

**HANDBALL PLAYING RULES**

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[The Playing Rules published in this booklet are those which apply to Irish Handball as it is played in both codes (60 x 30 & 40 x 20) in this country].

Modified January 2009 (CM).

**OFFICIAL PLAYING RULES**  
**PART I - THE GAME.**

**A. TYPES.**

Four-wall handball may be played by two or four players. When played by two it is called 'singles' and when played by four, 'doubles'.

**B. DESCRIPTION.**

Handball, as the name implies, is a competitive game in which either hand may be used to serve and return the ball.

**C. OBJECTIVE.**

The objective is to win each rally by serving or returning the ball so the opponent is unable to keep the ball in play. A serve or rally is won when a side is unable to return the ball to the front wall before it touches the floor twice.

**D. POINTS AND HANDOUTS.**

Points are scored by the serving side when it serves an ace or wins a rally. When the serving side loses a rally it loses the serve. Losing the serve is called a 'handout.'

**E. GAME.**

A game is won by the side first scoring 21 points.

**F. MATCH.**

(a) A match is won by the side first winning two games.

(b) In the case of a match played on a time basis the player or side with the highest score at the end of the specified time is the winner. If, however, the rules of any competition state that extra time must be played in the event of a tie, the match must continue without an interval after a toss a coin for service has been made.

(c) In team competitions a toss of a coin for service is made before each match.

(d) Substitution is not allowed during a match.

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**PART II - COURT AND EQUIPMENT.**

**A. COURT.**

The specifications for the standard four-wall courts are:

**1. Dimensions.**

(a) International Court: The dimensions are: 20ft wide. 20ft high and 40ft long with back wall recommended minimum height of 12 ft.

(b) Irish Court: The dimensions are 30 ft wide, 27 ft high and 60 ft long with back wall recommended minimum height of 10 ft.

**2. Lines and zones.** (See diagrams)

Handball courts shall be divided and marked on the floors with 2 inch wide lines. Recommended colour is white. The lines shall be marked as follows:

(a) Short Line: The short line is parallel to the front and back walls. Its outside measurement is 20 ft. from the front wall in the international court and 32.5 ft. from the front wall in the 60 x 30 court.

(b) Service Line: The service line is parallel to the short line and its outside measurement is 5 ft in front of the outside of the short line.

(c) Service Zone: The service zone is the area between the outer edges of the short and service lines.

(d) Service Boxes: A service box is located at each end of the service zone by lines whose outside measure is 18 inches from and parallel to each side wall.

(e) Receiver's Restraining Lines: Five feet back of the short line (outside measure), lines should be marked on the floor extending 6 inches from the side wall. These lines are parallel to the short line.

**B. BALL.**

**1. International Specifications:**

**The specifications for the standard handball are:**

**(a) Material:** The material should be rubber or synthetic material.

**(b) Colour:** Colour is optional.

**(c) Size:** 1.875 inch diameter with .031 inch variation.

**(d) Weight:** 2.3 ounces, with a variation of 0.2 ounces.

**(e) Rebound:** Rebound from freefall 70 inch drop to a hardwood floor is 46 to 50 inches at a temperature of 68 degrees F.

**2. The Specifications for the Standard 60 x 30 balls are:**

**(a) Hardball:** The standard hardball shall be made of suitable windings of rubber and yarn covered with goatskin or other suitable hide. It shall have a centre of lancewood or cork.

It shall not be less than 1.8 inches and not more than 1.95 inches in diameter.

It shall be not less than 1.5 ounces nor more than 1.75 ounces in weight.

It shall have a rebound of not less than 2.5 ft. nor more than 3.5 ft. when dropped from a height of 8 ft on to a concrete floor.

**(b) Softball:** The standard softball shall be made of best grade rubber. The ball shall be not less than 2.2 inches nor more than 2.25 inches in diameter and shall weigh not less than 61 grams and not more than 62 grams. The ball shall have a rebound of not less than 67 inches and not more than 70 inches when dropped from a height of 100 inches on to a concrete floor.

**(c) Selection:** A ball must be selected by the referee for use in each match. During a game the referee has the authority to change balls if he deems it necessary. It's the referee's decision, not the players.

## **C. GLOVES.**

**1.** Handball may not be played barehanded in the 40 x 20 court. Gloves must be worn. Gloves are optional in the 60 x 30 court.

**2. Style:** Gloves must be light in colour and made of a soft leather, and form fitting. The fingers of the gloves may not be webbed, connected or removed.

**3. Foreign Substances:** No foreign substance, tape or rubber bands shall be used on the fingers or the palms of the hand inside the glove. Metal or hard substances should not be worn on the hand under the glove. For sensitive, bruised or sore hands, surgical gauze or tape may be wrapped around the palm of the hand with or without thin foam rubber for protective purposes.

**4. Wet Gloves:** The gloves must be changed when they

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become sufficiently wet to moisten the ball. This is the referee's decision. It is the player's responsibility to have an ample supply of dry gloves for each match.

**D. PLAYING ATTIRE.**

1. In all inter-county championship, league and other official matches each player is required continuously to wear a singlet or T-shirt bearing the colours of the county as registered with the GAA, togs, shoes and socks. In doubles matches partners must be similarly attired, i.e. both singlets, shorts and socks should match. Failure to comply with this rule will involve a fine which must be paid before the county may continue to compete in official competitions or championships.

2. **Wet Shirts:** Referee may request wet shirt or gloves to be changed. Players shall have an ample supply of dry shirts and gloves.

**E. BLOOD RULE.**

A player who is bleeding or has blood on any part of his/her body, playing attire or playing equipment as a result of an injury sustained during play, shall, on the instruction of the referee, immediately leave the court to receive medical and/or other attention. He/she shall not be allowed to return to the court until the bleeding has stopped, all blood has been cleaned off, and where possible, the injured area has been covered, any bloodstained playing attire has been replaced and any bloodstained playing equipment has been fully cleaned.

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**PART III - OFFICIALS AND OFFICIATING.**

**A            FIXTURES.**

1. All fixtures under the control of Comhairle Liathróid Láimhe na hÉireann shall be managed by its appointed officials.

**2. Briefing.**

Players should be briefed on rules and on local court hinders before a match.

