



4 v 4 Rules

1 Introduction

Netball is an exciting, fast and skilful game of fair contest.

Mother Earth futureFERNS is Netball New Zealand's official junior Netball programme for Years 1 to 8 children. Netball New Zealand (NNZ) has revamped junior Netball after considering the findings from the Junior Netball Review, academic research, methods used in other sports, feedback from pilots run in Netball Centres throughout the country and findings from local research.

Children are not mini-adults and it is important to meet their needs, taking into consideration their physical, cognitive and social abilities.

The **Mother Earth futureFERNS** programme is focused on igniting a lifelong love of the game.

Mother Earth futureFERNS provides progressive development stages for players new to Netball. Year 1 & 2 children play 4 v 4, Year 3 & 4 play 5 v 5 Year 5 & 6 play 6 v 6 and Year 7 & 8 children play 7 v 7.

International Rules of Netball

Rule **15.5 Matches for Young Players** states:

"For primary school age children, who are just beginning to play Netball, it is likely more extensive modifications may be desirable to allow for differences in stature, strength and skill level. Thus a lower goalpost or a smaller ball may be used. A modified game with variations to the playing rules may be developed to meet the needs of such players".

NNZ has modified the playing rules to allow the game to grow with the players.

The 4 v 4 game is fun and provides players with lots of touches on the ball to enhance skill development. With no positions on court it means the game is less complicated for children and easier for coaches to ensure that the players develop the fundamental movement and basic Netball skills relevant and provide equal opportunities.

2 Definitions

A

Attacking team: team that has possession of the ball

B

Bench player: a player who is on the team bench at a given time during a match

C

Court surround: area immediately surrounding the court

D - E

Defending team: team not in possession of the ball

During play: at any time during a quarter/half except when time is held

F

Fake pass: player makes passing action but does not release ball

Field of play: area consisting of the court and the court surround

Free pass: sanction for a minor infringement

Full-time: end of the specified playing time for a match (16 minutes)

G

Game: the Game of Netball

Goal end: end of the court where a team shoots for goal

H

Half-time: interval between the first and second half

I

INF: the International Netball Federation

Infringement: action contrary to the Rules that may be penalised by a Junior Co-ordinator or Star Helper

L

Landing foot (one foot landing): foot on which a player either first lands after catching the ball or is standing on when the ball is caught

Landing foot (two feet landing): the foot NOT first moved when a player either catches the ball standing on both feet or lands on both feet simultaneously after catching the ball

M

Match: contest between two teams played according to the Rules of the Game

Match officials: Junior Co-ordinators or Star Helpers

N

O

Opponent: player from the opposing team

P - R

Pass: action of player throwing, batting or bouncing the ball to a player

Penalty pass: sanction for a major infringement or for foul play

Period of play: a half in a match

Pivot: a movement where the player with the ball swivels on either the heel or the ball of the landing foot without gaining any ground

Playing time: time elapsed in a quarter/half not including any stoppages

Possession: player holds the ball with one or both hands

S

Sanction: action taken by an umpire (free pass or penalty pass) against an infringing player, team official or bench player



Shot: a pass that directs the ball towards the hula hoop/ ring in an attempt to score a goal

Substitution: when a player moves from the team bench to replace a player on the court

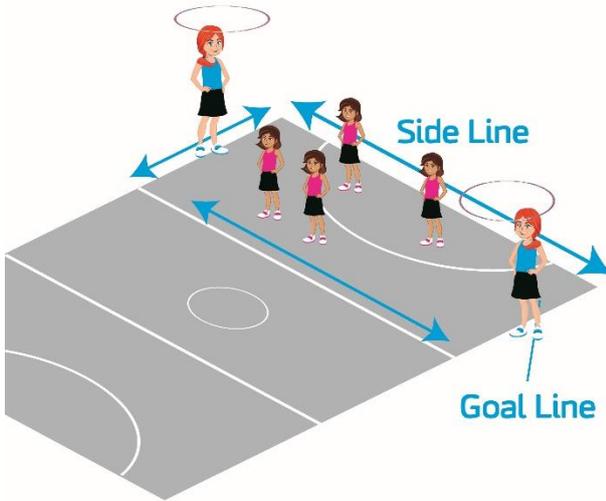
T

Team: up to 6 players (of whom a maximum of 4 are on the court at any time)

