

Grassroots Ruleset Adaptations - Cloth 2026

Introduction

The official ruleset is available on the [WDBF Rules page](#). The following rule adaptations are suggestions which national federations of event organisers may choose to adopt for their own competitions to suit their own objectives, competition outcomes and audience. These adaptations may be implemented for recreational events involving any age category.

Adaptation Principles

These rule amendments have been designed to support safety for newer players or those with additional needs as well as aid inclusion and access to the sport. The general objective is to provide organisers with recommended adaptations they can implement at grassroots/recreational events to support participation and enjoyment before progressively removing the adaptations and aligning to the WDBF official rules as players gain experience. Please note that adaptations relevant to competitive youth dodgeball are available on the [WDBF Rules page](#).

Grassroots Rule Adaptations

Rule 1 Playing Area

- Besides the standard WDBF court of 18m x 9m (4m neutral zone), the following may be used:
 - **Reduced neutral zone court:** 16m x 9m (2m neutral zone)
 - **No neutral zone court:** 14m x 9m (no neutral zone - centre line only)

Rule 2 Balls

- Size 1 (6" foam) dodgeballs may be used in place of size 2 (6.5" cloth) or size 3 (7" cloth) dodgeballs.

Rule 4 Team

- Teams are not required to have designated ball retrievers, and may instead 'self-retrieve' by having an active player raise their hand and step off court. They are treated as a retriever (and thus cannot make attempts or be eliminated) until they return to court via the backline.

Rule 6 Uniforms

- Uniforms are not required to match.

Rule 9 Timing

- **Timing Adjustments:** Timing may be adjusted to suit an event timeline/player fitness levels.
- **Sets-Based Matches:** To simplify timings, matches may consist of a determined number of sets (for example, two halves of 5 sets) rather than a running clock.

Rule 15 Outs

- **Points:** Players do not leave the court when eliminated - the opposing team instead gains one point. The team with the most points at the end of the set wins that set.
- **Faceshots:** Players are not eliminated if they are hit in the face by a ball, unless they are ducking down and in movement when struck.

Rule 17 Valid and Invalid Attempts

- Players may only be given an invalid attempt sanction if the referee deems them to be intentionally missing their target (i.e. a player who has shown they cannot yet throw the ball far enough to reach opponents is not sanctioned)

Rule 28 Sacrifice Play

- A player who successfully completes a sacrifice play is rendered out the moment they go out of bounds and return to their fair territory to continue playing.