



Umpiring Netball

A Guide for New Umpires



#THISISNETBALL

#CESTNETBALL

#DASISCHNETBALL

#TEAMOFFICIATING

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Congratulations on becoming an umpire

Are you ready to rise to the challenge

In this booklet we aim to provide new umpires, including parents, players and coaches a guide that will give a sound background of the basic Rules of Netball and help you build confidence for when you umpire.

Thank you for becoming a part of Team Officiating. Umpiring should be exciting, challenging and an enjoyable experience. The umpire is an integral part of the game and the enjoyment for the players will rely on the efficiency and manner of the umpires. It is the responsibility of the umpires to possess the right attitude toward umpiring.

Don't put pressure on yourself, believe in yourself and enjoy umpiring

Learn to be the best that you can be

Please read through the information and if you have any questions, contact your club coach or umpiring@swissnetball.ch

If you wish to learn more, follow the link:

International Netball Federation – Rules of Netball

<https://netball.sport/game/the-rules-of-netball>

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Where do I begin?

Here are some suggestions to help you become more confident with your umpiring. Your aim is to be relaxed, confident and in a composed state of mind when play commences

- Arrive at the court at least 30 minutes before the game is scheduled to start
- Ensure that you have your own whistle (and a spare just in case) and Centre Pass indicator (band)
- Warm up and warm down. Players need to warm up well, so does an umpire. Don't forget to warm down too
- Familiarise yourself with the lines of the netball court as many courts in Switzerland have multiple lines for different sports which can be confusing
- Read the game regulations the night before the match and bring them with you, you never know when you might have to refer to them.

Appearance

- Remember to wear the appropriate uniform. The dress presentation of an umpire can often reflect on how they umpire the game. Wear it with pride.

Attitude

Develop the following attributes – Communication, Consistency, Confidence, Control

- **COMMUNICATE** clearly and positively – listen, be polite, make eye contact and be calm
- Be **CONSISTENT** in your rulings throughout the court
- Convey **CONFIDENCE** to the players – develop a warm, friendly manner
- Maintain **CONTROL** from the first whistle – be fair, firm and alert.

Education

- Keep up to date with rules and rule interpretations
- Maintain accreditation and attend as many educational offerings as you can
- Watch as many umpires on TV or you tube games as you can for attitude, positioning etc.
- Don't be afraid to request the support of a fellow umpire to watch you every few weeks for tips and advice.

Personal Fitness

Fitness is an essential element of umpiring and you need to prepare for the start of the season as well as maintaining and enhancing a level of fitness throughout the season.

Communication

Remember to use your umpires tool box.

- Blow your whistle so that players can hear it
- Your voice should also be loud and clear – *try to keep your voice firm but friendly*
- Always look at the players when making your ruling and indicate clearly where to take the sanction
- **Most importantly, always remember to use common sense.**

Duties before the game starts

Before the start of the game you, the umpire, needs to check for the following:

Technical Specifications

- The 'Field of Play' for any safety concerns
- The goalposts and ball.

Match Personnel

- Greet your co-umpire and team captains
- Players' fingernails are cut short and smooth
- Players' have no adornment or jewellery on – a wedding ring and/or medical alert bracelet may be worn but must be taped
- Players' hair tied back if applicable
- Ensure there are two scorers – one from each team - standing together in a position easily visible to the umpires
- See who is responsible for timing the match
- The team captains should have tossed and notified the umpires and the scorers of the result.

Reading the game

Remember the 3 main Umpiring Techniques

Position

- Always try to be in the best possible position to see what is happening – reposition if needed
- During play, try to be in line or slightly ahead of the player with the ball
- Keep off the court except if you need to take a toss-up or cut the corner
- When play is in the Goal Circle area, it is likely that your best position will be behind the Goal Line and on the same side of the Goal Post as the player with the ball. Beware of being too close to the Goal Post as you look up, you will miss what happens at ground level
- Keep your shoulders facing the court both while moving and when stationary.

Vision

- Look wide
- Look long
- Look near
- Look early
- Look often
- Learn to look over the area of court you are umpiring so that you can see most players.

Timing

- Time your movement so you arrive at the next position as the ball arrives so you can see all players.

Dual Control

All games are controlled by two umpires who work co-operatively and may appeal to each other for decisions.

