

The following document is based on the Main Changes to the 2020 Rules of International Netball document circulated by the International Netball Federation.

We have attempted to highlight where changes, updates and additions have been made and whether these are minor or significant in how a match is played at grassroots level in England. For your convenience we have also added the time where this change, update or addition can be found in the England Netball 2020 Rules of Netball Update Video.

2020 Rule Change, Update or Addition	Impact on Grassroots Netball <b>Minor/Significant</b>	Timing in Rules Video
<b>Definitions - New and modified</b>	Minor - Updates to the definitions support additions to the rules book or changes to a particular sanction within a rule.	3.00
Failure to take the court: A team has less than 5 players present at the start of a period of play or a team delays taking the court after a stoppage.	Minor – Added due to rule change	3.00
Late Player: A player who is not ready to take the court at the start of a match or when the match is to be restarted after a stoppage or interval.	Minor – Added due to rule addition	3.00 and 23.17
Major infringement: infringement of the contact or obstruction rules, 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 or infringement of the foul play rule.	Minor – Added due to addition in text of sanctions for all Major Infringements	3.00
Pass: Action of a player throwing, batting or bouncing the ball to a player, dropping the ball or putting the ball on the ground and removing their hands.	Minor – Dropping the ball and putting the ball on the ground and player removing their hands added	3.00
Penalty pass: Sanction for a major infringement. A Goal Shooter or Goal Attack taking a penalty pass in the goal circle may either pass or shoot for goal.	Minor – Minor amendment to include the GS/GA may shoot or pass	3.00
Pivot: a movement where the player with the ball swivels either on the heel or on the ball of the landing foot while this maintains contact with the ground.	Significant – Added to help clarify what foot/feet movements are allowed and how these effect the Footwork and Obstruction rules	3.00 and 28.00
Reckless: without thinking or caring about the consequence of an action.	Minor – Added to Game Management Rule to help umpires distinguish between dangerous and reckless actions	3.00 and 54.35
Shot: a Goal Shooter or Goal Attack directs the ball towards the ring in an attempt to score a goal.	Minor – Minor amendment to add that only the GS/GA may attempt to score	3.00
<b>Match Length</b> If a team is awarded a penalty pass in its attacking goal circle before the timekeeper signals the end of play, the umpire will blow the whistle to end the period of play and advise the players that time is being extended for the penalty pass to be taken.	Minor – Umpires should blow to end play, inform the GA/GS that they may shoot and that play will be extended to do so. If the shot is successful the umpire signals the goal with the correct hand signal.	4.50
<b>Scorers</b> Record any caution, warning, suspension and ordering off.	Minor – Scorers are now required to also record Cautions as well as record Warnings, Suspensions and Ordering Off. England Netball will supply updated paperwork to do this.	8.28
<b>Procedures during Play</b> The umpires - When penalising an infringement, blow the whistle, state the infringement using the correct terminology [Appendix C], state the sanction given using the appropriate umpire hand signal [Appendix B] and indicate where the sanction is to be taken.	Minor – Umpires were always expected to do this but this addition means that umpires should follow this pattern. Updates to hand signals and the addition of Appendix C Umpire Terminology support this.	58.17 and 59.20
<b>Procedures for Game Management</b> The controlling umpire will ensure the co-umpire is aware of the action taken and the reason for it. If necessary the umpire may hold time to inform the co-umpire of the reason for the action (for Caution, Warning, and Suspension). When giving a warning, suspension or ordering off, the controlling umpire may hold time to confer with the co-umpire before deciding on the action to be taken.	Minor – This was always a feature of effective Game Management but is now required in the Rules.	50.35
<b>Sanctions</b> More detail has been added to some sanctions to state where the sanction is taken, to provide clarity.	Minor – All infringements listed in the Rules Book now have an associated sanction. In previous versions this was not always the case. In some cases there is more specific information regarding where the sanction is positioned.	10.15