**B.            REFEREE.**

**1. Pre-match duties.**

Before each match commences it shall be the duty of the referee to:

**(a) Playability:** Check on adequacy of preparation of the handball court with respect to playability.

**(b) Equipment:** Check on availability and suitability of all materials necessary for the match such as handballs, scorecards and pencils (or marking pens).

**(c) Assisting Officials:** Check readiness and provide instructions to assisting officials (marker).

**(d) Court Hinders:** Explain court hinders, if any, to players.

**(e) Inspect Gloves and Uniforms:** Remind players to have an adequate supply of extra gloves and shirts. Inspect

compliance of gloves and hands with rules.

**(f) Start Game:** Introduce players, toss coin to determine order of serve, and signal start of game.

**(g) Time:** The assigned referee should be present 15 minutes before match time.

**(h) Two-minute Warning:** The referee should give a two minute advance notification before the match and before each game. The referee shall announce the scores before each rally.

**(i) Blood Injury:** The referee shall instruct a player with a blood injury to leave the court for medical and/or other attention and ensure that any bloodstained playing attire is replaced and that any bloodstained playing equipment is fully cleaned before play resumes.

## 2. Decisions.

**(a)** During games the referee shall decide all questions that may arise in accordance with these rules. On all questions and situations not covered by these rules, the decision of the referee is final. This might include changing a call.

**(b) Stoppages:** Should a match be stopped during the course of play because of weather conditions, failing light, or any other unforeseen circumstances, it must be resumed from the point of stoppage with the same players and, if possible, the same officials. A wet or partially wet court shall be considered unplayable.

### **3. Appeal Calls.**

During the rally, if a player feels his opponent did not return the ball legally (double bounce, wrist ball, or carry), he must stop play and appeal. He then accepts the consequences of the appeal.

### **4. Protests.**

A player refusing to accept a referee's ruling shall continue to play "under protest" but may lodge a formal objection in accordance with the rules within seven days. Such "protest" should be noted in the Referee's Report.

### **5. Forfeitures.**

A match may be forfeited by the referee when:

**(a) Unsportsmanlike Conduct:** Any player refuses to abide by the referee's decision or engages in unsportsmanlike conduct.

**(b)** A player leaving the court without the permission of the referee or refusing to continue the match shall automatically be suspended for six months and no Council or Committee of Comhairle Liathróid Láimhe na hÉireann shall have the power to modify this penalty. In the case of doubles matches the referee shall endeavour to find out if the player's partner is willing to continue and report accordingly. The Council or Committee in charge must award the match to the player (in singles) or side (in doubles) willing to continue.

**(c)** Players failing to report at the venue at the appointed time shall forfeit the match unless the controlling

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body considers that extenuating circumstances exist.

**C. MARKER**

A marker shall be appointed to keep a record of the points scored and assist the referee by keeping the record of the order of service. The referee shall inform the players of the score before each service.

**PART IV - PLAY REGULATIONS.**

**A. SERVE.**

**1. General.**

**(a) Order:** The player or side winning the toss of a coin becomes the first server and starts the first game.

**(b) Start:** Games are started by the referee calling "play ball".

**(c) Place:** The server may serve from any place in the service zone. No part of either foot may extend beyond either line of the service zone. Stepping on the line (but not beyond) is permitted. Server must remain in the service zone until the served ball passes short line. Violations are called "foot faults". See rule IV A.3.b.i.

**(d) Manner:** A serve is commenced by bouncing the ball to the floor in the service zone. After the serve is commenced on the first bounce the ball must be struck by

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the server's hand or fist so that it hits the front wall and on the rebound hits the floor back of the short line, either with or without touching one of the side walls.

**(e) Readiness:** Serves shall not be made until the receiving side is ready. "Ready" means receiver has at least one full second in the receiving position. Server must also stand in the "ready" position for one full second before serving.

## 2. Doubles

**(a) Server:** At the beginning of each game in doubles, each side informs the referee of the order of service, which order must be followed throughout the game. Only the first server may serve the first time up and continue to serve first throughout the game. When the first server is out, the side is out. Thereafter, both players on each side shall serve until a handout for each occurs. It is not necessary for the server to alternate serves to his team's opponents.

**(b) Partner's Position:** On each serve, the server's partner shall stand erect with his back to the side wall and with both feet on the floor within the service box until the served ball passes the short line. Violations are called "Foot faults."

## 3. Defective Serves.

Defective serves are of three types resulting in penalties as follows:

**(a) Dead Ball Serves:** A dead ball serve results in no

penalty and the server is given another serve without cancelling a prior illegal serve. They occur when an otherwise legal service:

**(i) Hits Partner.** The ball hits the server's partner on the rebound from the front wall while the server's partner is in the service box. Any serve that touches the floor before hitting the partner in the box is a short. See rule IV. A.3.c.iii.

**(ii) Screen Balls.** The ball passes so close to the server or the server's partner that the view of the returning side is obstructed. Any serve passing between the server's partner and the side wall is an automatic screen. See rule IV.E.1.d.

**(iii) Straddle Balls.** A legally served ball between the legs is an automatic hinder.

**(iv) Court Hinders.** The ball hits any part of the court that under local rules is a dead ball. See rule IV.E.1.a.

**(b) Fault Serve:** Two fault serves result in a handout. The following serves are faults and any two in succession result in a handout.

**(i) Foot Faults.**

**(a) Leaving The Service Zone.** When the server leaves the service zone before the served ball passes the short line.

**(b) Partner Leaves The Service Zone.** When the server's partner leaves the service box before the served ball passes the short line.

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**(ii) Short Serve.** A short serve is any served ball that first hits the front wall and on the rebound hits the floor in front of the back edge of the short line either with or without touching one side wall.

**(iii) Three-wall Serve.** A three-wall serve is any served ball that first hits the front wall and on the rebound hits two side walls on the fly.

**(iv) Ceiling Serve.** A ceiling serve is any served ball that touches the ceiling after hitting the front wall before touching the floor (40 x 20 court only).

**(v) Long Serve.** A long serve is any ball that first hits the front wall and rebounds to the back wall before touching the floor.