The areas of responsibility are as follows:

- The court is divided in half at the centre circle from side line to side line
- Always umpire to your right
- You will control all throw-ins on the whole side line of your side of the court including infringements by the player taking the throw in or any opponent defending that player
- You control the goal line to your right
- You blow your whistle for the Centre Pass after a goal has been scored in your goal circle and control any infringement by the player taking the Centre Pass or a player defending that Centre Pass
- Always indicate the direction of the Centre Pass
- Make a quick visual check with your co-umpire to confirm you both have the same next Centre Pass when running back after a goal has been scored. If you are in disagreement, the bench side umpire (umpire on the side of the scorers) would hold time and ask the scorers for a Centre Pass check and then play continues.

Protocols

The two umpires must work together

At the start of the game

- Stand with your co-umpire
- The bench-side umpire (where the scorers are located) blows the 30 and 10 second warning whistles for the teams to take the court. The co-umpire walks to the far side at 10 seconds giving the ball to the Centre taking the first Centre Pass.

Know what to do at a stoppage for injury, illness or blood

(check the competition rules as they may differ)

- Umpire blows the whistle and signals to hold time
- Umpires stay on their respective side lines
- For blood stoppages the umpire who is dealing with the blood ensures the court, clothing and ball is clean before restarting play
- Where appropriate, the umpires should be encouraged to work together
- Play restarts from where the ball was when play stopped. Any player from that team allowed in the area can restart play
- Restart with the whistle as soon as substitutions/team changes have been made or when the 30 seconds is up – whichever comes first.

Know what to do at an interval

- Umpire blows the whistle signalling time
- Umpires meet midcourt
- Umpires discuss next Centre Pass and confirm with the scorers.

Summary of sanctions

The sanctions awarded for breaking of the rules are:

- Free Pass
- Penalty Pass.

Free Pass

A Free Pass is awarded to a team for minor infringements of the rules.

No player stands out of play. The Free Pass is taken from the point where the infringement occurred.

A Free Pass is awarded for:

- Offside (incorrect entry)
- Held ball
- Breaking (early entry) – only at a Centre Pass
- Over a third
- Untouched centre pass
- Short pass
- Footwork
- Incorrect playing of the ball
- Centre positioned incorrectly

NOTE: A player may not shoot directly from a Free Pass.

Penalty Pass

A Penalty Pass is awarded to a team for major infringements of the rules.

The penalised player must stand beside and away from the player taking the Penalty Pass and may not move or attempt to take part in play (including verbal comments) until the ball has left the thrower's hand.

The player taking the pass may choose to pass before the infringer stands beside and away or wait for the infringer to stand out of play. The infringer may not attempt to intercept the pass or take part in play until the ball has been passed.

The Penalty Pass is taken from where the infringer was standing unless the non-infringing team is disadvantaged.

Penalty Pass awarded for:

- Contact
- Obstruction
- When the goalpost is moved by a defending player so as to interfere with a shot at goal
- When a defending player deflects a ball on its downward flight towards the ring
- When a player enters the court at an incorrect time.

NOTE: A player may shoot if the Penalty Pass is awarded inside the goal circle.

Setting Sanctions

All sanctions are awarded to a team. The sanction may be taken by any member of the team allowed in the area where the sanction is to be taken.

The player taking the sanction must take up the position clearly directed and indicated by the umpire, throw the ball within three seconds and obey the Footwork rule.

Advantage

Advantage may be applied if the umpire can see an infringement has occurred but does not want to blow the whistle as this stops the flow of the game and the non-offending team will be disadvantaged by the stoppage. The umpire calls advantage and the infringement (eg. Advantage Obstruction Wing Defence or Advantage Offside Centre) and uses the hand signal for advantage.

Time to start the game

In order for a team to take the court they must have at least 5 players, one of whom must play as Centre.

A late player may go on court but only **after**:

- Being checked by an umpire
- A goal has been scored or
- After a stoppage for injury, illness or blood or
- Immediately following an interval

The late player must take **the vacant position** on the court.

If the late player enters the court without notifying the umpires or while play is in progress, the player is sent from the court until the correct time for entry.

Sanction

Award a Penalty pass to the opposing team where the ball was when play was stopped and an infringing team player allowed in the playing area stands out of play for the penalty.