<p><b>Failure to take the Court</b>  If a team fails to take the court, the sanction is:  Penalty pass which is advanced (unless the non-infringing team is disadvantaged). The whistle is blown to start play then the infringement is penalised. The captain is cautioned and the Centre stands out of play for the penalty pass.  1. The sanction may be advanced up to half a third (this may be to inside the goal circle if play was due to restart in the goal third).  2. The Centre stands out of play at the new position. If this is in the goal circle the Centre moves to the edge of this area.</p>	<p>Minor – The positioning of the sanction issued provides umpires more specific guidance.</p>	<p>12.25</p>
<p><b>Centre Pass</b>  At a centre pass, before the whistle was blown to end the quarter/half, the centre pass will be ruled not to have been taken if:  (a) The ball is still in the Centre’s hands and no player from that team has been penalised.  (b) The ball is knocked out of the Centre’s hands by a player from the opposing team.  (c) An intentional infringement by the opposing team has been penalised and the penalty pass has not been taken</p>	<p>Significant – This rule has been added to as some players were deliberately infringing so that the opposition would lose the next centre pass they were entitled to. This addition closes this loophole and provides considerations for Game Management.</p>	<p>17.20</p>
<p><b>Late Players (previously Late arrivals)</b>  If a player is late for the start or restart of a match and enters the court at an incorrect time the sanction is:  The player is sent from the court until the correct time for entry. 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.</p>	<p>Significant – This rule has been added as the rules Late Arrivals and Failure to Take the Court were often confused with each other. This rule makes the difference clearer and also provides a sanction and where it is taken if the player infringes the rule.</p>	<p>23.17</p>
<p><b>Stoppages</b>  If a player was in possession of the ball when time was held by the umpire for a stoppage, any player from that team allowed in the area may have possession of the ball for the restart of play.</p>	<p>Minor – Any player may now take possession of the ball after a stoppage whereas it was assumed that it had to be the same player.</p>	<p>24.00</p>
<p><b>Injury/Illness or Blood</b>  After a stoppage for injury/illness or blood, if the position has been left vacant when the match is restarted, the player concerned or a substitute may not enter the match while play is in progress.  Sanction: The player is sent from the court until the correct time for entry. Penalty pass where ball was when play was stopped and a player from the infringing team allowed in the area stands out of play for the penalty.</p>	<p>Minor – A sanction has now been added if a player incorrectly returns to play while the match is in progress.</p>	<p>24.15</p>
<p><b>Methods of playing the Ball</b>  A player may not:  (a) Kick the ball.  (b) Fall on the ball to gain possession.  (c) Strike the ball with a fist.  (d) Roll the ball to another player  NOTE: Deliberately has been removed.  A player who has possession of the ball, may not throw it deliberately at another player</p>	<p>Minor – It was stated by some members that Netball is a sport where players deliberately throw the ball each other throughout. The word deliberately has been removed and a player may not do any of these things even accidentally. Now, if a player deliberately throws the ball at a member of the opposition and causes harm or injury, the umpire may consider this dangerous play and deal with it through Game Management.</p>	<p>25.55</p>
<p><b>Passing distances</b>  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 those of the receiver.  Sanction: Free pass where the thrower was standing.</p>	<p>Minor – The addition of the word ‘hand’ allows for the varying sizes of players hands and avoids being overly specific about how far the ball must travel and common sense should be used.. The position of where the sanction is taken has been added.</p>	<p>26.52</p>
<p><b>Requirements for Taking a Shot</b>  A defending player may not: Cause the goalpost to move so as to interfere with a shot at goal.  NOTE: And cause it to miss has been removed</p>	<p>Minor – Causing the shot to miss has been removed as it was judged that any interference with the post was a disadvantage to the non-offending team regardless of the outcome of the shot.</p>	<p>30.10</p>

<p><b>Obstruction of a player in possession of the ball</b></p> <p>3 feet distance is measured on the ground from the nearest part of the landing foot of the player with the ball to the nearest part of the opposing player's nearer foot.</p> <p>(i) One foot landing by the player with the ball:</p> <p>(a) If the player remains in the landing position: from the nearest part of the landing foot to the nearest part of the nearer foot of the opposing player.</p> <p>(b) If the player lifts the landing foot: from the point where the nearest part of the landing foot was grounded to the nearest part of the nearer foot of the opposing player.</p> <p>(ii) Two feet landing by the player with the ball:</p> <p>(a) If the player does not move either foot: from the nearest part of the foot that is closer to the nearest part of the nearer foot of the opposing player.</p> <p>(b) If the player moves one foot: from the nearest part of the foot that remains grounded to the nearest part of the nearer foot of the opposing player.</p> <p>(iii) If the player with the ball pivots on the landing foot, the nearest part of the landing foot may change and the opposing player must adjust so that the nearest part of their nearer foot is not less than 0.9 m (3 ft) from the nearest part of where the landing foot is now grounded.</p> <p>(v) A defending player may be within 0.9 m (3 ft) of an opponent with the ball provided there is no interference with the throwing or shooting action of this player. The defending player may not make any effort to deflect or intercept the ball or defend the player with the ball.</p> <p><b>Obstruction of a player not in possession of the ball</b></p> <p>(i) A player who is within 0.9 m (3 ft) of an opponent (measured between the nearest part of the nearer feet on the ground) may stretch out arms to:</p> <p>(a) Catch, deflect or intercept a pass or a fake pass.</p> <p>(b) Catch, deflect or bat a rebound from an unsuccessful shot at goal.</p> <p>(c) Momentarily signal for a pass or to indicate the intended direction of a movement.</p> <p>(ii) A player who is within 0.9 m (3 ft) of an opponent (measured between the nearest part of the nearer feet on the ground) may not, whether attacking or defending, use movements that take the arms away from the body so as to limit the possible movement of an opponent, except as required for natural body stance.</p>	<p>Significant – A majority of this rule amendment is linked to a defending player being required to be at least 3ft away from the nearer part of the foot/feet of the player with the ball. If the attacking player with the ball pivots toward the defending player and lessens the distance between them the defending player is required to increase their distance to ensure they are consistently 3ft away from their opponent (distance is measured on the ground between the nearer part of the nearer feet).</p> <p>Minor - other minor amendments to this rule include grammatical changes to foot/feet.</p>	<p>31.34</p>
<p><b>Game management</b></p> <p>(i) To manage a match the umpires may, in addition to the normal sanction, use any of the following actions:</p> <p>(a) Caution a player: a player is advised that the behaviour specified must change.</p> <p>(b) Issue a warning to a player: a player is warned that suspension will follow if the player continues to infringe the foul play rule.</p> <p>(c) Suspend a player: a player who is suspended takes no part in play for 2 minutes playing time.</p> <p>(d) Order a player off: a player who is ordered off takes no further part in the match.</p> <p>(ii) Normally an umpire will work through these actions in the order indicated unless an offence is serious enough to require a higher level of Game Management to be applied immediately.</p> <p>(iii) A decision to give a caution, a warning, to suspend a player or order a player off will be considered to have been made jointly by both umpires and is binding on the co-umpire.</p> <p>(v) The co-umpire may hold time if an act of foul play is observed that is not seen by the controlling umpire and a sanction has not already been awarded for an infringement. Such cases should be limited to serious actions which require a warning, suspension or ordering off.</p> <p>(a) The co-umpire will immediately blow the whistle to hold time and provide details of the foul play to the controlling umpire with a recommendation of the action that should be taken.</p> <p>(b) The controlling umpire will make the final decision about any action to be taken and will restart play.</p>	<p>Significant – There have been a number of changes to the Game Management Rule and everyone should make themselves familiar with them.</p> <p>Cautions are now binding on the co-umpire and are considered to have been given jointly by both umpires.</p> <p>When issuing a Caution, Warning or Suspension the umpire must inform the player of what action will follow if they continue to infringe the foul play rule.</p> <p>A player will only receive one caution for a specific instance of foul play. If a caution is given for a different instance of foul play the umpire must consider if it may need escalating to a warning.</p> <p>A player will only be Warned once. Any instance of foul play after that will result in a Suspension.</p>	<p>39.20</p>

