

WHEELCHAIR AFL

RULES OF PLAY



INTRODUCTION

Wheelchair AFL (WCAFL) has been developed to provide all Australian Football enthusiasts with a disability with a match play experience that has strong parallels with the traditional game. Importantly, WCAFL is easy to play, not too physically demanding and provides an environment whereby participation, enjoyment and safety are a priority.

WCAFL has many applications in the community, particularly in school and social environments. Fundamentally, WCAFL enables people of all ages and disability levels to participate in male, female or mixed competitions that fit around their busy lives and provide a social and fitness outlet. WCAFL is a totally inclusive sport.

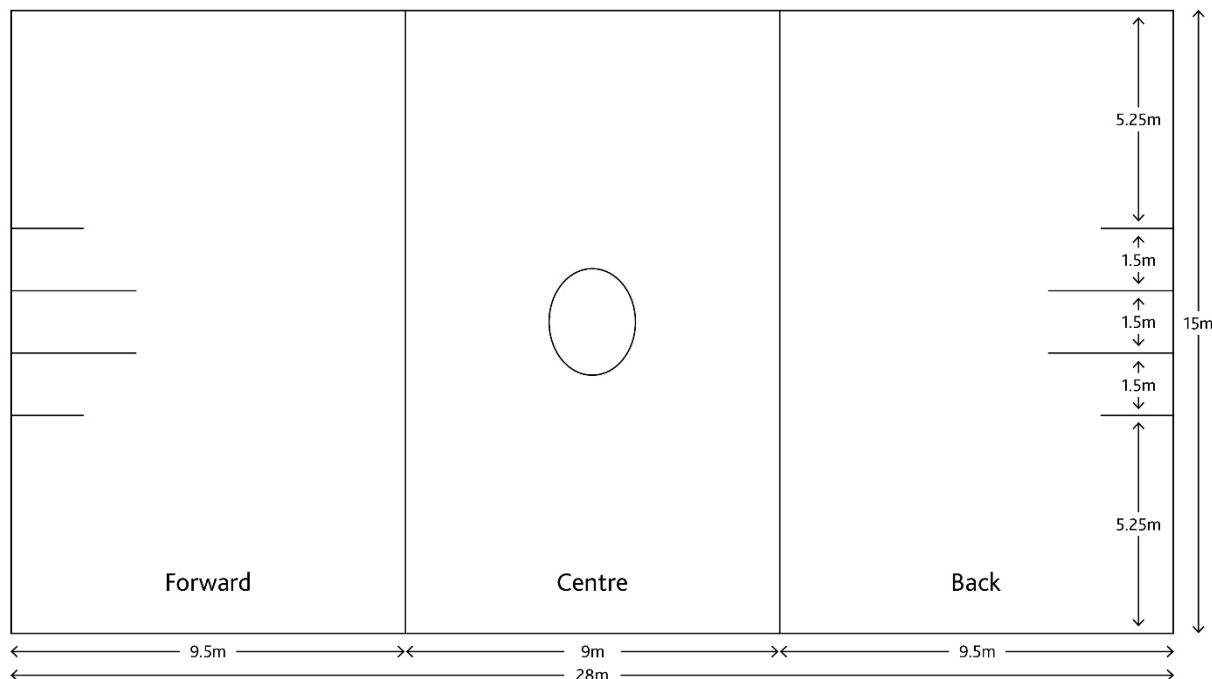
The game is played between two teams of five (5) with interchange players. The field is an indoor basketball or netball court (which can be modified depending on the age and ability level of participants) and is divided into three zones, a centre zone and two scoring zones. Teams' score by hand balling (kick) or passing the football into their attacking scoring zone to the designated scorer who can score a goal or behind by hand balling the ball between the goal posts. A mark is awarded when the ball has travelled 3 metres.

Note: There is no kicking of the ball in WCAFL. A hand ball is equivalent to a kick as per Australian Rules Football and a thrown ball equivalent to a pass. The ball may not be thrown over arm.



1. THE PLAYING SURFACE

- 1.1. The recommended playing field measures a maximum of 28 x 15 metres (basketball court) and is divided into three zones. The zones are advised to be set at approximately 9m for each zone (dependent upon court being used). Netball court markings can be used if already on the playing surface.



- 1.2. The playing field is marked with witch's hats, tape on the playing surface or similar markers on the boundary indicating where the change in zones occurs. The goal and point posts are to be placed as indicated in the diagram above. The heights of the point posts should be no less than 75cm with the height of the goal posts no less than 150 cm.