Centre Pass

It is the responsibility of all players to ensure they are in their correct areas for the start of play including the Centre with at least one foot wholly in the centre circle.

Players may stand on the lines bounding their respective goal thirds and are free to move but must not stand over these lines until the whistle has been blown to start play. The Centre must pass the ball within 3 seconds.

Substitution & team changes

A team can make as many substitutions as they wish in any one game but the players used must be named for the match. A player who has previously been substituted may return to the game at a later stage.

Substitutions and team changes can be made in the following cases:

- A player is injured, ill or has a blood injury. The injured or ill player must be involved in that team's substitution or team change
- During an interval
- All injury/blood stoppages are up to 30 seconds. The injured player must leave the court within the 30 seconds
- Both teams may make substitutions and/or team changes within the 30 seconds
- A team cannot leave the Centre position vacant, one player must move to play as Centre to allow the match to continue
- If a team leaves a position vacant at a stoppage, a player may come on in this vacant position after a goal is scored, at the next stoppage for injury or illness or at the next interval
- Only primary care person/s can come onto the court at the stoppage for injury or illness
- Coaching is allowed from the team bench provided all players other than the injured player stay on court.

Out of court

The ball is out of court when:

- It touches the ground outside the court
- It touches any person or object in contact with the ground outside the court
- A player on court is holding the ball which is in contact with the ground, an object or a person outside the court.

You should indicate which team takes the throw in when the ball goes out of court over your side line or goal line. This is the team that didn't touch the ball on-court last. Only blow the whistle if the players are not aware the ball was out of court or the wrong team is setting up to take the throw in.

When a throw in is being taken

- The player taking the throw in must wait for all other players to be on court
- Ensure that the throw in is taken from the correct position
- The player's foot must not be on the line (the line is part of the court) and must be within 15cm (6in) of the line
- The player taking the throw in must pass the ball within 3 seconds.

Sanction

A throw in to the opposing team where the player was taking the throw in.

In addition, when a throw in is being taken

- The player taking the throw in may not step behind any offside area while holding the ball.

Sanction

A throw in to the opposing team where the player stepped behind the offside area.

Toss up

A toss up is awarded when simultaneous infringements occur, and the two opposing players:

- Catch the ball – the toss up is taken between the two opposing players who caught the ball
- Send the ball out of court – the toss up is taken on the court close to where the players hit the ball out of court
- Are simultaneously offside or break when one or both have either caught or touched the ball – the toss up is taken in an area common to both players
- Contact each other – the toss up is taken where the players contacted each other.

How to take the toss up:

Players must be 0.9m (3 feet) between their nearer feet with:

- Arms straight with hands at sides
- Face each other and their goal ends
- Must not move until the whistle is blown as the umpire releases the ball.

Sanction

Free pass where the player who moved was standing.

The Umpire:

- Starts with the ball no higher than the shorter player's shoulder when standing
- Blows the whistle while releasing the ball midway between the two players
- Flicks the ball no higher than 600mm (2 feet) vertically.

Top Tip:

- *Wherever you are, always check that you have an exit eg. no players behind you*
- *If in the goal circle, never position with your back to any shooting or defending players.*

Playing the ball

A player may:

- Roll the ball to oneself
- Bat or bounce the ball to another player
- Lean on the ball to prevent going offside
- Gain or regain control of the ball if it rebounds from the goal post which includes the net.

A player may not:

- Kick the ball
- Roll the ball to another player
- Fall on the ball to gain possession
- Gain possession of the ball, or throw or play the ball, while lying, sitting or kneeling on the ground
- After **catching** the ball drop it and pick it up again
- Use the goal post to regain balance or as a support to recover the ball.

Sanction

Free pass where the player played the ball incorrectly (kick, roll, fall on the ball etc.)

Held ball

From the time of catching the ball, a player must release it within 3 seconds.

Sanction

Free pass where the player held the ball for 3 seconds.

Short pass

When a player passes the ball there must be sufficient space for an opposing player on the court to be able to intercept the ball with a hand as it moves from the hands of the thrower to the hands of the receiver.

Sanction

Free pass where the player caught the ball.

Over a third

The ball must be caught or touched in each third of the court by:

- Any player who is standing in the correct third
- Any player who lands in the correct third.