**(vi) Out-of-Court Serve.** Any ball that goes out of the court on the serve (40 x 20 court only). See rule IV. D.6.

**(c) Handout Serves:** A handout serve results in an out.

**(i) Missed Ball.** Any attempt to strike the ball on the first bounce that results either in a total miss or in touching any part of the server's body other than his serving hand or fist.

**(ii) Non-front Wall Serve.** Any served ball that strikes the server's partner or the ceiling, floor or side wall, before striking the front wall.

**(iii) Touched Serve.** Any served ball that on the rebound from the front wall touches the server, or touches the

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server's partner while his feet are out of the service box. This includes the ball that is intentionally caught. See rule IV.A.3.a.i.

**(iv) Time Games.** In case of all matches played on a time basis one fault serve shall count as a "handout" serve.

**N.B. Ceiling and/or Out-of-Court Serves are Handout Serves in the 60 x 30 court.**

**(v) Out-of-Order Serve.** In doubles, when either partner serves out of order or one player serves both serves. If the number two player in order of service serves first he automatically disqualifies his partner.

**(vi) Crotch Serve.** Any served ball that hits the crotch in the front wall shall be considered the same as a ball that hits the floor and is an out.

A crotch serve into the back wall is a good serve, as is a three-wall crotch serve.

**(vii) Delay.** A server fails to serve the ball within ten seconds after he and the receiver have assumed the ready position.

## **B. RETURN OF SERVE.**

### **1. Receiving Position.**

The receiver or receivers must stand at least 5 feet back of the short line, as indicated by the 6 inch restraining line, until the ball is struck by the server. Any infraction of this rule results in a point for the server.

### **2. Fly Return.**

In making a fly return, the receiver must play the ball after it passes over the short line and no part of his foot may extend on or over the short line. A violation results in a point for the server. After contact the receiver may step on or over the short line without penalty.

### **3. Legal Return.**

After the ball is legally served, one of the players on the receiving side must strike the ball either on the fly or after the first bounce and before the ball touches the floor a second time to return the ball to the front wall either directly or after it has touched one or both side walls, the back wall, or the ceiling (in 40 x 20 court), or any combination of those surfaces. A return ball may not touch the floor before touching the front wall. A ball may be played off the back wall as well as the front wall provided the ball does not touch the floor a second time except in the 60 x 30 court.

### **4. Failure to Return.**

The failure to return a serve results in a point for the server.

### **5. Touching Receiver.**

See rule 1V.D.5.

## **C. CHANGES OF SERVE.**

A server is entitled to continue serving until he makes a handout. When the server or the side loses the serve, the server or serving side becomes the receiver, and the receiving side, the server; and so alternatively in all subsequent services of the game. Handouts are made by:

### **1. Handout Serve.**

The server makes a handout serve under rule 1V.A.3.c.

### **2. Fault Serves.**

The server makes two fault serves in succession under rule 1V.A.3.b.

### **3. Hits Partner.**

The server hits his partner with an attempted return before the ball touches the floor the second time.

### **4. Return Failure.**

The server or his partner fails to keep the ball in play by returning it as required by rule 1V.B.3.

### **5. Avoidable Hinder.**

The server or his partner commits an avoidable hinder. See Rule 1V.E.2.

### **6. Side-out.**

In doubles, the side is retired when both partners have been put out, except on the first serve as provided in rule 1V.E.2.a.

## **D. RALLY.**

Each legal return after the serve is called a rally. Play during rallies must accord with the following rules (each violation results in handout or point):

### **1. One Hand.**

Only the front or back of one hand may be used at any one time to return the ball. Using two hands to hit a ball is a handout. The use of the foot or any portion of the body, other than the hand or fist, is a handout.

### **2. Wrist Ball.**

The use of any other part of the body to return the ball including the wrist or arm above the player's hand, is prohibited.

### **3. One Touch.**

In attempting returns, the ball may be touched only once by one player. In doubles, both partners may swing at, but only one may hit the ball.

### **4. Return Attempts.**

**(a) Singles:** In singles, if a player swings at but misses the ball in play, the player may repeat his attempts to return the ball until it touches the floor a second time.

**(b) Doubles:** In doubles, if one player swings at but misses the ball, both he and his partner may make further attempts to return the ball until it touches the floor a second time. Both partners on a side are entitled to attempt to return the ball.

**(c) Hinders:** In singles or doubles, if a player swings at but misses the ball in play, and in his, or his partner's attempt again to play the ball there is an unintentional interference by an opponent, a hinder is called. See rule 1V.E.

## **5. Touching the Ball.**

Except as provided in rule 1V.E.1.b any touching of a ball before it touches the floor the second time by a player other than the one making a return is a point or handout against the offending player.

## **6. Out-of-Court.**

**(a) After Return:** Any ball returned to the front wall that on the rebound on the first bounce in 60 x 30 and 40 x 20, goes into the gallery or through any opening in a side wall is declared dead and the serve replayed. Any ball returned to the front wall that on the rebound goes directly into the gallery or through any opening in the side wall is a point or hand out as appropriate in the 60 x 30 court. In the 40 x 20 court this is declared a dead ball and the serve is replayed.

**(b) No Return:** Any ball not returned to the front wall but which bounces off a player's hand or fist into the gallery or into any opening in a side wall either with or without touching the ceiling, side or back wall, shall be a handout or point against the player failing to make the return.

## **7. Dry Ball and Gloves.**

During the game and particularly on service, every effort must be made to keep the ball dry. Deliberately wetting the ball results in a handout or point. The ball may be inspected by the referee at any time during a game. If a player's

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gloves are wet to the extent that they leave wet marks on the ball, the player must change to dry gloves on a referee's time out. This is strictly a referee's judgement. If a player wishes to change to dry gloves, he must hold the palms of his hands up to the referee and obtain the referee's permission to change. He may not leave the court without the referee's permission. Two minutes are allowed for glove changes. The referee should give a one minute warning, but the player is still responsible to be back in the court within two minutes. Deliberately wetting the gloves results in a handout or point.

### **8. Broken Ball.**

If there is any suspicion that a ball is broken on the serve or during a rally play continues until the end of the rally. The referee or any player may request that the ball be examined. If the referee decides the ball is broken, a new ball must be put into play and the point replayed. Once the succeeding serve is begun (or attempted) the previous rally stands.

