

**UNDER 13'S, 15'S & 17'S
RULE BOOK
2021/2022 SEASON**



**BRITISH
DODGEBALL**

Introduction

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. Our four focus age groups are under 11's, under 13's, under 15's and under 17's.

British Dodgeball has four junior age groups in 2021/22:

- Under 11's
- Under 13's
- Under 15's
- Under 17's

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1. Age Categories

1.1 Children are permitted to compete in the Under 13's age category if they are aged 12 or younger on the 31st August 2021. In England and Wales this is children in school years 8 and below, in Scotland this is children in school year S1 and below and in Northern Ireland this is children in school year 9 and below.

1.2 Children are permitted to compete in the Under 15's age category if they were aged 14 or younger on the 31st August 2021. In England and Wales this is children in school years 10 and below, in Scotland this is children in school year S3 and below and in Northern Ireland this is children in school year 11 and below.

1.3 Children are permitted to compete in the Under 17's age category if they were aged 16 or younger on the 31st August 2021. In England and Wales this is children in school years 12 (Lower Sixth Form) and below, in Scotland this is children in school year S5 and below and in Northern Ireland this is children in school year 13 and below.

2. Under 17's Specific Rules

2.1 For under 17s, five size 3 (7 inch) cloth British Dodgeball approved dodgeballs will be used in each match.

2.2 For U17's, a "head shot" is a valid attempt and a player struck on the head is out unless the referee believes it was intentionally used in an unsportsmanlike fashion. A deliberate dangerous or unsportsmanlike head shot will result in a yellow card or further sanctions for the throwing player.

The following rules apply to all Under 13s, Under 15s and Under 17s age categories.

3. The Court

3.1 For under 13's, under 15's and under 17's, the recommended 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.

3.2 If the available length is 19m or above, play with a 17m court length with a minimum 1m retriever area at each end.

3.3 If the available length is between 18m and 19m, play with a 1m retriever area at each end plus the remainder as court length.

3.4 If the available length is less than 18m, use the full length as the court length and play wall to wall.

3.5 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.

3.6 A "centre line" will be marked across the court at exactly halfway between the back lines (or walls if playing wall to wall). Markings are recommended at 1m, 2.5m, 4m, 5.5m, and 7m along the centre line to indicate where the five balls should be placed at the start of play.

3.7 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.

3.8 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".

3.9 A “ball 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.

3.10 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.

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

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

3.12 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.

3.13 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.

3.14 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.

4. Coaches

4.1 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.

4.2 Coaches should refrain from questioning or talking to the referee during a set. Should a coach need to speak to the referee, they should do so at the end of a set. This should be done in a polite and appropriate manner.

4.3 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.

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

5. Equipment and Clothing

5.1 For under 13s and under 15s, five size 2 (6.5 inch) cloth British Dodgeball approved dodgeballs will be used in each match.

5.2 For under 17s, five size 3 (7 inch) cloth British Dodgeball approved dodgeballs will be used in each match.

5.3 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”.

5.4 All players competing in the same team should wear tops of the same colour. For further information and guidance on kit see the [Club and Team Kit Guidance document](#).

5.5 An official may at any time request that a player changes uniform or equipment or requires an adjustment, if they believe this uniform or equipment poses a significant risk to the safety of other players. Any queries should be sent to hello@britishdodgeball.com.

5.6 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.

- All footwear worn should be suitable for dodgeball and should be non-marking.
- Unsecured headgear such as ball caps and visors may not be worn during tournament play.
- Prosthetics may be worn. All casts, braces, and splints with exposed hard surfaces must be padded.
- 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.
- It is recommended that spectacles should not be worn by players during competition, unless secured by a strap. If a player chooses to wear spectacles, it is done so at their own risk, British Dodgeball accept no responsibility for injuries that occur whilst wearing spectacles.
- Taping of hands and fingers is permitted where the taping material does not provide an advantage to that player.

6. Match formats and scoring

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

6.2 A match will comprise of as many sets as will fit within the allotted match time. A set is when the two teams line up behind the back line to start play, and play until either one team is eliminated, or until the time for that set expires. The maximum time allowed for each set is 2 minutes of continuous play.

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

6.4 Teams will change ends at half time.

6.5 A match will usually consist of two halves of 7 minutes separated by a 1-minute half time. The 7 minutes for each half will be a running clock, i.e. 7 minutes without pausing, with the exception of an optional 1-minute time-out per match for each team. The head referee will only stop play and thus pause the time when they deem it to be absolutely necessary, such as when a health and safety concern arises.

