outside lines or step over these in the Under 11’s and Under 9’s game will not be called out, they must however be encouraged to get back onto court immediately by the referee and/or team coach.

15.3) In the Under 11’s game players that leave the court by more than 0.5m when avoiding being hit will receive 1 warning per match. Any subsequent infringements after the initial warning will result in an “out” for the offending player.





15.4) Players who remain off court for an unnecessary length of time will be called out. Referees are recommended to allow up to 3 seconds for a player to return to inside the court boundaries. If a player is outside the court beyond this length of time (unless leaving court to retrieve a ball) they may be called “out”.

15.5) 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”.

15.6) Players competing for the middle ball during the opening rush will be called out if they touch the centre line or the floor beyond it.

16. Behaviour

16.1) It is a requirement that all players competing at British Dodgeball leagues and events abide by the British Dodgeball Code of Conduct.

16.2) 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.

16.3) Taunting is not permitted at British Dodgeball leagues and events and any player that is seen to be taunting will receive a warning from the match referee. This includes foot stamping and other aggressive/intimidating play near the neutral zone used to put off the opposing team. Fake throws are not deemed as taunting and are permitted – however, referees may provide warnings for excessive fake throwing.

17. Stalling

17.1) 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.

17.2) 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.

17.3) 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.





17.4) 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”.

17.5) 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.

17.6) Passing a ball to a team-mate will not pause or re-start the five seconds.

17.7) 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.

17.8) 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.

17.9) 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

18.1) 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.

18.2) If a simultaneous play results in a hit followed by a catch by a team mate, the player hit must leave the court to step in the outbox before returning to the game.

18.2) 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.

18.3) 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

19.1) 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.

19.2) 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.

19.3) 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.

20. The Dodgeball Code

The dodgeball code is one of the most important aspects of dodgeball. It is about fair play, respect and sportsmanship. All dodgeball players have a duty to ensure they play by the rules and uphold themselves to the highest standards of honesty. Highly competitive play is encouraged but should never be displayed as cheating. If you respect your opponents, respect your officials and the decisions they make, then you respect the spirit of the dodgeball. This will increase the integrity of the sport and the joy of play for all.

Demonstrating the code:

- Declaring you've been hit when you feel a ball lightly skim you.
- Asking the referee if you aren't sure if a ball bounced before it hit you.
- Trusting an opponent to go out if the ball hits them.
- Letting the referee make a decision, and respecting it even if you don't agree.
- Treating your opponents with respect by introducing yourselves before a game.

The Dodgeball Code

- When I play dodgeball, I make myself proud
- I will play by the rules and be honest at all times
- I will try my best in every game and let my passion show
- I will respect my opponents, and always demonstrate fair play
- If I'm not sure what happened, I will ask referees and others around me
- I will respect their decisions
- I know that playing with integrity makes dodgeball more enjoyable for all
- This drives the sport forwards
- The future of dodgeball is here
- Come join in

