



Rules Guidance

WDBF Rules Implementation Guidance - 15th September 2026

Rule 4 Team

British Dodgeball Regulations cover ball retrievers amounts:

III. Retrievers

1. Teams are responsible for providing their own retrievers. These can be anyone not playing on court, including substitutes.
2. Teams must have a minimum of 2 retrievers at all times. Teams must play shorthanded, using players as retrievers if necessary, to meet this requirement.
3. Should team captains both agree in advance of the match and inform a main referee, each team may use 3 retrievers.
 - 3.1. This agreement lasts for the duration of the entire match once this agreement has been made. A team may reduce their own retriever numbers back to 2, but may not request that opponents reduce their retriever numbers from 3.

Rule 5 Team Leaders

British Dodgeball Regulations cover Team Leaders:

II. Coaches & Team Leaders

1. Anyone standing in the player return area who is not a live player is classed as a coach.
2. Each playing team can have a maximum of two coaches during each match they play in. Only one of these may be classed as the team leader.
 - 2.1. If no coach is present, a captain will fulfil the role of a team leader.
3. The coach must remain inside their player return area or penalty box at all times during live sets.
4. Should the team leader leave the court boundary area, or receive a blue, yellow or red card, the team must identify a new team representative to fulfil this responsibility until the original team representative returns or sanction is fulfilled.

The only exception to coaches leaving their player area is if this is authorised by a match official. *Example: Coaches are called in to explain a rules decision or to assist with first aid. They can leave their area between sets and timeouts.*

Rule 14 - False Starts

If there is a false start, time is paused, the set is restarted with a turnover against the offending team. Any time lost between starting a set, the false start being declared and then pausing the match clock is not restored.

False Start Procedure:

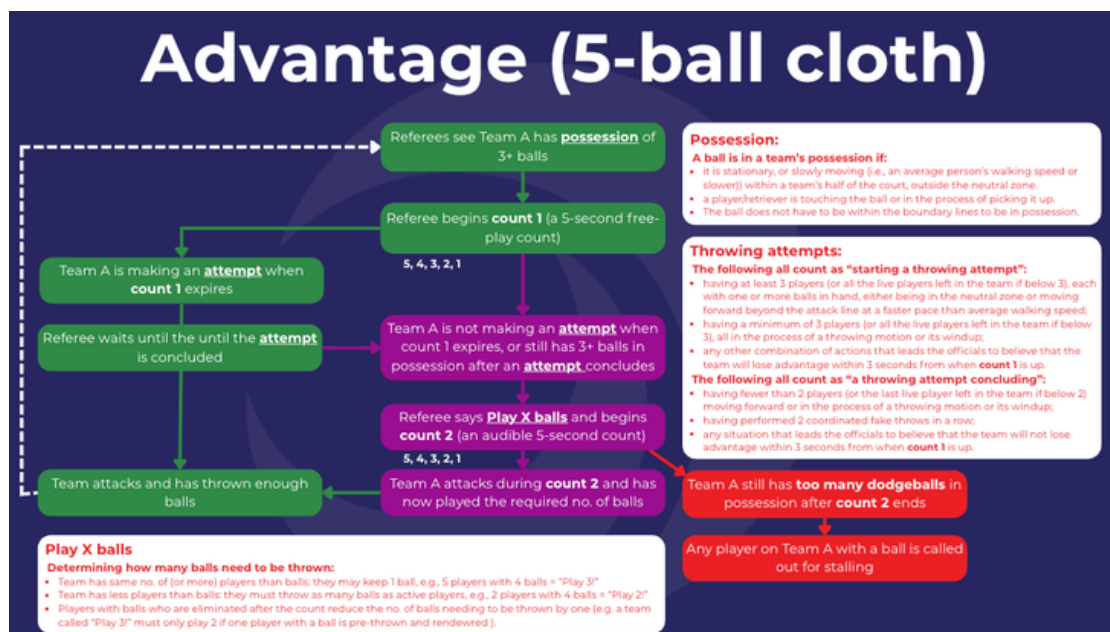
1. Team A false starts;
2. Pause the match clock
3. Team B are given all 5 balls
4. The set timer is reset to 3 minutes.
5. Announce time left in the half.
6. Start both clocks with a blow of the whistle

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Rule 18 - Play Ball

See this [diagram](#) containing rules references and additional guidance:



Rule 20 - Blocking

A non-activated ball that has been obtained from the opening rush can be used to block and will not result in the player being called out. A non-activated ball which has been passed in by a retriever may **not** be used to block, and will result in the player being called out as if it has hit the player directly.

