

Team Handball Basic Rules

The Basics

The Playing Court: The court measures 20 meters (65' 7") by 40 meters (131' 3"). The court is larger than a basketball court, but the length may be shortened when space is limited. The goal area line, or 6-meter line (19' 8"), is the most important line. No one except the goalie is allowed to stand in the goal area. The goal opening is 2 meters by 3 meters. Players may jump into the area if the ball is released before landing in the area.

The Ball: Team handball is played with a 32-panel leather ball. For women, the ball is 54 to 56 centimeters and 325 to 400 grams. For men, it is 58 to 60 centimeters and 425 to 475 grams.

Number of Players: There are seven players on each team (six court players and one goalie). A maximum of 12 players may dress and participate in a game for each team. Substitutes may enter the game at any time through own substitution area as long as the player they are replacing has left the court.

Uniform of the Players: Player numbers are 1 to 20. Uniform shirts and shorts are the same color. The goalkeeper must wear a different color shirt from teammates and opponents. No jewelry is allowed.

Referees: There are two referees, a court referee and a goal line referee. Referees have complete authority: Their decisions are final. The referees are assisted by a timer and a scorer.

Duration of the Game: For players 18 years and over, the game consists of 2, 30-minute halves with 10-minute half-time. For tournament and youth games 2, 15-minute or 2, 20-minute halves. This is running time except for injury or one team time-out per half. The teams change benches at half-time. The game ends in a tie unless the game demands a winner. (Tournament rules dictate that a winner must be determined.) Overtime consists of 2, 5-minute periods).

Passive Play: It is illegal to keep the ball in a team's possession without making a recognizable attempt to attack and to try to score. In other words, a team cannot stall (free-throw awarded to the other team).

Throw-Off: A throw-off is taken by the team that wins the coin toss and chooses to start the game with the ball. Each team must be in its own half of the court with the defense 3 meters away from the ball. Following a whistle, the ball is passed from center court to a teammate and play begins. Throw-off is repeated after every goal scored and after half-time.

Scoring: A goal is scored when the entire ball crosses the goal line inside the goal. A goal may be scored from any throw (free-throw, throw-in, throw-off, goal-throw).

Playing The Ball

A player is allowed . . . -To run with the ball for 3 steps -To hold the ball for 3 seconds - Unlimited dribble with 3 steps allowed before and after dribbling (no double-dribble).

A player is NOT allowed . . .

- To endanger an opponent with the ball.
- To pull, hit or punch the ball out of the hands of an opponent.
- To contact the ball below the knee.
- To dive on the floor for a rolling or stationary ball.

Defending the Opponent: A player is allowed to use the torso of the body to obstruct an opponent with or without the ball. However, using the outstretched arms or legs to obstruct, push, hold, trip or hit is NOT allowed. The attacking player is not allowed to charge into a defensive player.

Throw-In: A throw-in is awarded when ball goes out of bounds on the sideline or when the ball is last touched by a defensive player (excluding the goalie) and goes out of bounds over the endline. The throw-in is taken from the spot where the ball crossed the sideline, or if it crossed the endline, from the nearest corner. The thrower must place one foot on the sideline to execute the throw. All opposing players must stay 3 meters away from the ball.

Referee Throw: A referee throw is awarded when . . . The ball touches anything above the court after a simultaneous infringement of the rules after simultaneous possession of the ball.

The Referee throws the ball vertically between two opposing players. The jumping players may grab the ball or tap it to a teammate. All other players must be 3 meters away from the throw. The referee throw is always taken at center court.

Free-Throw: For a minor foul or violation, a free-throw is awarded to the opponent at the exact spot it took place. If the foul or violation occurs between the goal area line and the 9-meter line, the throw is taken from the nearest post outside the 9-meter line. The thrower must keep one foot in contact with the floor, then pass or shoot.

7-Meter Throw: The 7-meter throw is awarded when . . .

- A foul destroys a clear chance to score
- The goalie carries the ball back into his or her own goal area
- A court player intentionally plays the ball to his or her own goalie in the goal area and the goalie touches the ball

- A defensive player enters his or her goal area to gain an advantage over an attacking player in possession of the ball.

All players must be outside the free-throw line when the throw is taken. The player taking the throw has 3 seconds to shoot after referee's whistle. Any player may take the 7-meter throw.

Goal-Throw: A goal-throw is awarded when . . . The ball rebounds off the goalkeeper over the endline The ball is thrown over the endline by the attacking team.

The goalie takes the throw inside the goal area and is not restricted by the 3-step/3-second rule.

Progressive Punishments

Progressive Punishments: Pertain to fouls that require more punishment than just a free-throw. "Actions" directed mainly at the opponent and not the ball (such as reaching around, holding, pushing, hitting, tripping and jumping into an opponent) are to be punished progressively.

Warnings (yellow card): The referee gives only one warning to a player for rule violations and a total of three to a team. Exceeding these limits results in 2-minute suspensions thereafter. Warnings are not required prior to giving out a 2-minute suspension. 2-minute suspensions awarded for . . . -Serious or repeated rules violations -Unsportsmanlike conduct -Illegal substitution. -The suspended player's team plays short for 2 minutes.

Disqualification and Exclusion (red card): A disqualification is the equivalent of three, 2-minute suspensions. A disqualified player must leave court and bench, but the team can replace player after the 2-minute suspension expires. An exclusion is given for assault. The excluded player's team continues short one player for the rest of the game.