

# Handball Rules

## The Playing Court

The playing court is a 40 meter long and 20 meter wide rectangle, consisting of two goal areas and a playing area. The longer boundary lines are called side lines, and the shorter ones are called goal lines.

There should be a safety zone surrounding the playing court, with a width of at least 1 meter along the side lines and 2 meters behind the goal lines.

A goal is placed in the center of each goal line. The goals must be firmly attached to the floor or to the walls behind them. They have an interior height of 2 meters and a width of 3 meters.

All lines on the court are fully part of the area that they enclose.

**Goal-area line.** In front of each goal there is a goal area. The goal area is defined by the goal-area line (6-meter line)

The free throw line (9-meter line) is a broken line, drawn 3 meters outside the goal-area line.

The 7-meter line is a 1 meter long line, directly in front of the goal. It is parallel to the goal line and 7 meters away from it

The goalkeeper's restraining line (the 4-meter line) is a 15cm long line, directly in front of the goal. It is parallel to the goal line and 4 meters away from it

The center line connects the midpoints of the two side lines

The substitution line (a segment of the side line) for each team extends from the center line to a point at a distance of 4.5 meters from the center line.

The normal playing time for all teams with players of age 16 and above is 2 halves of 30 minutes. The half-time break is normally 10 minutes.

Overtime is played, following a 5-minute break, if a game is tied at the end of the regular playing time and a winner has to be determined. The overtime period consists of 2 halves of 5 minutes, with a 1-minute half-time break.

The playing time begins with the referee's whistle for the initial throw-off. It ends with the automatic final signal from the public clock or from the timekeeper. In principle, the referees decide when the clock is to be stopped and started in connection with a time-out.

The ball size

- 58-60cm and 425-475g (IHF Size 3) for Men and for Male Youth (over age 16) ;

A team consists of up to 14 players. No more than 7 players may be present on the court at the same time. The remaining players are substitutes. At all times during the game, the team must have one of the players on the court designated as a goalkeeper.

Substitutes may enter the court, at any time and repeatedly without notifying the timekeeper/scorekeeper, as long as the players they are replacing have already left the court. The players involved in the substitution shall always leave and enter the court over their own team's substitution line.

A faulty substitution shall be penalized with a 2-minute suspension for the guilty player.

The goalkeeper is *allowed* to :

- touch the ball with any part of his body while in the act of defense inside the goal area
- move with the ball inside the goal area, without being subject to the restrictions applying to court players
- leave the goal area without the ball and participate in the game in the playing area; when doing so, the goalkeeper becomes subject to the rules applying to players in the playing area; The goalkeeper is considered to have left the goal area as soon as any part of the body touches the floor outside the goal-area line.

The goalkeeper is *not allowed* to :

- leave the goal area with the ball under control; re-enter the goal area from the playing area with the ball.

## **The Goal Area**

Only the goalkeeper is allowed to enter the goal area. When a court player enters the goal area, the decisions shall be as follows :

- a) goalkeeper-throw when a player of the team in possession enters the goal area in possession of the ball or enters without the ball but gains an advantage by doing so
- b) free-throw when a court player of the defending team enters the goal area and gains an advantage, but without destroying a chance of scoring
- c) 7-meter throw when a court player of the defending team enters the goal area and because of this destroys a clear chance of scoring

Entering the goal area is not penalized when:

- a) a player enters the goal area after playing the ball, as long as this does not create a disadvantage for the opponents;
- b) a player from one of the teams enters the goal area without the ball and does not gain an advantage by doing so;

## Playing the Ball

It is *permitted* to :

- throw, catch, stop, push or hit the ball, by using hands (open or closed), arms, head, torso, thighs, and knees; It is *not* permitted to touch the ball with a foot or leg below the knee
- hold the ball for a maximum of 3 seconds, also when it is lying on the floor
- take a maximum of 3 steps with the ball

while standing or running:

a) bounce the ball once and catch it again with one or both hands;

b) bounce the ball repeatedly with one hand (dribble), and then catch it or pick it up again with one or both hands;

c) roll the ball on the floor repeatedly with one hand, and then catch it or pick it up again with one or both hands.

As soon as the ball thereafter is held in one or both hands, it must be played within 3 seconds or after no more than 3 steps

We can move the ball from one hand into the other one;

## *Passive Play*

It is not permitted to keep the ball in the team's possession without making any recognizable attempt to attack or to shoot on goal. This is regarded as passive play, which is to be penalized with a free-throw against the team in possession of the ball unless the passive tendency ceases.

In certain situations the referees can call a free throw against the team in possession also without any prior forewarning signal, e.g. when a player intentionally refrains from trying to utilize a clear scoring chance.