### **9. Play Stoppage.**

If a player loses a shoe or other equipment, or foreign objects enter the court, or any other outside interference occurs, the referee must stop the play immediately.

## **E. HINDERS.**

Hinders are of two types: "Dead ball" and "Avoidable".

### **1. Dead Ball Hinders.**

Dead ball hinders as described in this rule result in the point

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being replayed. When called by the referee, the following are dead ball hindrances:

**(a) Court Hindrances:** If in the referee's opinion an erratic bounce, caused by a court obstruction, affected play, it should be called a "court hinder." The player should not stop play at any time in anticipation of a call, nor influence the call.

Included in court hindrances is the unplayable, wet, skidding ball that hits a wet spot on the floor. This is the referee's, not the player's call.

**(b) Hitting Opponent:** When a returned ball touches an opponent on the fly before it returns to the front wall.

**(c) Body Contact:** When any body contact with an opponent interferes with seeing or returning the ball. A player should not stop play, except on physical contact on the backswing by the offensive (shooting) player. He should immediately call "contact" if he wants the contact hinder. If he elects to shoot, no contact call will be permitted. At no other time should the players stop on physical contact. Physical contact is not an automatic hinder. It is the judgement of the referee if the physical contact impeded the play.

**(d) Screen Ball:** When any ball rebounds from the front wall close to the body of a player on the side that has just returned the ball in such a way as to interfere with or prevent the returning side from seeing the ball. See rule 1V.A.3.ii.

**(e) Straddle Ball:** When a ball passes between the legs of a player on the side that just returned the ball, if there is no fair chance for the opposing player to see or return the ball. This is not automatic.

**(f) Avoidance:** While making an attempt to return the ball, a player is entitled to a fair chance to see and return the ball. It is the duty of the side that has just served or returned the ball to move so that the receiving side may go straight to the ball and not be required to go around an opponent. On the other hand, the receiver must make a reasonable effort to move towards the ball. The referee should be liberal in calling hinders to discourage any practice of playing the ball in such a way that an opponent cannot see it until it is too late. It is no excuse on an attempted kill, unless in the opinion of the referee the player cannot return the ball. Hinders must be called without a claim by a player. It is not a hinder when one player hinders his partner.

**(g) Doubles:** In doubles, both players or a side are entitled to a fair and unobstructed chance at the ball. Either one is entitled to a hinder even though it naturally would be his partner's ball and even though his partner may have attempted to play the ball and have already missed it.

**(h) Effect:** A call by the referee of a "hinder" stops the play and voids any situation following, such as the ball hitting a player. No player is authorised to call a hinder, except the shooting player on the backswing and such call must be made immediately.

## 2. Avoidable Hinders.

An avoidable hinder results in a handout or a point depending upon whether the offender was serving or receiving. Player intent need not have bearing on an avoidable call. Avoidable hinders are called when:

**(a) Failure to Move:** A player does not move sufficiently to allow his opponent his shot.

**(b) Blocking:** A player moves into a position that effects a block or crowds his opponent about to return the ball, or in doubles, one partner moves in front of an opponent as his partner is returning the ball.

**(c) Moving into Ball:** A player moves in the way and is struck by the ball just played by his opponent.

**(d) Pushing:** A player forcibly pushes or shoves an opponent during a rally.

**(e) View Obstruction:** Deliberately moving across a player's line of vision just before he strikes the ball.

**(f) Distraction:** Any avoidable intimidation or distraction that would interfere with the player playing the ball such as stomping feet, shouting, whistling or loud noise.

## 3. Technicals

A technical is assessed for unsportsmanlike conduct or for improperly wearing eye protection. If a referee issues a technical, one point shall be deducted from the offender's score. The technical has no effect on service changes or

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sideouts. If the technical occurs between games or when the offender has no points, the result will be that the offender's score will be a negative one. Three technicals in a match will result in a forfeiture.

### **A. Types**

Some examples of actions that may result in technicals are:

1. Too frequent complaints made against the referee's judgement.
2. Abuse of appeal privileges.
3. Profanity.
4. Excessive arguing.
5. Threat of any nature to opponent or referee.
6. Excessive or hard striking, throwing or kicking of ball between rallies (see interpretation No. 20, International Rules).
7. Failure to properly wear eye protection.
8. Anything considered to be unsportsmanlike behaviour.

### **B. Warnings**

If a player's behaviour is not so severe as to warrant a technical, a technical warning may be issued without a point deduction and should be accompanied by a brief explanation of the reason for warning. A technical warning may precede the penalty of a technical but is not necessary.

### **Interpretation No. 20 (International Rules)**

If the opponent is hit or narrowly missed by the ball, a technical should be called. On the other hand, if it is the

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first offence, and the opponent was in no danger of being hit, a technical warning should be issued.

## **F. REST PERIODS**

### **1. Delays.**

Delays exceeding 10 seconds by server or receiver shall result in a handout or point against the offender. Server and receiver must be in ready position within 10 seconds of the end of the preceding rally. The server must 'then' serve within 10 seconds.

### **2. Rest Periods and Time Outs.**

**(a)** In the 60 x 30 and 40 x 20 courts, a two minute rest period is allowed between the first and second game during which time the players may not leave the court without the approval of the referee. A five minute period is allowed between the second and third games during which time the players may leave the court. This interval shall not in any circumstances, exceed five minutes.

**(b)** During the game in the 40 x 20 court, each player in singles and each side in doubles may request a "time out" for a towel wiping, glasses or change or adjustment of equipment. Each "time out" shall not exceed thirty seconds and not more than three "time outs" shall be granted each player in singles and each side in doubles in each game.

### **3. Equipment Time Out.**

At the discretion of the referee, equipment time outs may be granted for lost shoes, broken shoelaces, torn equipment, wet shirts, wet floor etc. Player is not charged

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for this time out.

#### **4. Injury.**

No time out shall be charged to a player who is injured during play. An injured player shall not be allowed more than a total of 15 minutes of rest. If the injured player is not able to resume play after a period totalling 15 minutes per match, the match shall be awarded to the opponent or opponents.

