

FOAM DODGEBALL: Official Rules of the Game
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Here's a sample of what you need to keep on all or any part of the Rules:

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So, what does this all mean? Basically, we want you to do what you love, play foam dodgeball, and have fun using our rules, but just let people know we wrote them, and don't blame us for what happens when you use them, that's all.

Happy dodging!

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FOAM DODGEBALL AT A GLANCE

WAKA foam dodgeball is first and foremost about fun. SOFDA – the Soft Official Foam Dodgeball Association – is the world’s largest promoter and sanctioning body of official foam dodgeball™ leagues and events. SOFDA foam dodgeball is a game based on the old-fashioned rubber dodgeball game, but is specifically designed to be fun and painless. It is a simple game consisting of two teams, a rectangular court, and some soft balls. The object is to get players on the other team out by hitting them with the ball, keep players on your team in by avoiding getting hit, and have the most players on the court at the end of the round. In short, games are played in rounds with up to 20 players per team, until all players on one side are out, and no head shots. The following rules will govern all SOFDA foam dodgeball games. For the enjoyment of all, proper respect is required of all participants toward one another. Unsportsmanlike conduct and fighting are not allowed or tolerated.

PLAYING COURT AND EQUIPMENT

1. FOAM DODGEBALL COURT

1.01 The Head Referee will designate a court suitable for play in accordance with the following provisions:

- a. Boundary Lines: A standard foam dodgeball court allows for 20 players on each side. The court boundary shall be a clearly outlined rectangle with sides that are 60 feet long and 40 feet wide.
- b. Center Line: The court shall be clearly divided with a center line;
- c. Clear Lines: Two lines shall be clearly defined 5 feet on either side of the center line. These lines are the "clear lines";
- d. Sidelines: 10 feet outside of and parallel to the long court boundary lines. The area between the boundary lines and the sidelines is the sideline area;
- e. Ground: throughout these rules, the ground refers to the floor or ground, depending on the court surface.
- f. Neutral Zone: The area between the clear lines is the neutral zone.

1.02 All participants must respect and obey all rules and regulations pertaining to the court used for games.

1.03 Any player or Referee wholly or partly in bounds is an extension of the court. A player jumping from in bounds is in bounds while in the air.

1.04 Upon notification to the Head Referee of any improper court set up, the court layout shall be corrected before the beginning of the next round.

2. EQUIPMENT

2.01 While participating, players must properly wear the official athletic clothing designated for their use.

2.02 Athletic shoes are required.

2.03 Players may wear protective equipment providing it does not offer the wearer an unfair performance advantage. Any equipment deemed by the Head Referee (see Rule 3.01) as a performance enhancement must be removed or the player will be removed from play.

2.04 All player attire is an extension of the player.

2.05 Only SOFDA official foam dodgeballs are approved for play.

OFFICIALS

3. REFEREES

3.01 Games must be officiated by at least one authorized official, the Head Referee. When available, two to four officials referee each game: a Head Referee, an Assistant Referee, and 2 line judges.

a. The Head Referee governs all game play, issues all final rulings, and has final authority on equipment issues.

b. When available, the Assistant Referee is responsible for keeping the 15 second clock and can call players out.

c. When available, the Line Judges are responsible for making calls related to line infractions (see Rule 13.01).

3.02 Prior to each game, the Head Referee must conduct a meeting with the Captains of each team, to address any ground rules in effect, to ensure the exchange of team participants (see Rule 4.01), and to identify the designated Captains who are authorized to discuss calls with the Referees during the game (see Rule 5.01a).

3.03 Referees have jurisdiction over play and may:

a. call a time out;

b. call off a game due to facility situations, rain, or other cause at the Referee's discretion;

c. penalize a player, including game ejection, for any reason. This includes but is not limited to unsportsmanlike conduct, fighting, delay of game, or excessive verbal abuse. Ejected participants must leave the court area and may not return to the game.

3.04 Referees have jurisdiction over play and must:

a. cancel an outdoor game if lightning is seen, or delay it until safe to continue;

b. keep a record of the final game score.