The application of the rules regarding passive play has the objective of preventing unattractive methods of play and intentional delays in game.

## Playing the Ball

It is *permitted* to :

- use the body to obstruct an opponent, even when the opponent is not in possession of the ball;
- make body contact with an opponent, when facing him and with bent arms, and maintain this contact in order to monitor and follow the opponent.

It is *not permitted* to :

pull or hit the ball out of the hands of an opponent; restrain or hold (body or uniform), push, run or jump into an opponent; endanger an opponent (with or without the ball).

A goal is scored when the entire ball has completely crossed the goal line. A goal shall be awarded if there is a violation of the rules by a defender but the ball still goes into the goal.

### **The Throw-Off**

At the start of the game, the throw-off is taken by the team that wins the coin toss and elects to start with the ball in its possession. After a goal has been scored play is resumed with a throw-off taken by the team that conceded the goal.

The teammates of the thrower are not allowed to cross the center Line. However, for the throw-off after a goal has been scored, the opponents of the thrower are allowed to be in both halves of the court. In both cases, however, the opponents must be at least 3 meters away from the player taking the throw-off

### **The Throw-In**

The thrower must stand with a foot on the side line and remain in a correct position until the ball has left his hand. There is no limitation for the placement of the second foot. While the throw-in is being taken, the opponents may not be closer than 3 meters to the thrower. They are, however, always allowed to stand immediately outside their goal-area line even if the distance between them and the thrower is less than 3 meters then.

### **The Goalkeeper-Throw**

A goalkeeper-throw is awarded when:

the ball is stationary on the floor in the goal area, when the ball has crossed the outer goal line, after having been touched last by the goalkeeper or a player of the opposing team. The goalkeeper-throw is taken by the goalkeeper without whistle signal from the referee

### **Free-Throw**

The free-throw is normally taken without any whistle signal from the Referee. When a free throw is being taken, the opponents must remain at a distance of at least 3 meters from the thrower. They are, however, allowed to stand immediately outside their goal-area line if the free-throw is being taken at their free-throw line

## **The 7-Meter Throw**

A 7-meter throw is awarded when:

a) a clear chance of scoring is illegally destroyed anywhere on the court

The 7-meter throw is to be taken as a shot on goal, within 3 seconds after a whistle signal from the referee. The player who is taking the 7-meter throw must take up a position behind the 7-meter line, not further away than 1 meter behind the line. After the whistle signal from the referee, the thrower must not touch or cross the 7-meter line before the ball has left his hand. When a 7-meter throw is being executed, the teammates of the thrower must position themselves outside the free-throw line, and remain there until the ball has left the thrower's hand. When a 7-meter throw is being executed, the players of the opposing team must remain outside the free-throw line and at least 3 meters away from the 7-meter line, until the ball has left the thrower's hand. The 7-meter throw is to be retaken, unless a goal is scored, if the goalkeeper crosses his restraining line, i.e. the 4-meter line

## **General Instructions for the Execution of the Throws (Throw-Off, Throw-In, Goalkeeper-Throw, Free-Throw and 7-Meter Throw)**

During the execution, except in the case of the goalkeeper-throw, the thrower must have one part of a foot in constant contact with the floor until the ball is released.

## **The Punishments**

### **Warning**

A warning *shall* be given for :

- \* such fouls which are to be punished progressively;
- \* unsportsmanlike conduct by a player or team official

### **Suspension**

A suspension (2 minutes) *shall* be given :

For a faulty substitution, for repeated fouls of the type that they are to be punished progressively; for repeated unsportsmanlike conduct by a player, on the court or outside the court;

### **Disqualification**

A disqualification *shall* be given :

For fouls which endanger the opponent's health; for seriously unsportsmanlike conduct by a player or a team official, on or outside the court, because of a third suspension to the same player.

The disqualification of a player or a team official, on or off the court, during the playing time, always carries with it a 2-minute suspension for the team. This means that the team's strength on the court is reduced by one. A disqualification reduces the number of players, or officials, which is available to the team. The team is, however, allowed to increase the number of players on the court again following the expiration of the 2-minute suspension.

### **Exclusion**

An exclusion *shall* be given :  
when a player is guilty of an assault during the playing time, on or outside the playing court. Exclusion is always for the entire remainder of the playing time, and the team must continue with one player less on the court.

Two referees with equal authority shall be in charge of each game. They are assisted by a timekeeper and a scorekeeper. In principle, the timekeeper has the main responsibility for the playing time, the time-outs, and the suspension time of suspended players. The scorekeeper has the main responsibility for the team rosters, the score sheet.