#### **5. Eyeguards.**

A player will not be allowed play in any 40 x 20 match, championship or competition, unless he is wearing eyeguards.

Penalty: Forfeiture of game.

**PART V (A)**  
**JUVENILE PLAYING RULES**  
**SECTION I**

The Irish Handball Council shall organise Singles and Doubles Championships in Under 14, Under 15, Under 16 and Under 17 in both 40 x 20 and 60x 30.

Duplication is not permitted. A player may not play in both Singles and Doubles in either 40 x 20 or 60 x 30. A player beaten in an earlier round may not be used as a substitute during the course of those particular championships.

**A.** Full playing rules apply to Championships in both 40 x 20 and 60 x 30.

**B.** Singles and Doubles matches are for the best of three games of 15 points at Under 12, Under 13 and Under 14 levels and of two games of 21 points and a tie-breaker to 11 at Under 15, Under 16 and Under 17 levels.

**C.** A game shall be won by the first side scoring 15/21 points as at B above.

**D.** Under 14 players shall play with the Challenger No. 3 Ball in 60 x 30 and the Dark Blue Ball in 40 x 20.

**E.** Under 15 and Under 16 players shall play with the Dark Blue Ball in 40 x 20 and the standard softball in 60 x 30.

**F.** Under 17 players shall play with the standard adult ball

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in 40 x 20 and the standard softball in 60 x 30.

**G.** Gloves and eyeguards are mandatory in the 40 x 20 court. Gloves are optional in the 60 x 30 court, but eyeguards are compulsory for players up to and including Under 18 level.

**H.** A referee shall not allow a player/players not complying with the foregoing rule to commence a game.

**I. (a)** A player winning an Under 14 or Under 16 Provincial or All-Ireland title in 40 x 20 cannot play Under 15 or Under 17 in that court.

**(b)** A player winning an Under 15 Provincial or All-Ireland title in 40 x 20 cannot play Under 17 in that court.

**(c)** A player winning an Under 14 or Under 16 Provincial or All-Ireland title in 60 x 30 cannot play Under 15 or Under 17 in that court.

**(d)** A player winning an Under 15 Provincial or All-Ireland title in 60 x 30 cannot play Under 17 in that court.

REGULATIONS FOR JUVENILE TEAM  
CHAMPIONSHIPS

**1. In Under 12/13 Team Competition the following rules apply:**

**(a)** A team comprises of 6 players, three of whom must be Under 12.

**(b)** The team plays in three doubles partnerships of any combination.

**(c)** Each pair plays two games to 15 points.

**(d)** The aggregate score decides the winner.

**(e)** In the event of a tie, each team will select a pair to play a tiebreaker to 15 points.

**(f)** Full rules apply in both 40 x 20 and 60 x 30.

**(g)** The Challenger No 2 is the official ball in 40 x 20 and Challenger No 3 is the official ball in 60 x 30.

**(h)** Players must wear eyeguards and gloves in 40 x 20 and eyeguards in 60 x 30 with gloves optional.

**(i)** Any player who represented his county at Under 14 level or over is ineligible to play on an Under 12/13 team.

**(j)** The competition is open to players who have not won a provincial championship in any age group from Under 14 upwards.

**2. In Under 14/15 Team Competition the following rules apply:**

**(a)** A team comprises of 6 players, three of whom must be under 14.

**(b)** The team plays in three doubles partnerships of any combination.

**(c)** Each pair plays two games to 15 points.

**(d)** The aggregate score decides the winner.

**(e)** In the event of a tie, each team will select a pair to play a tiebreaker to 15 points.

**(f)** Full rules apply in both 40 x 20 and 60 x 30.

**(g)** Gloves are mandatory in 40 x 20 and eyeguards are mandatory 40 x 20 and 60 x 30.

**(h)** The Dark Blue Ball is the official ball in 40 x 20 and the adult ball is the official ball in 60 x 30.

**(i)** The competition is open to players who have not won a provincial championship in any age group from Under 14 upwards.

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**REGULATIONS FOR COMPETITIONS TO  
UNDER 13 LEVEL**

**1.** Championships/Competitions are promoted by County Boards and Provincial Councils for players of 13 years of age and under.

**(a)** All players Under 12 use the Challenger No. 2 Ball in 40 x 20 and 60 x 30. Players Under 13 use the Challenger No. 3 Ball in 60 x 30 and Dark Blue Ball in 40 x 20.

**(b)** Full rules apply for Under 13.

**(c)** Gloves are mandatory in 40 x 20 and eyeguards are mandatory in 60 x 30 and 40 x 20.

**(d)** Full rules apply for players Under 12 in 40 x 20.

**(e)** For players Under 12 in 60 x 30:

**(i)** The service (inside) line shall be the short line and the player shall serve between the service lines.

**(ii)** A ball reaching the back wall in service before the second hop shall be a "dead ball" and shall not count.

**(iii)** In Doubles the server's partner shall stand erect with back to the side wall inside the service/short line until the ball is served, i.e. crosses the short line; otherwise a fault results.

**(iii)** Games are to 15 points.

**PART V (B)**  
**REGULATIONS FOR INTER-CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS**

The Irish Handball Council shall organise Inter-Club Championships in Junior B, Junior and Open in 60 x 30 and 40 x 20 (Fo-Riail 47 (L) refers).

Each team to consist of four players and one substitute.  
Duplication in different teams is not permitted.  
The order of play is as follows:

1st Singles            2 x 21 points

Doubles              2 x 21 points

2nd Singles           2 x 21 points

Before the match commences each team shall exchange lists showing the team members in the order of play.

Aggregate scores shall decide the winner. In the event of a tie, any pair from each team shall play one game of 21 points to decide the winner.