6.6 A time-out can only be taken between sets. A team's time-out can only be requested by the team captain or coach and must be requested before the referees call for players to line-up for the next set.

6.7 In 7-minute half match formats, if less than 30 seconds remain of a half before a new set is due to start and greater than 0 seconds remain at the conclusion of the previous set, the match officials will announce that a "final set" of 60 seconds will be played. If after the completion of the final set, any time remains on either the match clock or the set clock, no further sets will be played.

6.8 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

6.9 Once a set ends (due to a team being eliminated, or time expiring), teams must be ready to re-set for the next set. A maximum of 20 seconds should be allowed for re-set. During this re-set time any player substitutions can be made.

6.10 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.

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

6.12 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.

6.13 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.

6.14 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.

6.15 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.

6.16 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. Where a player is hit at the end of overtime and the hit results in the teams being level and the match progressing to sudden death, the hit player remains able to attempt to catch the ball that has hit them.

6.17 The referee will keep track of the match score and will announce the current score at the end of each finished set, and before calling for teams to “line up” for the new set if it is not the end of a half. If a team coach wishes to dispute the announced score they must do so at this point and this point only, and before any new set begins. If no disputes are made the score is considered agreed and play will continue.

6.18 A team coach must sign the score sheet at the end of each match.

6.18.1 A match score that has been signed off by both team coaches will be final and cannot be amended.

7. The start of play

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

7.2 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 set. Players may touch the back line as this is not part of the court.

7.3 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 set, with at least one foot in contact with the back line.

7.4 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.

7.5 The beginning of each set 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).

7.6 For safety it is recommended that a maximum of 3 players per team rush for the balls – with each player able to rush for up to two balls. If more than 3 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 must step onto the court at the start of the set before the first rusher from either team reaches the centre line.

7.7 When rushing for their designated balls, players should not touch or step over the opponent’s neutral zone line. For the centre, contested ball, the competing player will be called “out” if they touch the centre line or the surface beyond it with any part of their body.

7.8 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”.

7.9 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.

7.10 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.

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

7.11.1 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).

7.11.2 Another player receiving the ball whilst with two feet in contact with the floor behind the ball return line.

7.12 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.

7.12.1 In this instance, a catch made on a ball that has not been made live after the opening rush will be considered a valid catch.

7.13 The 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.

7.14 At the opening rush, running for an opponents designated ball is not permitted.

7.14.1 Clearly running for an opponents' designated ball or touching an opponents' designated ball prior to their own designated ball being live will be seen as a 'retrieving error'.

7.14.2 In this instance, the opposing team will decide on the distribution of the dodgeballs i.e. they can request the possession of all 5 balls.

8. False Starts

8.1 Players should be stationary following the call from the referee to be “ready”. If a player moves in any direction before any signal, this is a false start.

8.2 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.

8.3 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.

8.4 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.

8.5 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.

9. Retrievers and recovering dodgeballs

9.1 British Dodgeball U13, U15 and U17 events and leagues will be played with retrievers. 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.

9.2 All matches at British Dodgeball U13, U15 and U17 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.

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

9.4 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.

9.5 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.

9.6 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

9.7 In matches with retrievers:

- Retrievers may not step on court at any time.
- Retrievers may not wear jerseys of the same colour as their team uniform.
- Retrievers 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.
- Retrievers must not hoard dodgeballs, and should put balls back into play as soon as is possible.

9.8 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:

- 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.
- Placing the ball on court behind the ball return line.

9.9 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.

9.10 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.

9.11 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 least at 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.

9.12 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.

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

10. Exiting the Court

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

10.2 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.

10.3 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.

10.4 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.

10.5 Where a player has been “hit” and is attempting to catch the deflected ball, subsequent plays made against that player are resolved as follows:

- The player may be hit and deemed out by additional throws.
- Catches made by the player are void, unless the player first catches the deflected ball, saving themselves from being out.

10.6 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.

10.7 Upon becoming “out”, an exiting player should promptly 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.

10.8 Any ball that hits an exiting player is considered to still be a “live” ball. Therefore a ball that has hit an exiting player which hasn’t been intentionally deflected by that player can be caught or hit other players out.

10.9 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.

11. Returning to the Court

11.1 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. They must re-enter the court behind the back line.

11.2 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.

11.3 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.

11.4 Returning players must have both feet inside the playing area in order to be able to be hit, or to catch.

12. Live and Dead Balls

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.

13. Hits and Attempts

13.1 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”.

13.1.1 In U13 and U15s 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”.

13.1.2 In U17s events, 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.

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

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

13.4 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.

