

Girls & Boys Touch

2025



Current NRL Touch Football Australia, 8th edition, except where stated otherwise below. Any modifications listed here are the rules of the game at Lansdowne Zone matches, any rules not listed automatically default to the NRL TFA rules.

Touch Football Parent Body Rules - 8th Edition

GENERAL RULES

- Field dimensions should be roughly half a soccer field with no dead ball area.
- A JUNIOR is anyone turning 8, 9 or 10 in the calendar year. A SENIOR is anyone above that age.
- SCORING – 1 point will be awarded for SENIORS and 2 points will be awarded for JUNIORS scoring in the Open competition. **A maximum differential of 6 “For and Against” points will be counted in the points table.** See details in Duration of Game.

UNIFORMS

- It is preferable that players wear an identifying number, on the back of the upper garment. No two players of the same team may wear the same number.
- Players are not to participate in any match while wearing any item of jewellery, which might prove dangerous. Long or sharp fingernails are to be trimmed or taped.

DURATION

Halves will be 15 minutes with a 5-minute half time break.

Games must have time out called when **9 points difference exists** between the team scores. The coach of the losing team at this point in the game can decide if the game should continue – because it is competitive and possibly going to become closer, and the team is still enjoying the experience. If the coach of the losing team believes that the game is not competitive and that it would be demoralising for the game to continue – they can call for it to cease. Games can only continue if both coaches agree – only the losing team’s coach can ask for it to cease. If the game is halted, the coaches can: -

- agree to keep playing but without score, with on field coaching for improvement in play
- play a friendly with mixed teams
- have skills sessions

End of play - when time expires play is to continue until the ball next becomes dead. Should a penalty be awarded during this period, the penalty is to be taken.

A maximum differential of 6 points will be recorded onto the results table, for the purpose of determining for and against points.

PLAYING THE GAME

- The Captain of the team that wins the toss will choose which direction to run OR receive the ball to start.
- The starting team tap off the ball from the centre of the halfway line following the indication from the referee to start the game.
 - The tap is taken by placing the ball on the ground at or behind the mark, releasing both hands from the ball, tapping the ball with either foot a distance of not more than a metre, and retrieving the ball cleanly.
- The player in possession of the ball may run or pass the ball in attempting to move it downfield and across the opposition’s try line. It is the objective of the defending team to try to prevent making a touch on the ball carrier. The attacking team has 6 touches to score a try, after 6 touches have occurred, the defending team becomes the attacking team as the ball is handed over.

POSITIONS AND EQUIPMENT

- a. There can be a maximum of six (6) players per team on the field at any time.
- b. There is unlimited replacement, with no stoppage of play when replacements are made.
- c. The replaced player must be off the field before the substitute can participate in the game.
- d. There must be a minimum of 2 Juniors on the field. A maximum of 12 players on a team.
- e. If a team has less than 5 players, they must forfeit the game.
- f. Joggers/rubber soled shoes are to be worn during the game. Cleats/studs (plastic and metal) must NOT be worn.
- g. If a player chooses to wear a cap during the game, it must be turned backwards, to prevent throat injuries from hard peaks.
- h. A junior size Touch ball is to be used; any other code of ball will not be acceptable.

SCORING

- a. A try is awarded to the team crossing the opponents try line within the boundaries of the Touchdown Zone whilst in the possession of the ball. The ball must be grounded with downward pressure and must be on or over the line.
- b. Dummy half cannot score a try.
- c. If a play ball occurs within 5m from the try line the opposition are to defend on the try line (they are deemed to be defending 5m from the play-the-ball).
- d. 1 point will be awarded for SENIORS and 2 points will be awarded for JUNIORS scoring in the Open competition.

DEFENCE RULES

- a. All players of the defending team are required to retire a distance of not less than ten (10) metres from the mark for a tap. Defending players may move forward of their positions once the ball has been tapped with the foot.
- b. The progress of the ball carrier and the ball can only be halted if a defender touches a player. A player in defence must be making an attempt to touch and not impeding the progress of the ball carrier with their body.
- c. A defender cannot hold on to an attacking player by their uniform.
- d. The point of where the touch is made is where the ball is played.
- e. When the touch is made, the defender must hold their hand in the air, at the point where the touch was made and return to the defending line (a distance not less than 5 metres from the roll ball). The ball carrier must return to the point where the touch was taken and play the ball by placing it under the foot and stepping over it. The dummy half picks it up, then initiates the next play. f. There is no marker in Touch.
- g. If a ball carrier accidentally grounds the ball before the try line, then a touch is deemed to be effected.
- h. If the ball falls to the ground, then it is a drop ball and a change of possession deemed. If the defending team touch the ball before the ball touches the ground, then the offensive team receives 6 (touches) again.
- i. If the ball carrier is touched within 5m of the try line the ball carrier may go back to play the ball from the 5 metres from the try line.
- j. The defensive line must be set at least 5m from the play the ball area. The defensive line may move forward when the ball is touched by the dummy half.
- k. If a defender moves before the dummy half touches the ball, the referee must call the player off-side and the player must return onside before a touch is made. If the player does not return onside and interferes with the play then a penalty is called.
- l. If a dummy half is not in position (more than 1m away) the defence may advance on the ball after it is played by the ball carrier. The defence will gain possession of the ball by making a touch on the ball. They may then play the ball and the dummy half picks it up, then initiates the next play.