**PART V (C)**  
**FÉILE NA nGAEL COMPETITION RULES**

- 1.** Club team of four players in two pairs and one substitute. The substitute may only play in the case of injury to one of the first four players.
- 2.** Team in order of play to be supplied to the referee before each match. (The order of play may be changed for second or subsequent matches).
- 3.** Each pair play one game to 21 aces with a point for each win. First service is decided on the toss of a coin. The team receiving in the first game will have first service in the second game.
- 4.** When two or more teams in a group tie on points, the placings are decided on total aggregate aces. Where aggregate aces are equal, a play-off to 11 aces between any pair from each side decides the placings.
- 5.** In case of a tie in any final, rules as in 4 apply. First service to be decided on the toss of a coin.
- 6.** Full playing rules apply in all games.
- 7.** Teams to wear Club colours in all matches unless requested to change when colours clash.
- 8.** Players must be under 14 years of age on 1st January in year of the competition.

**PART V (D)**  
**LADIES HANDBALL**

**Playing Rules**

Playing Rules as outlined heretofore apply for ladies adult and juvenile handball.

**Playing Equipment**

See Part V (H) for playing equipment used in 40 x 20 and 60 x 30.

**REGULATIONS FOR  
ALL-IRELAND GIRLS U16 TEAM OF FOUR  
CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP**

(a) A team will consist of four players (Singles, Doubles, Singles) and two substitutes.

(b) Team in order of play to be supplied in writing to official in charge before play commences.

(c) Singles players play two games to 21 points. Doubles teams play two games to 21 points.

(d) The aggregate score decides the winner.

(e) In the event of a tie, any two players from each side play a tie-breaker to 11 points.

(f) Full playing rules apply in 40 x 20 and 60 x 30.

**(g) Equipment**

	<b>40 x 20</b>	<b>60 x 30</b>
<b>BALL</b>	Dunlop Dark Blue	Challenger No. 3
<b>EYEGUARDS</b>	Mandatory	Mandatory
<b>GLOVES</b>	Mandatory	Optional

(h) The competition will be run off on one day in 40 x 20 and on one day in 60 x 30 at suitable venues

(i) The venues will be decided by An Coiste Gn imh and will be rotated around the provinces, depending on entries received.

**REGULATIONS FOR ADULT LADIES  
INTERPROVINCIAL TOURNAMENTS**

- (a) A team will consist of three players 18 years of age and over in the year of competition – one Singles player and one Doubles pair.
- (b) Players may be selected from any Club within the province.
- (c) Team in order of play to be supplied in writing to official in charge before play commences.
- (d) Singles players play two games to 21 points. Doubles teams play two games to 21 points.
- (e) The aggregate score decides the winner.
- (f) In the event of a tie, any two players from each side play a tie-breaker to 11 points.
- (g) Full playing rules apply in 40 x 20 and 60 x 30.

**(h) Equipment**

	<b>40 x 20</b>	<b>60 x 30</b>
<b>BALL</b>	Dunlop Dark Blue	Challenger No. 3
<b>EYEGUARDS</b>	Mandatory	Mandatory
<b>GLOVES</b>	Mandatory	Optional

- (i) The competition will be run off on one day in 40 x 20 and on one day in 60 x 30 at suitable venues.
- (j) The venues will be decided by An Coiste Gnímh and will be rotated around the provinces, depending on entries received.

**REGULATIONS FOR GAEL LINN 40 x 20  
MIXED DOUBLES COMPETITION**

- (a) The competition is for Mixed pairs at Under 13 level (on 1 January of year of competition).
- (b) One entry per Club. A team consists of one boy and one girl.
- (c) Provincial competitions will be held to decide on two teams from each province for the All-Ireland competition.
- (d) Defeated All-Ireland quarter-finalists will play in a Sólaís competition.
- (e) The format will be timed games as follows:
- |             |             |
|-------------|-------------|
| Girl v Girl | 10 minutes  |
| Boy v Boy   | 10 minutes  |
| Pair v Pair | 15 minutes. |
- (f) Aggregate score decides the winners.
- (g) In the event of a tie, the teams will play one doubles game to 11 points to decide the winner.
- (h) Juvenile playing rules apply.
- (i) Equipment**

<b>BALL</b>	Challenger No 3
<b>EYEGUARDS &amp; GLOVES</b>	Mandatory

(j) Úsáid na Gaeilge is to be encouraged during the competition.

Terms such as isteach, amach, fada, scór, aon, liathróid, cluiche and simple phrases should be used.

**REGULATIONS FOR INTERPROVINCIAL GIRLS  
TEAM OF TEN COMPETITIONS**

- (a) A team consists of 10 players, two at each age group from Under 13 to Under 17.
- (b) Order of play is from Under 13 to Under 17.
- (c) Team in order of play to be supplied in writing to official in charge before play commences.
- (d) Each pair play two games to 11 points.
- (e) The aggregate score decides the winner.
- (f) In the event of a tie, any two players from each side play a tie-breaker to 11 points.
- (g) Full playing rules apply in 40 x 20 and 60 x 30.

**(h) Equipment**

	<b>40 x 20</b>	<b>60 x 30</b>
<b>BALL</b>	Dunlop Dark Blue	Challenger No. 3
<b>EYEGUARDS</b>	Mandatory	Mandatory
<b>GLOVES</b>	Mandatory	Optional

- (i) The official balls are the Dark Blue in 40 x 20 and the Challenger No. 3 in 60 x 30.
- (j) The competition will be run off on one day in 40 x 20 and on one day in 60 x 30 at suitable venues.
- (k) The venues will be decided by An Coiste Gnímh and will be rotated around the provinces, depending on entries received.

**PART V (E)**  
**REGULATIONS FOR BOYS COLLEGES 40 x 20 AND**  
**60 x 30 CHAMPIONSHIPS**

**1. FIRST YEARS**

**(a) Competitions**

Singles and Doubles to PROVINCIAL LEVEL ONLY for pupils in their first year in Second Level education.

**(b) Scoring**

Best of 3 games to 15 points.

<b>(c) Equipment</b>	<b>40 x 20</b>	<b>60 x 30</b>
<b>BALL</b>	Dunlop Dark Blue Challenger No. 3	
<b>GLOVES</b>	Compulsory	Optional
<b>EYEGUARDS</b>	Compulsory	Compulsory

**2. JUNIOR**

**(a) Competitions and Age**

Singles and Doubles to All-Ireland level for pupils Under 15 on 1st September at start of School Year.

**(b) Scoring**

Best of 2 games to 21 points and tie-breaker to 11 points.

