

IHF Handball Rules

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Rule 1: Playing Court

1. Dimensions:

1. Court is a **40m x 20m rectangle** with two goal areas and a playing area.
2. Safety zone: **1m along sidelines, 2m behind goal lines.**

2. Goal Specifications:

1. Height: **2m**, Width: **3m**.
2. Firmly attached with an **8cm square cross-section**, painted in contrasting bands.
3. Includes nets to retain the ball.

3. Court Lines:

1. Goal lines: **8cm wide**.
2. Other lines: **5cm wide** or marked by contrasting colors.

4. Key Markings:

1. **Goal Area:** 6m line with a 3m straight segment and two quarter circles (radius 6m).
2. **Free Throw Line:** 9m broken line (segments and gaps of 15cm).
3. **7m Line:** 1m line in front of the goal, 7m from the goal line.
4. **4m Line:** Goalkeeper's restraining line.

5. Central Features:

1. **Centre Line:** Divides the court in half.
2. **Throw-Off Area:** 4m diameter circle at the center.

6. Substitution Line:

1. Extends 4.5m from the center line, marked with a 15cm extension inside and outside the sidelines.

Rule 2 Playing Time, Final Signal, and Time-Out

- **Playing Time:**
 - 16+ years: Two halves of 30 minutes with a 10-minute halftime break.
 - 12-16 years: Two halves of 25 minutes.
 - 8-12 years: Two halves of 20 minutes.

Halftime can extend to 15 minutes under certain regulations.
- **Overtime: Played if tied and a winner is needed.**
 - Two 5-minute halves with a 1-minute halftime.
 - Second overtime if needed.
 - If still tied, 7-metre throws decide the winner.
 - 7-Metre Throw Rules:
 - Five players per team, alternating throws.
 - Coin toss determines first or last throw.
- **Continues until a goal difference occurs.**
- **Game Start and End:**
- **Starts with referee's whistle.**
- **Ends with final signal or timekeeper's whistle.**
- **Time-Outs:**
- **Obligatory for:**
 - Suspensions or disqualifications.
 - Team-requested time-outs (1 per half).

Rule 3: The Ball

- **Material and Shape:**
 - Made of **leather or synthetic material**.
 - Must be **spherical** with a **non-shiny, non-slippery surface**.
- **Categories of Handballs:**
 - **Handballs with resin:**
 - **Men (16+ years):** 58-60 cm, 425-475 g (Size 3).
 - **Women (14+ years) and Boys (12-16 years):** 54-56 cm, 325-375 g (Size 2).
 - **Girls (8-14 years) and Boys (8-12 years):** 50-52 cm, 290-330 g (Size 1).
 - **Handballs without resin:**
 - **Men (16+ years):** 55.5-57.5 cm, 400-425 g (Size 3).
 - **Women (14+ years) and Boys (12-16 years):** 51.5-53.5 cm, 300-325 g (Size 2).
 - **Girls (8-14 years) and Boys (8-12 years):** 49-51 cm, 290-315 g (Size 1).

Rule 4: The Team, Substitutions, Equipment, Player Injuries

- **Team Composition:**

A team may consist of up to **14 players**.

A maximum of **7 players** (including the goalkeeper) can be on the court simultaneously.

Remaining players serve as substitutes.

- **Player Roles:**

Goalkeeper can switch to a court player role and vice versa, provided they are identified as such.

If no goalkeeper is used, up to **7 court players** are allowed.

- **Minimum Players:**

Teams must have **at least 5 players** to start a game.

Game can continue with fewer than 5 players; referees decide whether to suspend the game.

- **Substitutions:**

Player count can increase to **14 players** during the game, including overtime.

Goalkeeper substitutions follow specific rules (Rules 4:4–4:7).

Rule 5: The Goalkeeper

- **Ball Handling:**
 - Can touch the ball with any part of the body within the goal area.
 - Can move with the ball inside the goal area without court player restrictions.
- **Leaving the Goal Area:**
 - Can leave the goal area without the ball and participate in the game, but will be subject to court player rules.
 - Once any part of the body crosses the goal-area line, the goalkeeper is considered outside the goal area.
- **Ball Movement:**
 - Can leave the goal area with the ball and play it again in the playing area if not controlled.
- **Goalkeeper Restrictions**
- **Endangering Opponents:**
 - Cannot endanger the opponent during defensive actions.
- **Ball Handling Outside the Goal Area:**
 - Cannot leave the goal area with the ball under control (results in a free throw).
 - Cannot touch the ball outside the goal area when stationary or rolling.
 - Cannot take the ball back into the goal area if it is outside.
 - Cannot re-enter the goal area from the playing area with the ball.
 - Cannot touch the ball with the foot or below the knee when moving toward the playing area.
- **Goalkeeper's Restraining Line:**
 - Must not cross the **4-metre line** before the 7-metre throw is executed.

Rule 6: Goal Area

- **Goal Area Entry:**
- Only the **goalkeeper** is allowed in the goal area.
- A court player enters the goal area if they touch it with any part of their body.
- **Penalties for Entering the Goal Area:**
- **Goalkeeper throw** if the attacking player enters the goal area with the ball or gains an advantage (12:1).
- **Free throw** if the defending player enters and gains an advantage but doesn't destroy a scoring chance (13:1b).
- **7-metre throw** if the defending player enters and destroys a clear scoring chance (14:1a).
- **When Entering the Goal Area is Not Penalized:**
- When a player enters the goal area after playing the ball, provided it doesn't create a disadvantage.
- When a player enters the goal area without the ball and doesn't gain an advantage.
- **Ball in the Goal Area:**
- **Out of play** when the goalkeeper controls the ball.
- If the ball rolls on the floor inside the goal area, only the goalkeeper may touch it.
- A **free throw** is awarded if a teammate of the goalkeeper touches the rolling ball.
- Ball remains in play if it passes through the goal area into the playing area.
- **Playing the Ball into Own Goal Area:**
- **Goal** if the ball enters the goal.
- **Free throw** if the ball rests in the goal area or if the goalkeeper touches the ball without it entering the goal.
- **Throw-in** if the ball goes out over the outer goal line.