<p>13.1.1 Caution An umpire may give a caution to a player and advise that a specified behaviour must change. (i) Only one caution may be given to a player for a specific instance of foul play. (ii) If a player is given a caution for different instances of foul play, the umpire must consider escalating this to a warning.</p> <p>13.1.2 Warning If a player continues to infringe after receiving a caution for a specified behaviour, the umpire will issue a warning to the player. (i) Where appropriate a warning may be given even if no caution has been issued. (ii) Only one warning may be given to a player in a match.</p> <p>13.1.3 Suspension The umpire will suspend a player following a warning if the player continues to infringe the foul play rules. (i) Where appropriate the umpire may suspend a player even if no warning has been given. (ii) Only one suspension may be given to a player in a match.</p> <p>13.1.4 Ordering off The umpire will order a player off the court following a suspension if the player continues to infringe the foul play rules. (i) Where appropriate an umpire may order a player off the court even if no suspension has been given. (ii) A player who has been ordered off may not take any further part in the match. (iii) A player who is ordered off must immediately leave the court. (iv) The player reports to the appropriate team officials on the team bench and may not re-enter the field of play.</p> <p>13.2.2 Dangerous Play A player must not take any action, either reckless or dangerous that could affect the safety of another player. Such actions may include but are not limited to: (i) Punching, kicking, tripping or striking a player with any part of the body. (ii) Causing a player in the air to fall by moving into the path of that player. <b>Sanction: Penalty pass and the player is either warned, suspended or in a serious case ordered off.</b></p>	<p>A player will only be Suspended once. Any instance of foul play after that will result in an Order Off.</p> <p>References to accidental and deliberate dangerous play have been removed.</p> <p>The addition of the term reckless has been added to help umpires differentiate between actions that may be dangerous but were unintended and reckless actions where a player had a disregard of the consequences of their actions.</p> <p>In all cases a sanction has now been added to all infringements in the Game Management rule and in some cases where this is positioned has been specified.</p>	<p><b>50.35</b></p> <p><b>52.00</b></p>
<p><b>Appendix A – Match guidelines</b> Replace the Match Protocols and these have been rewritten</p>	<p>Significant – Everyone involved in our sport should read this new section. It incorporates the previous Match Protocols, the Effective Game Management document so that all text is now contained in the Rules Book. This section provides additional information for a number of rules and provides further guidance on how some of these are applied.</p>	<p><b>57.17</b></p>
<p><b>Appendix B – Umpire hand signals</b> Hand signal text has been changed for 10 Centre positioned incorrectly 11 Offside or breaking 12 Ball over a third or untouched centre pass</p>	<p>Minor – There have been some minor changes to the wording of the hand signals but no change to the hand signal itself.</p>	<p><b>58.17</b></p>
<p><b>Appendix C – Umpire terminology</b> Umpire terminology for infringements has been defined</p>	<p>Minor – Clear terminology has now been provided for a majority of infringements and this should be used. For any not covered the umpire should use the appropriate rule book heading.</p>	<p><b>59.20</b></p>