<b>(c) Equipment</b>	<b>40 x 20</b>	<b>60 x 30</b>
<b>BALL</b>	Dunlop Dark Blue Challenger No. 3	
<b>GLOVES</b>	Compulsory	Optional
<b>EYEGUARDS</b>	Compulsory	Compulsory

**3. INTERMEDIATE**

**(a) Competitions and Age**

Singles and Doubles to All-Ireland level for pupils Under 17 on 1st September at start of School Year.

**(b) Scoring**

Best of 2 games to 21 points and tie-breaker to 11points.

**(c ) Equipment**

	<b>40 x 20</b>	<b>60 x 30</b>
<b>BALL</b>	Dunlop International	Adult Softball
<b>GLOVES</b>	Compulsory	Optional
<b>EYEGUARDS</b>	Compulsory	Compulsory

**4. SENIOR**

**(a) Competitions and Age**

Singles and Doubles to All-Ireland level for pupils Under 19 on 1st September at start of School Year.

**(b) Scoring**

Best of 3 games to 21 points .

**(c ) Equipment**

	<b>40 x 20</b>	<b>60 x 30</b>
<b>BALL</b>	Dunlop International	Adult Softball
<b>GLOVES</b>	Compulsory	Optional
<b>EYEGUARDS</b>	Compulsory	Compulsory

**5. GENERAL NOTES**

**(a)** A player may compete in one grade and in one competition only, i.e. a player may compete only in Singles or Doubles in one grade.

**(b)** The scoring system for each grade corresponds with that for the same age group in championships administered by the Irish Handball Council.

**REGULATIONS FOR GIRLS COLLEGES  
40 X 20 and 60 x 30 CHAMPIONSHIPS**

**1. FIRST YEARS**

**(a) Competitions**

Singles and Doubles to PROVINCIAL LEVEL ONLY for pupils in their first year in Second Level education.

**(b) Scoring**

Best of 3 games to 15 points .

**(c) Equipment**

	<b>40 x 20</b>	<b>60 x 30</b>
<b>BALL</b>	Dunlop Dark Blue Challenger No. 3 Ball	
<b>GLOVES</b>	Compulsory	Compulsory
<b>EYEGUARDS</b>	Compulsory	Compulsory

**2. JUNIOR**

**(a) Competitions and Age**

singles and Doubles to All-Ireland level for pupils Under 16 on 1st September at start of School Year.

**(b) Scoring**

Best of 2 games to 21 points and tie-breaker to 11 points.

**(c) Equipment**

	<b>40 x 20</b>	<b>60 x 30</b>
<b>BALL</b>	Dunlop Dark Blue Challenger No. 3 Ball	
<b>GLOVES</b>	Compulsory	Compulsory
<b>EYEGUARDS</b>	Compulsory	Compulsory

### 3. SENIOR

#### (a) Competitions and Age

Singles and Doubles to All-Ireland level for pupils Under 19 on 1st September at start of School Year.

#### (b) Scoring

Best of 3 games to 21 points.

#### (c) Equipment

	<b>40 x 20</b>	<b>60 x 30</b>
<b>BALL</b>	Dunlop Dark Blue Challenger No. 3 Ball	
<b>GLOVES</b>	Compulsory	Optional
<b>EYEGUARDS</b>	Compulsory	Compulsory

### 4. GENERAL NOTES

(a) A player may compete in one grade and in one competition only, i.e. a player may compete only in Singles or Doubles in one grade.

(b) The scoring system for each grade corresponds with that for the same age group in championships administered by the Irish Handball Council.

**PART V (F)**  
**COMMUNITY GAMES**

1. The playing rules of Comhairle Liathróid Láimhe na hÉireann shall apply except where amended by Community Games Rules and Bye Laws.

2. Teams to consist of six (6) registered players – four(4) to play and two(2) substitutes.

3. In Girls Under 13 years and Under 15 years competitions and in the Boys Under 13 years, the ball to be used is the Challenger No. 2 Ball. Games of 11 aces in Under 13 years and 15 aces in the Under 15 years. In the Boys Under 15, games to be played with Challenger No. 3 Ball. 40 x 20 Court must be used.

4. All matches to follow the same order: Singles, Doubles, Singles.

5. Each match will be as follows:

Under 13 Boys and Girls

Singles – 2 games of 11 aces each

Doubles – 3 games of 11 aces each

Singles – 2 games of 11 aces each

Under 15 Boys and Girls

Singles – 2 games of 15 aces each

Doubles – 3 games of 15 aces each

Singles – 2 games of 15 aces each

All seven games must be played and the total number of aces scored by each team will decide the winners of the match. A 40x20 court must be used.

Gloves and eye guards are mandatory in the 40 x 20 court. Full Playing Rules apply in all games.

First service is decided on the toss of a coin. The team receiving in the first game will have first service in the second game. The team receiving in the second game will have first service in the third game. In the case of a tie the first service to be decided on the toss of a coin.

**6.** The referee must be given in writing before the match commences, the order in which members of each team will play. The order may be changed for subsequent matches.

**7.** The referee's decision in all matches concerning play will be final.

**8.** A Team of Four must field at the commencement of the game. Failure to do so will result in disqualification.

## **INTERNATIONAL RULES**

International Playing Rules apply for (a) Irish Trials for international events and (b) the Irish Nationals.

The main points of difference to note are:

- 1.** Timeouts are of one minute duration.
- 2.** Five minute timeouts are allowed between games.
- 3.** Players may leave the court during timeouts and between games without the referee's permission.
- 4.** If in the referee's opinion a ball striking an opponent would not have reached the front wall, a mark or a hand-out is given.
- 5.** If a player falls he must wait until he is not obstructing his opponent before getting up or an avoidable will be called.
- 6.** A Referee may use 2 Linesmen to assist with the game. They only adjudicate on appeal calls.
- 7.** A player may appeal a serve, bad bounce, wrist ball or two hops after the rally is completed.
- 8.** Two consecutive screen serves result in a fault serve.
- 9.** Two time-outs are allowed in a tie-breaker
- 10.** A player late for his game or not on court after a time-out or break between games is charged a point for each minute he is late. After 10 minutes he forfeits the game.