3.05 Referees may make rulings on any points not specifically covered in the rules (at the time of occurrence), but the ruling shall not be deemed as a precedent for future rulings.

PARTICIPANTS

4. TEAMS AND PLAYERS

4.01 Games and rounds are played between two (2) participating teams: the Home team who chooses its court side for the first round; and the Away team.

4.02 At the start of each round, teams must play a minimum of six (6) and no more than twenty (20) players on the court.

4.03 At the start of each round, teams may play a maximum of four (4) males for every female on the court.

4.04 Players arriving late during an active round may not play in that round.

4.05 A claim of ineligible players must be made to the Head Referee who will make the final determination. Any such claim must be made no later than the beginning of the next round. If the round in question is the last in the game, the claim must be made before the game's end. Any round won by a team with an ineligible player will be converted to a loss.

5. CAPTAINS

5.01 For a given game, each team shall have one Captain and one Co-Captain (collectively "the Captains") who are jointly responsible for the team;

a. Only Team Captains may discuss calls and dispute rules with the Head Referee, but must accept the Head Referee's final ruling.

6. SHAGGERS

6.01 Members of each team that are out or not playing in the round may return (shag) balls to the court that go out of bounds, switching as needed with other team members.

6.02 Shaggers may not:

- a. physically assist players;
- b. touch a ball within the court boundary lines;
- c. cross into the court boundary lines;
- d. go forward the back line of the court.

6.03 Shaggers must return balls over the back line of the court by standing behind the back line of the court and rolling the balls forward, back into play. Balls may not be returned to play over the side lines. Balls returned to the court from the side lines are not live until crossing the center line or put out of bounds and back in by crossing the back line.

GAME PLAY

7. REGULATION GAMES

7.01 A regulation game lasts for forty-five (45) minutes and consists of a series of rounds.

7.02 A round ends when all the players of one team are out or the referee ends the round due to time limit or infraction (See rule 3.03).

7.03 The game clock starts when the first round begins, and ends 45 minutes later (if a round is in progress, the round must end at that 45 minute time and the team with the most number of active players on the court wins the round).

7.04 The game clock shall not be stopped except for:

- a. Referee time out for an injury, a warning, a hazard on the court, equipment malfunction, or power outage.
- b. Referee time out between rounds for a rules clarification, or any other reason deemed appropriate by the Head Referee.

7.05 The Rush is when the referee audibly signals the start of the round and players located behind the back line advance toward the balls (see Rule 8.02, 8.04, 8.05).

7.06 A regulation game ends when all players on one team are out or time the game clock expires (see Rule 7.02).

7.07 The team that wins a round shall receive one point.

7.08 Teams change court sides between each round.

7.09 The team with the most points at the end of the game, wins.

7.10 In the event of a tie score at the end of the game, the game shall be marked as a tie. Games called off that end in a tie shall be marked as a tie.

7.11 A game that is called off by the Referee (see Rules 3.03, 3.04) after fifteen (15) minutes or three (3) rounds of play shall be considered a regulation game. The game score at the end of the last round shall determine the winner.

8. STARTING PLAY

- 8.01 Before the round starts, only referees and designated shaggers may occupy the sideline area. After the round starts, anyone playing in that round may also occupy the sideline area. An infraction shall result in a warning to the player (see Rule 13.01).
- 8.02 At the beginning of each round, all players line up behind the back line on their team's side of the court. Shoes may rest on the back line, but no part of the shoe may be in front of the line (see Rule 7.05).
- 8.03 All seven (7) balls are placed on the center line equally spaced.
- 8.04 The Head Referee audibly signals the start of the round at which time, players may advance toward the balls.
- 8.05 Players may only retrieve the 3 balls to their right, and may not touch or retrieve the three balls to their left. Players touching or retrieving balls on their left side are penalized with a false start.
- 8.06 A false start halts play, and restarts the round, with a ball being moved to the left of the center ball for the penalized team.
- 8.07 The center ball is not active (eligible for play) during the rush.
- 8.08 Players throwing a ball while between the clear line and the center line are out (see Rule 8.10, 8.11).
- 8.09 Once all active balls are behind the clear lines, the center ball is eligible for play.
- 8.10 Any ball may be played once it is behind the clear line.
- 8.11 Any ball thrown before it is behind the clear line is not a ball in play. A player hit by a ball not in play is not out.