2. THE TEAM & ZONES

- 2.1. Five (5) players to take the field at any one time with up to three (3) interchange players.
- 2.2. Teams consist of two backs, one centre and two forwards.
- 2.3. Players are restricted to which zone they are enter.
- 2.4. Forwards can only move in the Forward or Centre zones.
- 2.5. Backs can only move in the Centre and Back zones.
- 2.6. Centre can move in all zones.
- 2.7. Only the designated forward can score.
- 2.8. The designated forward must wear a yellow arm band to distinguish them from other players.
- 2.9. Players may change position during interchange.
- 2.10. There must be a minimum of three players with a disability on the ground at all times unless an alternative is agreed to by the captains before the start of play.

3. THE BALL

- 3.1. An AFL size 5 synthetic football is recommended to be used; this ball makes it easy to handle for recreational participants and limit the kicking length due to the field size.

4. DURATION OF THE GAME

- 4.1. The game will consist of 4 x 10 minute quarters with no time on. The quarter time breaks will be of two (2) minutes in duration and half time interval will be five (5) minutes in duration. The Competition Manager may vary the duration of the match and intervals as needed.

5. MATCH OFFICIALS

- 5.1. It is recommended that each match has two (2) umpires, two (2) goal umpires and two (2) scores/timekeepers. These match officials should be from opposing sides in order to ensure fairness during the match. The umpires are the sole judge on the score to be awarded when goal umpires are unavailable.

6. START OF PLAY

- 6.1. Prior to the start of play, the umpire shall toss a coin with the 'Away' calling "the fall of the coin". The captain of the team who wins the toss shall choose the end to which their team kicks.
- 6.2. The game shall be started by a ball up between two centreline players in the centre of the ground (centre circle if playing on a basketball court); players must parallel to each other in the ball up. Each team is permitted one defender and one forward in the centre zone for the ball up.
- 6.3. The two competing players in the ball up cannot grab the ball or take possession of it until it has been touched by one of the centre players not involved in the ball up or bounced on the playing surface.

7. GAINING POSSESSION OF THE BALL

- 7.1. Players may take possession of the ball, by picking it up from the ground or whilst it is travelling through the air. Players may attempt to intercept the ball in flight; however they must not make contact with an opposing player.

8. POSSESSION

- 8.1. A player may stay in possession of the ball for a maximum distance involving 3 pushes/ change of direction of the wheelchair unless:
- 8.1.1. The player is touched with one hand (touch) by an opposing player or
- 8.1.2. The player is directed to dispose of the football by the umpire.
- 8.2. A player while in possession of the ball must keep one bottom cheek in contact with the seat at all times and both feet on the footplate of the wheelchair.

9. BALL TRANSITION

- 9.1. The ball may not be kicked or passed from the back zone directly into the forward zone without touching a player or the floor inside the centre zone.
- 9.2. If this occurs, a Free kick will be awarded to the opposing team at the point in which the ball entered the scoring zone.

10. DISPOSAL OF THE BALL

- 10.1. The ball must be disposed of by a kick or pass. A kick is considered to be a 'hand ball' as per Australian Rules Football. A pass is considered to be an under arm throw using either one or two hands. The player arm(s) throwing the ball must remain under shoulder height in order for the pass to be legal. A player may not throw the ball via an over arm action.
- 10.2. If a deliberate attempt to kick or pass the ball into an opposing player occurs to retain possession of the ball, a free kick will be awarded to the opposing team. Where the umpires are unsure if this has occurred deliberately, a ball up will ensure.
- 10.3. A player while in disposing of the ball must keep one bottom cheek in contact with the seat at all times and both feet on the footplate of the wheelchair.

11. BOUNCING THE BALL

- 11.1. When a player is moving whilst in possession of the ball he/she must bounce (includes touching the ball on the ground) the ball, or touch the wheelchair with the ball after 3 pushes/ change of direction. A player in possession may bounce the ball/ touch wheelchair only once. He/she must dispose of it by kick or pass and may not touch it again until it has been touched by another player.
- 11.2. Note: If a player fails to bounce or touch wheelchair the umpire will award a Free Kick to the opposing team.

12. DISPOSSESSING THE PLAYER IN POSSESSION

- 12.1. When a player in possession of the ball is touched by an opponent the opponent calls 'TOUCH' but is deemed to have had 'no prior opportunity' to dispose of the ball, the player must kick or pass within one push or three (3) seconds. Failure to do so will result in a Free Kick being awarded to the opposing team. The umpire will count out aloud so that the player in possession is aware of the time allocated to dispose of the ball.
- 12.2. When a player in possession of the ball is deemed to have had 'prior opportunity' to dispose of it when touched by an opposing player (either one- or two handed), the umpire will award a Free Kick to the opposing team.
- 12.3. An opponent may knock the ball out of the hands of the player with the ball, provided they only touch the ball.