Team bench: place where any players not on the court are located during a match

3 Technical Specifications

3.1 COURT AND RELATED AREAS

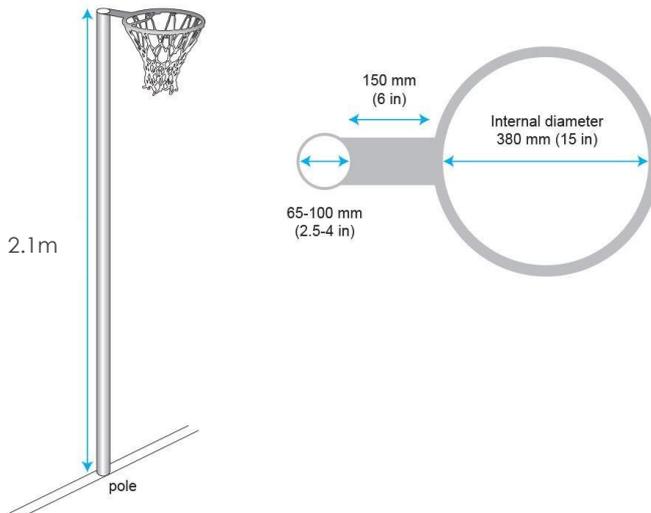


3.1.1 Court

The court is rectangular in shape and is level and firm.

- (i) The two longer sides are called side lines and measure 15.25 m (50 ft).
- (ii) The two shorter sides are called goal lines and measure 10 m (50 ft).

3.2 GOALPOSTS



Goal posts should measure 2.1m from the ground. The two posts are adjustable and should be placed at the centre point of the goal third side lines. If this is unattainable, a hula hoop may be held by a parent or older sibling. If using portable hoops ensure that they have weights on them so that they are stable, nets should also preferably be fitted onto the portable goal posts

3.3 BALL



A playground ball e.g. 20cm textured surface ball.

4 Match Duration

4.1 GAME LENGTH

- (i) Each game should be made up of 2 x 8 minute halves, with a two minute interval in between.
- (ii) Teams can change shooting end at half-time but if too confusing, this isn't required.

5 Match Personnel

5.1 TEAM

- (i) The game may be played by mixed or single sexed teams.
- (ii) A maximum of six players per team is recommended and teams have rolling substitutions that can be made at any time throughout the game.
- (iii) During a game, four players from a team may be on the court at any one time.
- (iv) Players may register as individuals or a team.

5.1.1 Players

- (i) During a game, players must wear:
 - (a) Suitable sports footwear
 - (b) Branded **Mother Earth futureFERNs** bibs must be worn above the waist, front and back.
- (ii) Players may not wear anything that could endanger themselves or other players, specifically:
 - (a) No adornment or jewellery may be worn
 - (b) A medical alert bracelet may be worn provided it is covered with tape
 - (c) Fingernails must be short and smooth
 - (d) Hair must be suitably tied back.

5.1.2 Team Officials

- (i) A team may have up to two team officials. These will include a Junior Co-ordinator/Star Helper or coach.

5.2 GAME OFFICIALS

The game will be assisted by either the Junior Co-ordinator/Star Helper or coach. This person will assist the players and support them during play.

6 Game Procedures

6.1 GAME PROCEDURES

6.1.1 Procedures for the Start of Play

One player from each team will use paper, scissors, or rock to determine who will start with the ball at the start of each half.

Play starts with a throw in behind the opposition's goal line (side line of full court).

After a goal has been scored, play continues with a goal line throw-in. The player throwing in must stand close to the line and cannot enter onto the court until the ball has been received on court. The Junior Co-ordinator or Star Helper may say "play" if needed and the ball must be released within 5 seconds with players obeying the footwork rule.

6.1.2 Procedures during Play

The Junior Co-ordinators / Star Helpers move inside the court. Their role is to ensure the players are abiding by the rules and assisting them with encouragement of pivoting, grounding one foot, and obstruction.

It is preferred that the game is controlled by direction given by the Junior Co-ordinator or Star Helper rather than a whistle.

6.1.3 Procedures for Out of Court

The ball is deemed out of court when it, or a player touching it, touches the ground or any object out of the playing court. A throw-in is awarded to the opposing team. The line counts as part of the court.

If the ball hits the goal post but bounces back into the field of play, play continues.

The throw-in is taken from where the ball crossed the line. The pass must be made within 5 seconds, and can be taken by any player on court. The player must stand behind but as close to the line as possible. Junior Co-ordinators and Star Helpers should ensure that a different player takes the throw in to provide equal opportunities.