9. OUTS AND INS

- 9.01. A player is out when;
- a. hit by a thrown ball beyond the clear line from the opposing team's side, that has not touched the ground, ceiling or wall that is not caught;
 - b. hit by a deflected ball (see Rule 11.02) beyond the clear line from the opposing team's side, that has not touched the ground, ceiling or wall that is not caught;
 - c. hit by a thrown ball beyond the clear line from the opposing team's side that has hit another player or ball in bounds, but has not touched the ground, ceiling or wall;
 - d. the player's thrown ball is caught by an active player of the other team before it touches the ground, ceiling or wall;
 - e. touching any part of the opponent's side of the court;
 - f. stepping with both feet out of bounds while dodging a ball;
 - g. dropping a ball that is hit by a thrown ball from the opposing team's side;
 - h. dropping a ball while catching another.
 - i. throwing a ball from in front of the clear line during the rush (see Rule 8.11);
 - j. hit by a ball while attempting to deflect a ball from the opposing team that has not touched the ground, ceiling or wall.
- 9.02 Players who are out must immediately raise their hand and leave the court within five (5) seconds of being out. Such players join their teammates at the end of the waiting line on the right side of the court, starting at the clear line (see Rule 12.02).
- 9.03 When a player catches a thrown ball from the opposing team's side, the next teammate in the waiting line must join the round.
- 9.04 A player is not out when:
- a. successfully catching a ball and moving out of bounds in the process;
 - b. a thrown ball's first contact is the neck or head;
 - c. hit with a ball that was thrown over the clear line by their team and is deflected back over the clear line by the opposing team without touching the ground;
 - d. hit with a ball that is not thrown by hand, or not thrown from inbounds, or deflected from the ground, ceiling, or wall, or deflected from a referee or non participating player.

10. SUBSTITUTIONS

- 10.01 In cases of injury or illness, a time out may be requested for participant removal and replacement by the next teammate of the same sex in the waiting line (see Rule 9.02).
- 10.02 The Head Referee should announce any player removed from the game for injury or illness.

11. BALL CONTROL

- 11.01 Balls must be thrown by hand from an in bounds position. There are no restrictions on throwing style (see Rule 9.04d).

11.02 Players may use a ball in their possession to deflect another ball thrown by the opposing team to avoid being hit and called out.

11.03 Players may not intentionally make contact with a ball while exiting the court.

11.04 Teams may not maintain possession of four (4) or more balls at the same time for longer than 15-seconds. The head referee or assistant referee will begin an audible 15-second countdown when such possession occurs. If the end of the 15-second countdown is reached, play stops and all balls are surrendered via rolling them across the court to the opposing team.

11.05 If a ball is resting directly over the center line, play stops and the head referee shall kick the ball to the team possessing the least number of balls.

12. CONDUCT

12.01 The spirit of these rules is to ensure a fun environment and participant enjoyment. All games are to be played in a sportsmanlike manner. If necessary, SOFDA will address any inconsistencies, discrepancies, and misunderstandings in accordance with the spirit of these rules. These rules are maintained at foamdodgeball.com and are subject to change without notice.

12.02 In order to keep games active and fun, all players are expected to participate in officiating themselves and their teammates. Teammates are expected to identify team members who are out. Players who should be, or who are called out, must leave the playing court without argument.

13. WARNINGS AND REMOVAL

13.01 Referees shall issue warnings for serious rule infractions. Referees may issue multiple warnings for the same rule infraction to correspond with its severity level. A player receiving two warnings for the same rule infraction in the same round shall be removed from that round and the following round without substitution. A player receiving three warnings for the same rule infraction in the same game shall be expelled from that game and the following game without substitution.