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

13.6 In U17s, 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 hit by a ball used in this way.

13.7 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.

13.8 For U13's and U15's any hit to an opponent's face or side of the head is not out, except when the player has been hit on any part of their body first. In that case the player would be called out. Hits to an opponent's head can be called out by the referee if:

- The hit player deliberately uses their face to block an opposing throw.
- 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.
- A player is hit on the back of the head
- The thrower may be called out if they strike an opponent above the shoulders deliberately.
- If a player is hit elsewhere first and the ball then hits them in the face they are still out, and should exit the court.
- If a player blocks the ball up into their own face or head they are still out.
- The thrower may be called out if they strike an opponent above the shoulders deliberately.

13.9 For U17's, a "head shot" is a valid attempt and a player struck on the head is out unless the referee believes it was intentionally used in an unsportsmanlike fashion. A deliberate dangerous or unsportsmanlike head shot will result in a yellow card or further sanctions for the throwing player.

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

13.11 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.

14. Catches

14.1 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.

14.2 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.

14.3 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.

14.4 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.

14.5 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.

14.6 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.

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

14.8 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.

14.8.1 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.

14.8.2 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.

14.9 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.

14.10 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.

15. Blocking

15.1 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”.

15.2 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”.

15.3 When a player uses a ball in their possession (blocking ball) to block a live ball (blocked ball), the player must have re-gained control of their blocking ball before it makes contact with another player or any surface, or they will be called out. The player has kept control of the blocking ball so long as the blocking ball is not dropped, and the ball is stable and in contact with at least one of the player’s hands before it makes contact with another player or any surface. The blocked 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.

15.4 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 and they do not re-gain control of this ball.

15.5 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.

15.6 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.

16. Lines and the neutral zone

16.1 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.

16.1.1 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.

16.2 A player will be called "out" if they step out of bounds to attempt to make a catch or to avoid being hit.

16.3 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".

16.4 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.

16.5 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.

16.6 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.

17. Behaviour

17.1 It is a requirement that all players competing at British Dodgeball leagues and events abide by the British Dodgeball [Code of Conduct](#).

17.2 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.

17.3 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.

17.4 Calling opposition players 'out' is not permitted at British Dodgeball leagues and events and any player or team that is seen to be doing this will receive a warning from the match referee.

18. Stalling

18.1 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.

18.2 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.

18.3 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.

18.4 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.

18.5 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.

18.6 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".

18.7 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).

18.8 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".

18.9 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.

18.10 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.

18.11 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.

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

18.13 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.

18.14 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.

18.15 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.

18.16 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.

18.17 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.

19. Simultaneous Plays

19.1 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.

19.2 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.

19.3 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.

20. Injury

20.1 Where feasible, an injured player is expected to make their way off court as soon as possible. Referees may 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.

20.2 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.

20.3 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.

20.3.1 If a blood injury occurs, the court must be clean of any blood before the set/match can continue. The event coordinator should be notified of any blood injuries. The referee will pause time to allow for the court to be cleaned and checked before restarting play.

20.4 Clubs are responsible for first aid, and as per the regulations, should have appropriate provisions (e.g. ice packs and a stocked first aid kit) to treat any injuries that may occur. The referee is not responsible for administering first aid to any injured player.

21. The Dodgeball Code

21.1 [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.

21.2 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.

21.3 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

21.4 At junior events, should warnings need to be issued to any players for any reason, these warnings should be given through the team coach at an appropriate time e.g. at a stop in play or at the end of a set.

21.5 A player can 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.

21.5 Referees may call out or if necessary further sanction any player who shows unsportsmanlike conduct (for instance calling players on the opposing team out).

21.5.1 Should a coach display behaviour such as calling opposition players out, they will be issued with a warning. If the behaviour continues they will be asked to leave the game.

22. Contact

The Junior Rules Committee consists of the following members. For any queries involving junior rules please contact hello@britishdodgeball.com with the email titled: 'FAO Junior Rules Committee'.

- Kirsty Shaw – **Head of Junior Rules and Regulations**
- Alice Bowler – **Youth Development Manager**
- Aden Woodall – **British Dodgeball**
- Ben Hoyle – **Eden Dodgeball**
- Brooke Thurbon – **Harborough Hurricanes**
- Joy Neave – **Flintshire Dodgeball**
- Mark Yates – **Enderby Junior Dodgeball Club**
- Michael Bailey – **Altrincham Dodgers**
- Robyn Kerrie Smith – **GCG Juniors**
- Stephanie Robson – **Hartlepool Mavericks**
- Victoria Foster – **Wilmslow Wasps**