## **PART V (H)**

### **ONE-WALL RULES**

#### **1. Wall**

The wall shall be 20 feet wide from the outside edge of one side line to the outside edge of the other side line, and 16 feet high, including any top line.

#### **2. Floor**

The floor shall be 20 feet wide from the outside edges of the side lines. It shall be 34 feet from the wall to the outside edge of the long line. The side lines should extend at least three feet beyond the long line. There should also be a minimum of at least six feet, but ideally 20 feet, of floor beyond each side line as well as 16 feet beyond the long line to allow for playing space.

#### **3. Short Line**

The short line runs parallel to the wall with the back edge of the line 16 feet from the wall.

#### **4. Service Markers**

There shall be service markers, lines of a at least six inches in length extending inward from the side lines, parallel to the short and long lines and located midway between them. The imaginary extension of these lines across the court indicates the service line.

#### **5. Serving Zone**

The serving zone is the floor area inside and including the short, service and side lines.

## **6. Receiving Zone**

The receiving zone is the floor area beyond the short line, inside and including the side and long lines.

## **7. Playing Zone**

The playing zone is the floor area between the front wall and the outside edges of the side and long lines.

## **8. Wall Edge**

The top edge of the wall, if any, is not part of the court. A ball striking the top edge is an out.

## **8. Hitting Spectators**

A ball that hits a spectator before hitting the wall shall be considered an out.

## GENERAL

Shirts are not required for outdoor play unless requested by opponent. Also, uniforms should be light-coloured.

### Line Judges

Linesmen. There shall be a linesman for each of the side lines, the short line and the long line. Their duties shall be to call “out” the balls that hit beyond their respective lines. The short-line linesman may also call foot faults, skip balls and double bounces at the discretion of the referee.

### Doubles

Partner’s service position. While a player is serving, his partner must stand outside the side lines, astraddle the indicated service line. The partner may not enter the playing zone until the served ball passes him. Violations are called foot faults.

### One-Wall Dead Ball Hinders

Delete the four-wall hinders per USHA rules pertaining to:

3. Body contact
4. Screen ball
5. Straddle ball
6. Backswing hinder
7. Safety hold-up
8. Other interference

Add one-wall hinder rules:

**A. Standing Still.** If a player attempting to play a ball suffers from interference by an opponent who remained

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perfectly still after hitting his shot, there is no hinder. This legal block is the essence of one-wall handball. Movement is permitted by the offensive team until the ball is struck, and this includes movement to gain court position in front of an opponent while the partner is hitting the ball.

However, if a player on the side that has just hit the ball remains perfectly still, but the opponent moves back into him in trying to play the ball, not necessarily making contact, and is kept from having a fair chance to play the ball, it is a hinder. It is the duty of the player further from the wall to get out of the way.

**B. Being moved into ball.** If a player on the defensive team is moved or pushed unintentionally into the ball by an opponent who is trying to play the ball, it is a hinder.

**C. Ball hits opponent on way to wall.** This is always a hinder, regardless of whether the referee felt the ball would have made the wall on the fly.

**D. Spectator Interference.** If a non-seated spectator or official interferes with a player in his attempt to play a ball, it is a hinder.

**E. Hinder Fault.** During a rally, if a player on the serving side creates a hinder called by the referee, the serving side starts the ensuing service with a fault.

Postponed by referee. Any games postponed by referee (due to weather or darkness) shall be resumed with the same score, etc. just as if the game had continued uninterrupted.

**Part V (H)**  
**PLAYING EQUIPMENT**

<b>40 x 20</b>	<b>EYE GUARDS</b>	<b>GLOVES</b>	<b>BALL</b>
Boys & Girls – Under 12	Mandatory	Mandatory	Challenger No. 2
Boys & Girls – Under 13	Mandatory	Mandatory	Dark Blue
Boys & Girls – Under 14	Mandatory	Mandatory	Dark Blue
Boys & Girls – Under 15	Mandatory	Mandatory	Dark Blue
Boys & Girls – Under 16	Mandatory	Mandatory	Dark Blue
Girls Under 17	Mandatory	Mandatory	Dark Blue
Boys Under 17	Mandatory	Mandatory	Dunlop International
Adults – Male	Mandatory	Mandatory	Dunlop International
Adults - Female	Mandatory	Mandatory	Dark Blue

**Part V (H)**  
**PLAYING EQUIPMENT**

<b>60 x 30</b>	<b>EYE GUARDS</b>	<b>GLOVES</b>	<b>BALL</b>
Boys & Girls – Under 12	Mandatory	Optional	Challenger No. 2
Boys & Girls – Under 13	Mandatory	Optional	Challenger No. 3
Boys & Girls – Under 14	Mandatory	Optional	Challenger No. 3
Girls Under 15 & Over	Mandatory	Optional	Challenger No. 3
Boys Under 15 & Over	Mandatory	Optional	Dunlop Softball
Adult – Male	Optional	Optional	Dunlop Softball
Adult - Female	Mandatory	Optional	Challenger No. 3
Hardball	Optional	Optional	Hardball
One Wall	Mandatory	Optional	Irish One-Wall

**Part V (H)**  
**PLAYING EQUIPMENT**

<b>TEAM EVENT</b>	<b>EYE GUARDS</b>	<b>GLOVES</b>	<b>BALL</b>
Under 12/13 40 x 20 Team	Mandatory	Mandatory	Challenger No. 2
Under 12/13 60 x 30 Team	Mandatory	Optional	Challenger No. 3
Under 14/15 40 x 20 Team	Mandatory	Mandatory	Dark Blue
Under 14/15 60 x 30 Team	Optional	Optional	Dunlop Softball
Under 16/17 40 x 20 Team	Mandatory	Mandatory	Dunlop
<b>International</b>			
Under 16/17 60 x 30 Team	Mandatory	Optional	Dunlop Softball
Girls Under 16 40 x 20 Team	Mandatory	Mandatory	Dark Blue
Feile na nGael: Boys 40 x 20	Mandatory	Mandatory	Dark Blue
Feile na nGael: Girls 40 x 20	Mandatory	Mandatory	Dark Blue
Feile na nGael: Boys 60 x 30	Mandatory	Optional	Challenger No. 3