Rule 23 - Exiting Players

When a player is hit (in front of the activation line), they will ideally place any balls in their possession down on the court, stationary, where they have been hit. If the ball is passed to a teammate; rolls more than 1 metre from where placed/dropped; or the movement of a ball affects their opponent's ability to gain possession (e.g. the ball rolls 30cm away from an opponent who can now no longer reach over the neutral zone to take the ball), the player shall receive a blue card. Factors to consider for the blue card:

- If a ball is flicked back (old habits) = Blue Card.
- If the ball is placed/dropped down but rolls over 1m from its original placement = Blue Card
- If the ball is placed/dropped down but rolls, preventing the other team from taking possession = Blue Card

If a player is backtracking and gets called out by an official, the ball(s) carried by the player must be returned to the position the official has determined the player was hit. If a player is unsure where to place the ball, they should ask the referee.



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Rule 28 - Sacrifice Play

If a player releases their ball before landing in their opponent's territory **and** their thrown ball hits a player or forces their target to commit a line fault, the sacrifice play is deemed successful and attacking player is not immediately rendered out. Instead, they have a chance to return to their fair territory and remain active in the game.

Until this player successfully reaches the neutral zone, no active plays may be made by this player or they are deemed out: No catching, no dodging, no blocking, no picking up of balls, no intentional change of speed, no throwing.

Only 1 sacrifice may happen at a time; the 1st sacrifice player must return across the centre line before the 2nd player can make a sacrifice play. If multiple sacrifice plays happen, then all players making these attempts are out. Example:

1. Player 1 makes a sacrifice play
2. Hits other team
3. Starts running back (has not crossed the centre line)
4. Player 2 starts their attack.
5. Both players are out; the hit player is also still out. (Player 1 was not out before hit was made)

Rule 31 - Ball Retrievers

Balls must be put back into play as soon as possible, either:

- passed to an active player behind the return line, or
- placed on court behind the return line

Rule 34 - Yellow Card

A yellow card is only 5 minutes



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Rule 37 - Challenges

Challenges are only for applications of the rules by an official; this is limited to 2 attempts per game by a captain or coach (**1 attempt in open formats**). A challenge must be made as immediately as possible following an incorrect application, but after an active play.

Resolution of challenges should be completed quickly (no longer than 1 minute where possible). **The onus is on the challenging team** to explain to the referee what rule was given wrong and what it should be, with evidence. Examples include:

- "You refereed rule X this way. It should actually be this. Read this rule here."
- "You refereed rule X this way. Actually, this is a WDBF rule which is superseded in the British Dodgeball Regulations. Read this regulation here."
- "You refereed rule X this way. It should actually be refereed this way as per BD's WDBF Rules Guidance document."

The only acceptable documents that can be evidenced are:

1. WDBF Cloth Rules 2026
2. the British Dodgeball Regulations 26-27 season, and
3. the Rules Implementation Guidance September 2026 (this document).

If this no such evidence can be produced by the team, then the challenge is rejected automatically. Referees should also have a copy of the rules and regulations to hand (e.g. downloaded to their phone) in case this is needed.

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Sorting out challenges should not last longer than one minute or so; if it cannot be cleared up relatively quickly, the challenge must be rejected for the current game and the referee can seek clarification after the game. If a team is not satisfied with the outcome of a challenge, then they should be told to complete the **referee feedback form** in order to report this and receive a resolution from the Technical Committee.

Further Guidance

Please be proactive in learning the new ruleset. If unsure after reading the rules & regulations, or want to check that your application of a rule is correct, contact the British dodgeball Technical Committee via disciplinary@britishdodgeball.com. This should be, where possible, with the specific rule number e.g. Rule 24.2 - "Insert question on rule"