6.2 TEAM OFFICIAL PROCEDURES

- (i) Team officials and bench players may encourage players/team.
- (ii) Team officials and bench players must not use offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures.

7 Sanctions

7.1 TYPES OF SANCTIONS

During a match the Junior Co-ordinators may penalise an infringement and award a sanction to the non-offending team as follows:

- (i) Free pass – awarded for minor infringements e.g. excessive continual stepping
- (ii) Penalty pass – awarded for major infringements e.g. contact

7.1.2 Conditions for Free Pass

A player taking a free pass may not shoot for goal.

Sanction: *Free pass – no goal is scored*

7.1.3 Conditions for Penalty Pass

- (i) The infringer must stand out of play.
 - (a) The infringer may not take part in play until the ball has been released or make any attempt to intercept the penalty pass
 - (b) The penalty pass will be retaken if the infringer interferes with it.
- (ii) If an infringer is substituted or changes positions before a penalty pass is taken, the player who takes the position of the penalised player stands out of play.

7.2 ADVANTAGE

The Junior Co-ordinators / Star Helpers should apply advantage as much as possible to allow the attacking teams ball to flow. Junior Co-ordinators / Star Helpers should guide players e.g. “you are too close Hannah, move to a space” or count down from 5 to encourage the player to pass the ball.

8 Starting Play

8.1 ORGANISATION FOR START OF PLAY

- (i) For each half:
 - (a) Players positioned themselves anywhere in the field of play.

- (ii) If a team doesn't have enough players, they may borrow a player from another team. Teams must have a minimum of three players on court.

8.2.1 Positioning of Players for the Start of Play

- (i) The team in possession of the ball stands behind the goal line.
- (ii) All other players are free to move to move in the field of play.

8.3 OUT OF COURT

8.3.1 Ball Out of Court

- (i) The ball is out of court when:
 - (a) It touches the ground outside the court
 - (b) It touches any person or object in contact with the ground outside the court.

Action: *Throw in by team that did not touch the ball last on court*

- (ii) A ball is not out of court if it hits any part of the goalpost and rebounds into the court.

8.4 THROW IN

When the ball is ruled to be out of court, play restarts with a throw in.

8.4.1 Requirements for Taking Throw In

- (i) The player taking the throw in:
 - (a) Stands outside the court with at least one foot within 15 cm (6 in) of the line at the point indicated by the umpire (this foot is considered 'the landed foot')
 - (b) Ensures all other players are on the court before releasing the ball
 - (c) Throws the ball within 5 seconds of taking up this position
- (ii) The task of the throw must rotate within the team

8.5 TOSS UP

A toss up is taken to restart play when:

- (i) Two opposing players gain possession of the ball simultaneously (with one or both hands)
- (ii) Two opposing players contact each other simultaneously
- (iii) After a stoppage, the umpires are unable to determine which player had the ball or the ball was on the ground when play stopped.

8.5.1 Position for Toss Up

The toss up is taken between the two opposing players concerned at the point where the incident occurred

8.5.2 Position of Players for Toss Up

- (i) Before taking the toss up the umpire checks the two players are positioned as follows:
 - (a) the players face each other and their goal ends
 - (b) there is a distance of 1.0m between the nearer feet of the players
 - (c) their arms are straight with hands at sides.
- (ii) The two players remain stationary until the whistle is blown as the Junior Coordinator/Star Helper or coach releases the ball.

Sanction: *Re-set the toss up*
- (iii) All other players may stand or move anywhere within their playing areas provided they do not interfere with the toss-up.

8.5.3 Outcome of Toss Up

- (i) Either player may catch the ball or bat it in any direction except directly at another player.

9 During the Match

9.1 SUBSTITUTIONS AND TEAM CHANGES

- (i) Both teams have the right to make rolling substitutions and/or team changes:
 - (a) At any stage of the game, with the players meeting at the side line and high fiving
 - (b) During an interval
 - (c) When play is stopped for injury/illness or blood.
- (ii) There is no limit to the number of substitutions which can be made by a team provided that the team does not exceed nine players.

9.2 LATE ARRIVALS

- (i) There are no penalties for late arrivals providing this requirement is met.
- (ii) A player who arrives after the game has started must advise the Junior Co-ordinator or Star Helper before taking the court.

9.3 STOPPAGES

- (i) The Junior Co-ordinators/Star Helpers hold time for injury/illness upon appeal from a player or coach, or for blood and may hold time for an emergency or such other circumstances as they consider appropriate. During a stoppage:
 - (a) For injury/illness of a player or blood: all players not affected remain on the court
 - (b) In an emergency or other circumstances: the Junior Co-ordinator/Star Helpers decide whether the players leave the court or not.
- (ii) Play restarts from where the ball was when play stopped.