ATTACKING RULES

- a. The ball carrier may pass, flick, knock, throw or otherwise deliver the ball to any other onside player in the attacking team.
- b. A ball carrier is not to pass, flick, knock, throw or otherwise propel the ball in a forward direction. c. A player who passes the ball at or towards a defending player and thereby causes the ball to go to ground shall lose possession. However, if the defending player attempts to catch the ball or play at the ball and the ball goes to ground, the attacking team retains possession. Play is restarted at the mark where the ball goes to ground or at a position of best advantage to the non-offending team. The touch count is restarted.
- d. If a player is touched, they may not pass the ball.
- e. If any player is touched over the try line, while attempting to score, then the play the ball will commence 5m back, unless it is the last touch.
- f. A player is to perform a Roll ball under the following circumstances:
 - When a touch has been effected.
 - When possession changes due to the sixth touch.
 - When possession changes due to the ball going to ground.
 - When possession changes due to an infringement by an attacking player at a penalty or a tap; - When possession changes when the half is touched (or places the ball on or over the scoreline) whilst in possession of the ball.
 - When possession changes due to a player in possession of the ball running across the sideline; or - When directed by the referee.
- g. Roll ball- The attacking player is to position on the mark, face the opponent's (defending) scoreline, stand parallel to the sidelines, and roll the ball backwards along the ground between the feet a distance of not more than one metre. Or the ball is placed on the mark, the attacking player may step over the ball.

CHANGE OVERS

All change overs occur at the point of infringement. Change overs occur in Touch when: -

- a. The ball carrier or receiver propels the ball forward with their arm or hand and it comes into contact with the ground. This is a knock-on, and a change of possession occurs.
- b. A defender in attempting to gain possession knocks on. This is 6 (touches again). c. The ball is passed forward to a receiver coming from an onside direction. This is a changeover of possession and a penalty tap.
- d. The ball goes over the sideline. This is a changeover of possession with a play of the ball, unless passed out deliberately to slow down the play on the last touch, in which case a penalty tap will occur.
- e. After a team has used their 6 touches. This is a changeover of possession with a play of the ball.
- f. When the ball carrier accidentally or deliberately crosses the sideline. This is a changeover of possession with a play of the ball.
- g. If in attempting to score, a player either makes contact with the corner marker or crosses the extended sideline, no touchdown is awarded and the match is recommenced by the opposition with a Roll ball five(5) metres from the scoreline and five (5) metres from the sideline.

PENALTIES

A penalty is given at the point of infringement unless otherwise specified. Penalties are given when: -

- a. The offence plays the ball off the mark from where the touch is taken.
- b. If the defensive line is less than 5m from the play the ball, the penalty is awarded where the offside player/s should have been.
- c. If the touch action is deemed too vigorous or "unsportsman like" by the ball carrier or the defender.
- d. Offside play.
- e. When a ball carrier prevents being touched by running behind or using a member of their team as a shield (shepherding)
- f. If a defender calls "touch" or "yes...no" without making a touch. The player is sent for time ("sin bin") if this occurs.
- g. If the offence executes a late pass after being touched by an opponent (A warning is given in 2011 and play commences at previous touch count).
- h. When any player exhibits "unsportsman like" behaviour.
- i. Too many players on the field.
- j. Forward passes are to be penalised even if the ball goes to ground or if it is the last touch.

MISCELLANEOUS

Teachers may use a “sin bin” where if any players are displaying: -

- a. Blatant disregard for the rules.
- b. Continued rule infringements.
- c. Back chatting/ dissent/ sledging.
- d. Repeated or significant contact infringements.
- e. Fighting.
- f. Yes/no calls.

The duration of the time off the field is at the discretion of the teacher refereeing. Sin binned players may be replaced (usually after two sets of 6).

Rules adapted from the Official NSW Touch Rule Book

RULES FOR SEMI-FINALS

Semi-final games must follow the rules stated above and be umpired by neutral referees, if possible.

If, at the conclusion of time, there is a draw a DROP OFF will occur. Refer to Drop off procedure. If, at the conclusion of the drop off, there is still a draw, then the team highest on the points table shall move through to the Final.

FINALS – Teams shall play extra time to the same rules as for the semis, in the event of a draw. If, at the conclusion of extra time a draw still exists, both teams shall be declared Premiers. (Joint Premiers 2004.)

RESULTS

1. 1 point to be awarded per goal
2. The Zone results table shall show 2 points awarded for a win, 1 point for a draw and 0 points for a loss.

Any threats or acts of violence must be reported to the Lansdowne Zone Executive, the Principals of both schools involved and if necessary, the Police.

A reminder that the Code of Conduct also applies to coaches and not just to players and spectators. Coaches should not be refereeing from the sideline and should always be setting a positive example to their team or teams. Code of Conduct breaches may result in games being stopped and warnings issued (to students, coaches or spectators) by the referee/umpire. If continued breaches occur, games should be stopped completely.