



AUSTRALIAN
DODGEBALL
FEDERATION

CLOTH DODGEBALL RULESET

LOCAL LEVEL

1. Overview

1.1. What is Cloth Dodgeball?

Dodgeball is a sport played by two teams, each with 6 players. Teams throw balls with the aim to hit and eliminate opposing players, while dodging, blocking or catching their opponents thrown balls. To win a Dodgeball Match, you must win more points than your opponent before the Match time runs out. Points are accumulated by winning Set's, which are as follows:

- **2 Points:** Eliminating all players during a Set, or having more players than your opponent once a Set's time has elapsed.
- **1 Point:** Rewarded to both teams by having the same number of Live players once a Set's time has elapsed.

A Match runs for two Halves (typically 20 minutes), which are divided into timed Sets (typically 3 minutes). At the end of the first Half, teams shake hands and swap court sides to ensure fairness, and begin the second Half.

1.2. Playing Area

A Dodgeball court's design can differ depending on your local league and their different needs such as available facility, internal/external environment, community size, and player skill.

- 1.2.1. **Dimensions:** A standard dodgeball court is 18m long, and 9m wide, which is the same size as a volleyball court. Typically these dimensions are marked with tape that is visually bright and sufficiently wide so to be easily visible against the court surface.
- 1.2.2. **Netting:** Where possible, the use of netting or barriers is advised to ensure the containment of thrown balls, and the safety of non-participants.
- 1.2.3. **Boundary Lines:** These are the outermost lines that mark the playing area, stepping on or outside this line eliminates the player.
- 1.2.4. **Centre Line:** Found in the middle, splitting the court by length.

- 1.2.5. **Neutral Zone Lines:** Found 2m behind the Centre Line, the Neutral Zone Lines indicate the area that is accessible to both teams for the purpose of play.
- 1.2.6. **Attack Lines:** Found 5.5m behind the Centre Line, this line is where balls are Activated during the Opening Rush.

1.3. Balls

Cloth Dodgeball is played with round balls that are typically 6"-7" in size, and are made of a durable cloth outer layer and rubber inner layer, meaning the ball is malleable yet doesn't cause injury upon impact. Like any piece of sporting equipment, Dodgeballs perform best when they are treated properly, meaning they should be used with care, and replaced when there is visible damage or soiling.

Resource: Aussie Dodgeballs Website (Appendix D)

1.4. Throwing

To eliminate an opposing player, a Live ball must be thrown and make contact with the players body (inclusive of clothing) without touching any part of the court. Eliminated players must exit the court safely to an allocated area outside the court boundaries.

- 1.4.1. **Live Ball:** A ball is considered Live from the moment it is thrown until it becomes Dead, meaning that all players that a Live ball contacts are eliminated once it becomes Dead.
- 1.4.2. **Dead Ball:** A ball is considered Dead once it contacts any other object without hitting a player, which includes the court, eliminated players, thrown balls and any other non-player objects.
- 1.4.3. **Invalid Throws:** A player is eliminated and their throw considered Invalid if it does not land or pass within 1 metre of an opposing player or their position at the moment the ball was thrown.

1.5. Blocking

Players may use held balls to block an incoming live ball. To successfully block, a player must:

- a. Retain control of the ball they are currently holding
- b. Avoid any contact by the live ball with their person or clothing, to the exception of the hand down to the wrist.

If the dodgeball is blocked successfully but hits your teammate and hits the floor, your teammate is eliminated. If a player attempts to block the ball but loses control of their own ball and their ball hits the floor, that player has been Disarmed and they are eliminated from the game.

1.6. Catching

Catching is when a Live ball is caught by a player, eliminating the opposing thrower and reviving the first eliminated player from your team. The revived player must then enter from behind the Boundary Line to enter the Set, and is not considered part of the Set until they do this. Remember, a ball is still Live until it makes contact with a Dead Object, meaning a ball may hit several players on your team and still be caught before it becomes Dead.

1.7. Dodging

Dodging is a fundamental defensive skill in dodgeball. Players should be aware of their surroundings and be able to react quickly to avoid incoming throws. This includes techniques such as stepping, jumping, and diving to evade being hit by incoming balls.

1.8. The Opening Rush

At the beginning of every Set, all 5 balls are placed along the Centre Line in 1.5m intervals for each team's collection. Players must rush to collect their left 2 balls from the Centre Line, with the 3rd ball being contestable by both teams.

This match phase is broken up as follows:

- **Opening Rush:** The Official will visually confirm that both teams are ready and standing on their back-most Boundary Line, and then announce the beginning of the Set, either verbally by yelling "Dodgeball", or by using their whistle.
- **False Starts:** If a player's foot loses contact with the back line after "Team Ready" has been called, but before the whistle has been blown, it will be considered a false start, with the Set to be reset.

- **Ball Retrieval:** Players rushing for the centre ball are not allowed to touch the Center Line, opposing player & court beyond with any part of their body, including their uniform.

1.9. Activating Balls

Ensuring all balls are activated is an important part of the Opening Rush, and requires an Officials full attention due to the frenetic nature of this phase of the Match. Players may retrieve the ball and pass it back to one of their teammates who is positioned behind the Attack Line, so that retrieved balls can be thrown as soon as possible!

All balls must be brought fully behind the Activation Line in order to become “Live”, which means if thrown, any opposing player hit is eliminated. This is important to note as sometimes, balls may not be activated due to player error or otherwise, and can cause confusion if thrown.

1.10. Play Ball

To ensure that Matches are fast-paced and avoid stalling, teams with the majority of balls are given 5 seconds to throw. Should this team still possess the majority of balls after the countdown, “Play # Balls” is called to a new 5 second count, where (#) represents the number of dodgeballs that must be thrown. The number of balls to be thrown (#) is determined as follows:

- a. Equal or Greater Players than Balls:** The majority of balls on a teams **fair territory** minus one.
- b. Less Players than Balls:** The number of players alive on the team.

Before the end of Play Ball, any balls that are thrown (or can't be thrown due to elimination) reduce the (#) of balls that need to be thrown. At the conclusion of Play Ball, the number (#) of balls not thrown eliminates the ball holder or closest player, and should a team still have ball majority, Play Ball is called once again.