



AFL Junior Match Policy Under 12's

Purpose	To provide children with a fun, safe and positive experience through a well-structured match program that considers the level of maturation in motor, cognitive, psychological and emotional skill of children in this age group.
Spirit of the game	To give all available players a game of football in which they have every opportunity to gain possession of the ball and safely dispose of it by kick or handball.
The game	A home and away program will be introduced by AFL Canberra. Teams will be allocated premiership points and a ladder will be kept. Finals will be played.
Playing Ground	Full size. No Zones. However, flexibility is often needed, in particular, smaller fields may be required depending on the number of players per team, age and ability level.
Officials	Two Field Umpire and two Goal Umpires
The ball	Synthetic size 3 football (leather may be used if agreed by both coaches)
The team	Ideally 12 -16 players' a-side. Minimum playing numbers – 9 Maximum – 16 (see By-Law 6.11.1 for exceptions) Interchanges may take place at any time but all players must play at least half of the match. The spirit of the game is to give all available players a game of football. Therefore: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where difficulty occurs fielding full numbers, both coaches must agree to even up player numbers; • Excess players should be to the opposition team if they are unable to field the required numbers; Coaches should consider modifying the number per side to ensure all players participate. For instance, if planning 16-a-side but only 24 players in total are available, play 12-a-side.
Scoring	Any player can score
Playing time	Maximum of 4 x 15 minute quarters with no time-on. Break pattern (minutes) 3-8-3
Starting and restarting play	A ball-up is contested between two centre players of similar height as nominated by the umpire in the centre of the ground. Only centre-line players attend centre bounces (20 metres clearance from all other players). The umpire is to enforce a similar 20 metre area for field bounces.
Scrimmage and field ball ups	Field ball-ups are contested by two players of similar height selected by the umpire. Before the ball-up the umpire should clear the area by sending players back to their positions. No more than three players from each team shall be closer to the ball-up than about 20-metres.
Out of bounds	A free kick is awarded against the player who last kicked the ball. If there is doubt, or if the ball came off hands or a body, the umpire shall call ball-up five (5)-metres in from the boundary. 'Full possession' at the ball up is not permitted
Contact/bumping	As per the Laws of Australian football
Tackling	As per the Laws of Australian Football

Shepherds	As per the Laws of Australian Football
Barging	No barging or chopping past opponents is allowed. Fending off with an open hand to the body (provided it is not above the shoulders or in the back) is allowed.
Marking	A mark is awarded when a player catches the ball directly from another player's kick that has travelled at least 15 metres
Bouncing	Only 2 bounces are permitted.
Distance run	As per the Laws of Australian football (15 metres) While a player in possession of the ball is moving, the player must bounce the ball within 15 metres, irrespective of whether the player is running in a straight line or otherwise. As above, only two bounces are permitted before a player must dispose of the ball.
Kicking off the ground	Not permitted unless accidental Where a player deliberately kicks off the ground a free kick shall be awarded
Distance penalty	A 25m advancement may be awarded to a player after a mark or free kick if he or she has been hindered by an opposition player in the opinion of the umpire. This could include such acts as overstepping the mark, wasting time and using abusive language and behaviour.
Order-off rule	To be applied at the umpire's discretion. Bad language, poor sportsmanship and disrupting umpiring decisions should have a zero tolerance policy.
Coaches	The coach is not allowed on the ground during play but messages may be delivered by a runner. However, the runner must follow the procedure of going directly to the player involved, delivering the message and returning directly to the coaching bench.