13. SHEPHERING A PLAYER

- 13.1. A player shepherding a defending player must establish position and be stationary giving defending player space and time to avoid contact with player shepherding the player with the ball.

14. MARK

- 14.1. A 'Mark' is awarded if, in the opinion of the umpire, a player catches or takes control of the football after it has been kicked by another player after the ball has travelled three (3) metres.
- 14.2. When a player is awarded a 'mark' an opposing player may stand at the position on the playing surface where the mark was awarded, known as "the mark". No player (except for the player on the mark) may be closer than 2 metres away in any direction.
- 14.3. There is to be absolutely no body contact in a marking contest. The player in the front position has every opportunity to mark the ball, and the umpire may nominate which player has right-of-way to attempt a mark. A Free Kick will be awarded against any player initiating contact.
- 14.4. There may be accidental wheelchair contact.
- 14.5. The player taking the mark will have a reasonable opportunity to dispose of the ball or play on. If he/she delays, the umpire will place a three (3) second count for play to resume.
- 14.6. It is not a mark if the ball touches the ground or has been touched by another player during the period when the ball was kicked until it was caught or controlled by the player.

15. PLAYING ON

- 15.1. The umpire shall call "play on" in the following:
 - 15.1.1. When a player after taking a mark wheels more than one (1) metre over or around the spot "the mark" where he/she caught the ball.
 - 15.1.2. The ball after being kicked has been touched in transit.

16. SCORING

- 16.1. A designated forward can kick for goal within their scoring zone which is the forward third of the court. This can be during general play by receiving a kick or pass; or upon marking the ball and taking a set shot for goal. The player kicking for goal must be inside the scoring zone.
- 16.2. The field/ goal umpire will be the judge of whether the kick for goal was successful.
- 16.3. A player may kick for goal from a Free Kick (initiating contact, 'holding- the-ball' etc.), but not from a Turnover (going out-of-bounds).
- 16.4. A goal or behind is scored if the ball touches the ground and bounces through, provided that it is kicked by a player and has not been touched between making contact with the ground and passing through the goals.
- 16.5. A point is scored if:
 - 16.5.1. The ball hits the goal post.
 - 16.5.2. The ball is touched in flight by any player prior to going through the goal posts.
 - 16.5.3. The ball goes between the goal and point posts.
- 16.6. Scoring is as per the Laws of Australian Football.
- 16.7. However, in mixed competitions, the competition organiser will be able to determine if a goal scored by a female is worth 6 or 9 points as it may encourage greater female participation.

17. RESTART OF PLAY

- 17.1. After a goal, play is restarted in the centre of the field via a ball up.
- 17.2. If a behind (1 point) is scored the ball is required to be kicked back into play from between the goals by a defender.
- 17.3. "Playing on from a behind". A player may bounce the ball once or touch the ball on their wheelchair in the defensive goal square and then play on into the field of play.

18. OUT OF BOUNDS

- 18.1. When the ball goes out of bounds (ball completely over the line) or the wheelchair is outside of playing surface the nearest opponent shall kick the ball back into play.
- 18.2. If there is any doubt as to which team last touched the ball before it went out of bounds, the umpire shall call a ball-up 2 metres in from the boundary line.
- 18.3. A player carrying the ball may have one (1) wheel of the wheelchair outside the playing surface.

19. PLAYING THE ADVANTAGE

- 19.1. The field umpire instead of awarding a Free Kick may allow play to continue by calling "Advantage, Play On" in the case that the individual player in possession of the ball initiates the advantage.

20. FIELD BOUNCES/BALL UPS

- 20.1. The ball shall be thrown up when:
 - 20.1.1. The umpire is unsure which team touched the ball before it went out of bounds.
 - 20.1.2. The ball is trapped under a wheelchair.
 - 20.1.3. Two or more players from opposing sides hold onto the ball with no clear possession.
 - 20.1.4. A player falls out of their wheelchair during a contest.
 - 20.1.5. If the umpire calls a ball up during general play, all players in the zone where the ball up is held must start on the defensive side of their ruckman and not be within 2 metres of the contest.

21. FREE KICKS

- 21.1. A free kick will be awarded by the umpire in the following circumstances:
 - 21.1.1. While a player is competing for the possession of the ball or defending a player lifts their foot/feet off the footplate or their bottom off the seat of the wheelchair to gain an advantage
 - 21.1.2. Holding a player with their hands
 - 21.1.3. There is to be no contact or spoiling, players cannot:
 - 21.1.4. Hold an opponent with their hands.
 - 21.1.5. Push the player in the side, front or back.
 - 21.1.6. Deliberately bump/charge another player.
 - 21.1.7. Charge, fend off opponents
 - 21.1.8. Make contact with an opponent's wheelchair behind the rear axle.