9.3.1 Injury/Illness or Blood

- (i) The Junior Co-ordinators/Star Helpers hold time for blood when noticed or for injury/illness when requested by an on-court player
- (ii) The time can be held for any necessary amount of time, and the player must be removed from the court while being attended to, but may go back on after the wound has been covered adequately.
- (iii) Any blood on the ball or the court must be cleaned before play restarts and any bloodstained clothing replaced.
- (iv) During the stoppage both teams may make substitutions and/or team changes, provided these are completed within the time allowed for the stoppage by the umpires.

9.3.2 Other Stoppages:

- (i) The umpires may hold time or extend an interval if considered appropriate. Examples for which time may be held include (but are not limited to):
 - (a) Emergencies such as serious injury/illness of a player, injury/illness of an umpire or technical official/s, the equipment, the court, the weather or technical equipment
 - (b) Retrieving the ball
 - (c) Disciplining a player, team official or bench player.
- (ii) The umpires decide the length of such a stoppage and ensure play restarts as soon as possible.
- (iii) Team officials are not permitted on the court during a stoppage other than specified in Rule 9.3.1 (iii).

9.4 PLAYING THE BALL

9.4.1 Methods of Playing the Ball

- (i) To gain possession a player may:
 - (a) Catch the ball with one or both hands
 - (b) Roll the ball to oneself
 - (c) Catch the ball if it rebounds from the goalpost.
- (iii) A player must:
 - (a) Pass or shoot the ball within 5 seconds. The Junior Co-ordinator or Star Helper can help players by counting down from five, to provide awareness of release time.
- (iii) A player may not:
 - (a) Deliberately kick the ball
 - (b) Place their hands on the ball while held by an opponent
 - (c) Throw the ball while sitting or lying on the ground
 - (d) Regain possession of the ball, having dropped or thrown it before it has been touched by another player.
 - (e) Bounce the ball once before either catching the ball or batting or bouncing it to another player.
 - (f) Strike the ball with their fist

Sanction: *Free pass*

- (ii) A player may not use the goalpost to regain balance or as a support to recover the ball.

Sanction: *Free pass*

9.5 PASSING DISTANCES

9.5.1 Short Pass

- (i) 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 as it moves from the hands of the thrower to those of the receiver.

Sanction: *Free pass*

- (ii) If two players from the same team gain possession of the ball in quick succession, the second player's hands must be removed or it will be deemed to be a short pass.
- (iii) If two opposing players gain possession of the ball in quick succession, the Junior Coordinator/Star Helper or coach calls 'possession', indicates the player who caught the ball first and allows play to continue.

9.6 FOOTWORK

9.6.1 Landing

Players are encouraged to be stationary once they have received the ball, landing on either one or two feet.

Players may take additional steps to gain balance, but walking toward their passing option should be discouraged.

The Junior Co-ordinator or Star Helper may ask the player to move back to the original point of landing or encourage players to keep the first grounded foot.

It is important players are supported by the Junior Co-ordinator/Star Helpers in developing players' stable body position to pass or shoot.

If the player continues taking 3-4 steps, a free pass is awarded to the opposing team.

Sanction: *Free pass*

9.7 OFFSIDE

There is no offside in 4 v 4 modified Netball.

10 Scoring a Goal

10.1 REQUIREMENTS FOR SCORING A GOAL

A goal is scored when the ball is thrown or batted above and completely through the ring/hula hoop by any player on the court.

Players who are unsuccessful after a couple of attempts are to be encouraged to pass the ball to another team member who has not had a shot.

10.2 REQUIREMENTS FOR TAKING A SHOT

- (i) In taking a shot at goal the player must:
 - (a) Shoot within 5 seconds of catching the ball
 - (b) Obey the footwork rule.

Sanction: *Free pass*

11 Obstruction

Players are not allowed to defend or mark the player with the ball. Players are to be encouraged to move back and keep hands down by Junior Co-ordinator or Star Helper.

12 Contact

12.1 CONTACT

Players may not push, trip, knock, bump or hold an opponent, regardless of being deliberate or accidental.

The Junior Co-ordinator or Star Helper should discourage players from making physical contact with any other player or the ball, and a sanction should be awarded if contacting continues or is overly aggressive after discouragement and explanation.

Sanction: *Penalty pass*