Sanction

Free pass taken just over the second transverse line that the ball crossed without being touched. If the ball is thrown from the Centre Third and goes over the third and out of court over the goal line, a throw in is taken.

Footwork

Footwork occurs when a player with the ball:

- Re-grounds the first grounded foot
- Hops on either foot
- Drags or slides the landing foot
- Jumps from both feet and lands on both feet while still in possession of the ball.

Remember, if a player lands on both feet simultaneously, either foot may be moved, then the other foot becomes the landing foot.

Sanction

Free pass where the player stepped, hopped, dragged their foot etc.

Offside

A player is offside if:

- Players with or without the ball move into an area other than their own playing area.

Sanction

Free pass where the player went offside.

Simultaneous offside

When two opposing players go offside at the **same time**:

- If neither player makes any contact with the ball you let play continue
- If either of the players is in possession of or has touched the ball you will take a toss up between the two players in their own area of play.

Obstruction

Obstruction of a player with the ball

Obstruction is measured by:

The distance on the ground between two players from the nearer part of the nearer feet.

- The player defending must be no closer than 0.9 metres from the attacking player's first grounded foot
- If the player's landing foot is lifted, the distance is measured from the spot on the ground from which the foot was lifted
- If a player with the ball pivots on the landing foot, a defending player must adjust the distance to 0.9m (3 feet).

A defending player may defend from in front, to the side or from behind a player with the ball providing that they are the correct distance and standing on court.

Sanction

Penalty pass where the player obstructed unless this disadvantages the non-infringing team. If the infringement is in the goal circle the non-offending player may shoot for goal.

If the infringing player was defending from out of court, the penalty is taken on court opposite where the infringer was defending. If this is in the goal circle, the non-offending player may shoot for goal.

Contact

This occurs when a player:

- Uses any part of the body to interfere with an opponent
- Pushes the ball into an opponent
- Puts a hand or hands on the ball held by an opponent
- Knocks the ball from an opponent's hands
- Pushes, trips, knocks, bumps or holds an opponent
- Moves into the path of an opponent who is committed to a particular landing space.







Sanction

Penalty pass where the player contacted.

HAND SIGNALS

START/RESTART OF PLAY	START/RESTART OF PLAY	HOLD TIME
		
<p>Arm held high, angled towards goal end of team with pass</p>	<p>Arm held high, angled towards goal end of team with pass</p>	<p>Facing timekeeper, one hand vertical and other horizontal to form 'T'</p>
DIRECTION OF PASS	THROW IN – GOAL LINE	TOSS UP
		
<p><i>For centre pass, sanction, throw in</i> Arm outstretched to side pointing to goal end of team with pass</p>	<p><i>For attacking team at its goal end</i> Arm angled down, pointing to base of goal post</p>	<p>Hand, palm up, makes upward flicking movement</p>

HAND SIGNALS Continued

ADVANTAGE	GOAL SCORED	GOAL NOT SCORED
		
<p>Arm sweeps across body towards goal end of team with advantage</p>	<p>Arm held vertically</p>	<p>Arms below waist move from side to side across each other</p>
FOOTWORK	CENTRE POSITIONED INCORRECTLY	OFFSIDE OR BREAKING
		
<p>Hands, palms down, move vertically up and down in opposite directions</p>	<p>Hand traces horizontal circle</p>	<p>Hand traces small upward arc in direction of player's movement</p>

HAND SIGNALS Continued

BALL OVER A THIRD OR UNTOUCHED CENTRE PASS	HELD BALL	SHORT PASS
		
<p>Hand traces medium upward arc in direction of ball</p>	<p>Arm held vertically with 3 fingers displayed</p>	<p>Hands, palms inward a short distance apart, one hand moves towards the other held stationary</p>
INCORRECT PLAYING THE BALL	OBSTRUCTION OF PLAYER WITH BALL	OBSTRUCTION OF PLAYER WITHOUT BALL
		
<p>Hands, palms inward a short distance apart, twist from side to side in parallel motion</p>	<p>Hands, palms inward, held short distance apart</p>	<p>Arms angled out from body below waist</p>

HAND SIGNALS Continued

INTIMIDATION	CONTACT
	
<p>Hand traces small arc in front of face</p>	<p>Hand, palm facing down, taps opposite forearm</p>