

JUNIOR RULES
REFEREE
GUIDANCE



BRITISH
DODGEBALL

Introduction

The sections below are designed in particular to assist referees, coaches and players to achieve a consistent and fair interpretation of the junior rules.

The British Dodgeball Junior Rules are designed to facilitate an exciting but safe, free-flowing game; interpretation of the rules should keep this in mind.

Overall a referee should always consider the intent of a player or team.

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1. Headshots (Under 11's, Under 13's & Under 15's)

- Any hit to an opponent's face or side of the head around the ear should be called 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.
- Any hits to an opponent's head should be called out if the player deliberately uses their face or other part of their head to block an opposing throw.
- Any hits to an opponent's head should be called out if the player is ducking down whilst the ball strikes them on the head.
- Any hits to an opponent's head should be called out if the ball hits a player on the back of the head.
- Any hits to an opponent's neck should be called out.

2. Headshots (Under 17's)

2.1 At U17s a headshot is considered a valid attempt, and will result in the player struck on the head being out.

2.2 The referee should consider whether they believe the throwing player is acting maliciously, or could have reasonably expected that this attempt might hit the opposing player in the head. For instance, a head shot not entirely as a result of the target player's movement, so where any throw and (big) movement was not simultaneous, would result in a yellow card for the throwing player.

2.2.1 This particularly applies to instances at close range/at the front of the court though is not limited to this if the throwing player is still adjudged to be acting maliciously.

2.3 Where a player repeatedly throws at the opposition's head, the referee should give the throwing player a warning if they believe this is deliberate and unsportsmanlike. If the player continues to regularly throw in this way, they may then be called "out".

3. Invalid Attempts (Under 11's, Under 13's & Under 15's)

3.1 In U11, U13 and U15 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.

3.1.1 In this case, a warning for an invalid attempt can be given.

3.1.2 A subsequent invalid attempt will result in the player being called "out".

4. Invalid Attempts (Under 17's)

4.1 In U17 events, failure to make a valid attempt with the thrown ball will result in the throwing player being called out.

4.2 A throw that is off court but is within 1m of the targeted player at some point in its trajectory is not an invalid attempt.

5. Sanctions & Warnings

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.

6. Play Ball Rules

6.1 Once a team has or can have possession 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.

6.2 The "play ball" rule is designed to ensure the game flows and is designed to avoid teams stalling. Where, having allowed up to approximately five seconds, the team with majority possession do not look like at least one player is about to make an attacking play in the next 1-2 seconds, then "play n balls" should be called.

6.3 The approximate 5 seconds a team has to initiate an attack before “play n balls” is called is not meant as a prescriptive and definitive time. Referees should be mindful of the match situation and whether it is in a team’s interest to stall. Referees should be mindful that the younger ages may take longer to decide on their strategy and begin the attack.

6.4 If at least one player is advancing to the front of the court in a way that looks like they are about to throw, play ball should not be called unless all players actively show they are stalling (e.g. all players fake).

7. Lines (Under 11’s)

7.1 Players who touch the outside court lines in the Under 11’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”.

7.2 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. This warning should be issued through the team coach to ensure it is understood. Any subsequent infringements after the initial warning will result in an “out” for the offending player.

7.3 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”.

8. Lines (Under 13s, Under 15s & Under 17s)

Players who touch the outside lines or step over the court lines in the Under 13’s, Under 15’s and Under 17’s will be called “out”. 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.

9. The Start of Play (Under 11's)

9.1 In Under 11's, for safety it is recommended that a maximum of 2 players per team rush for the 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.

9.2 Players will not be called out for stepping on or over the "contested ball safety lines", 0.3m either side of the centre line for the central ball. These lines are just a guide as to where to safely stop.

10. The Start of Play (Under 13s, Under 15s & Under 17s)

In Under 13's, Under 15's and Under 17's for safety it is recommended that a maximum of 3 players per team rush for the 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.