22. FIVE METRE PENALTY

- 22.1. A five metre penalty may be awarded when a player:
 - 22.1.1. Over steps the 'Mark'.
 - 22.1.2. Engages in time-wasting.
 - 22.1.3. Uses abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language or behaviour towards an umpire.
 - 22.1.4. Enters the protected 2 metre area around a player which has been awarded a mark or Free Kick.
 - 22.1.5. Has not returned the football directly and on the full to the player awarded the Free Kick or Mark
 - 22.1.6. Engages in any other conduct for which a Free Kick would originally be awarded.

23. INJURED PLAYER

- 23.1. If a player cannot take a free kick that has been awarded due to injury or illness then another teammate may take the kick.

24. END OF GAME

- 24.1. Upon the completion of the final quarter, the team with the highest total score is deemed the winner. In the event of a drawn match, the competition manager may use 'extra time' to determine a winner.
- 24.2. Extra time will consist of two (2) five (5) minute halves, with a two (2) minute break between the end of the final quarter and the commencement of the first extra time half. This is in order to conduct interchange and confirm the score.
- 24.3. At the end of the first half, teams are to immediately change ends so that play can recommence. There is no break between the two halves.
- 24.4. At the end of the second half, if the scores are still tied, play will continue until the next score. The team that just scored will be deemed the winner.

25. WHEELCHAIRS SPECIFICATIONS

- 25.1. The wheelchair is considered to be part of the player
- 25.2. Must have two large wheels at the back and one or two small wheels at the front of the wheelchair.
- 25.3. The wheelchair may have one or two anti-tip devices utilising no more than a total of two small castors attached to either the frame or rear axle and located at the rear of the wheelchair.
- 25.4. The anti- tip devices must not protrude pass the line of the rear wheels and castors must be no more than 2cm off the floor.
- 25.5. Front fender bar must be no more than 11cm to centre of bar off the floor.
- 25.6. Rear wheels to be no more than a maximum of 27".
- 25.7. Maximum height of wheelchair frame including cushion 58cm.
- 25.8. Wheelchair must have no protruding footplates or parts.
- 25.9. Tyres may be coloured as long as they don't mark the field.
- 25.10. If a wheelchair has a rear bar it must be covered with a soft material.

26. **PLAYER'S WHEELCHAIR, JEWELLERY AND PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

- 26.1. A player shall not wear during a match:
- 26.1.1. Any form of jewellery.
 - 26.1.2. A field umpire may inspect a players hands or any protective equipment that a player intends to wear or use during the match.
 - 26.1.3. The field umpires will inspect player's wheelchairs before the start of play.

27. **SEND OFF RULE**

- 27.1. The process for penalties adjudicated by the umpire are as follows:
- 27.1.1. For crude language or incidental rough conduct, a verbal warning and Free Kick against them will be given for the first offence, with a 5 meter penalty to be given for a second offence.
 - 27.1.2. For verbal abuse or deliberate rough conduct, a 5 meter penalty will be given for the first offence.
 - 27.1.3. For additional offences of the above actions, the player will be sent off for the remainder of the match.
 - 27.1.4. If the umpire deems that a reportable offence has been committed, the offending player will be sent off and a set penalty will be provided.
 - 27.1.5. If a second reportable offence occurs during the competition, the player will be de-registered and not be able to participate in the competition any longer.
 - 27.1.6. Team captains will be informed of players who are to be sent off.
 - 27.1.7. The manager of the competition reserves the right to invoke heavier penalties if circumstances require. Repeat offenders will have their suspensions doubled from the previous time or double the prescribed penalty if a different incident has occurred with the same player.

28. **SET PENALTIES**

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|---|---------|
| 28.1. Using abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language towards or in relation to any participating player/umpire | 1 week |
| 28.2. For a second offence of 28.1 in the same season | 2 weeks |
| 28.3. Striking another person | 3 weeks |
| 28.4. Engaging in time wasting | 1 week |
| 28.5. Charging other person | 2 weeks |
| 28.6. Making contact another player after that player has taken a mark, disposed of the football or after the football is otherwise out of play | 1 week |
| 28.7. Engaging in rough play against an opponent which in the circumstances is unreasonable | 2 weeks |
| 28.8. Spitting at or on another player | 2 weeks |
| 28.9. Attempting to strike another person. | 1 week |

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