



**SOUTH
METRO
JUNIOR**
FOOTBALL LEAGUE

MODIFIED RULES SUMMARY

With thanks to the Northern Football League for allowing us to use their video samples.



It's about the kids



Laws and By-laws

League and Club Umpires
Do not make the Laws of our game

**Umpires apply the Laws
as set down by the
SMJFL and AFL**

Spirit of the Laws



It is the **Spirit** and the **intention** of the Laws of Australian Football (L.O.A.F) that a free kick shall be awarded to:

- Ensure that a match is played in a fair manner;
- Provide to a player, who makes obtaining possession of the football his or her sole objective, every opportunity to gain possession;
- Protect players from sustaining injury; and
- A player who executes a correct (modified) tackle that results in an opponent failing to dispose of the football in accordance with these laws.



Modified Rules

The over-riding objective

Provide an environment where young players can play the game and sequentially develop their skills through activities, games, match rules and conditions commensurate with their stage of learning and level of ability.

ROLE

SMJFL Club Umpire

General	Match day
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage• Teach good sportsmanship• Make clear explanations to players when decisions are made• Provide guidance on positions and / or what to do next• Be subject matter expert on modified rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apply the laws and make interpretations according to the Spirit of the Laws• Attend to the required administrative requirements

ROLE

SMJFL Club Coach

General	Match day
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage• Teach good sportsmanship• Teach skills appropriate to the age level being played• Model behaviour expected of players and parents• Provide guidance on positions and / or what to do next• Be subject matter expert on modified rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Respect the umpires decisions and interpretations of the Laws• Attend to the players and club's requirements and not place undue importance on winning.• Adhere to the Coaches Code of Conduct signed by all coaches.• Model ideal behaviour to match officials, players and parents.

Modified Rules

Zones	Ball-ups
Transition of ball	Smothering
Out of bounds	Barging
Gaining possession	Shepherding
Scoring	Marking
Modified tackle <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Can't take ball carrier to the ground▪ No stealing▪ No bumping, pushing, slinging	Distance run
	Bouncing the ball
	Kicking off the ground
	Distance penalty

Modified Rules - ZONES

ZONES:

Players are positioned in three equal zones to prevent ball chasing and subsequent congestion around the ball. Umpires will encourage players to stay in their correct zones. Players in each zone will wear different coloured wrist bands.

Players will not be penalised for completing a possession (kick or handball) in an adjacent zone as long as they clearly took possession inside their correct zone. It is not intended that players come to a halt as if there was a glass screen at the zone boundary! Once the player completes their kick or handball they must immediately move back to their correct zone. **HOWEVER** – if a player continually plays into the next zone the umpire may pay a free kick if he/she believes the rules are being unsportingly exploited.

When the ball is in transition from the back zone to the forward zone, it must be touched by a player in the mid zone. Failure for this to occur will result in a free kick awarded to the opposition team at the point at which the ball entered the end zone.

Modified Rules - POSSESSIONS

Gaining Possession

1. A player's prime objective should be to gain possession of the ball (eyes on the ball).
2. 'Running with' the player rather than 'running at' the player must be the intention. Any deliberate contact or contact to the back is strictly prohibited other than in the process of completing a Modified Tackle.
3. Once the ball is possessed, an opposition player may apply a modified tackle.

Scoring

Any player not designated as a "forward" who scores will be deemed to be breaching the zones and a score will not be awarded. Whether the umpire pays a free kick to the opposition will depend on his/her opinion as to whether the score was a deliberate shot at goal, or an unintentional result of no other player being able to take possession of the ball.

Modified Rules - GENERAL

- NO knocking the ball out of an opponent's hands
 - NO pushing the player in the side
 - NO stealing the ball from another player
 - NO bumping an opponent
 - NO sling, pull or otherwise applied force when 'holding' a player
- NO barging, fending off or chopping past opponents is permitted. A free kick shall be awarded to the nearest opponent.
- NO Shepherding permitted. The free kick shall be awarded to the nearest opponent.

Modified Rules – BALL UPS

Ball-ups

Field ball-ups are contested by two (2) players of equal size **selected by the umpire** – NOT the coach. This is in order to allow all players to get their hands on the ball. Umpires are encouraged to select different players to contest each ball-up.

Before the ball-up, the umpire should clear the area by sending players back to their zones/positions.

A free kick will be awarded for non-compliance. Umpires should “coach” the players to clear the immediate area.

Link to video: https://youtu.be/_L25YOVDDGA

Modified Rules – OUT OF BOUNDS

Out of Bounds

1. Where kicked out of bounds (regardless of whether it bounced before being out of bounds) a free kick is awarded against the player who last kicked the ball.
2. This free kick may be taken by the closest player to where the ball went out of play or the umpire may overrule this and elect the player to receive the free kick in order to bring quieter players into the game.
3. If there is any doubt, or if the ball came off hands or a body, the umpire shall call a ball-up 5 metres in from the boundary.

Link to video: <https://youtu.be/McRdrabthLA> (by foot)
<https://youtu.be/AsmJIFsi7CM> (general play)



Modified Rules – no kicking off the ground

There is no deliberate kicking off the ground in modified rules, to encourage players to pick the ball up and dispose of it correctly by foot or hand.

The umpire may pay the free kick to a player who has not had much of the ball.

Link to video: <https://youtu.be/vnzW9BXX-AE>

Modified Rules - SMOTHERING

Smothering

Deliberate smothering is not permitted in order to avoid injury, and will result in a free kick to nearest opponent.

If a smother is considered incidental (e.g. ball kicked into the person on the mark who made no move to smother), play will continue if in a passage of play, or the umpire may ask a player to re-take the kick instructing the player on the mark not to smother and the kicker to give themselves more room.

Link to video: https://youtu.be/TZz0PTgp_3w

Modified Rules - BOUNCING

In the SMJFL a player running with the ball must bounce it or touch it to the ground within ten (10) metres - not 15 as per AFL or the following video.

Only one bounce is permitted.

Link to video: https://youtu.be/zjlb_L2raX0

Modified Rules – TACKLES

A player in possession of the ball may be tackled by an opponent wrapping both arms around the area below the top of the shoulders and on/above the knees.

The tackle may be from either side or from behind, providing the tackle from behind does not thrust the player with the ball forward (i.e. push him or her in the back).

If the player in possession of the ball is taken to the ground in the act of tackling, they will receive a free kick. If the umpire feels the player drops to the ground in order to receive a free kick, they will be penalised for holding the ball.

A player in possession of the ball, when held by an opponent applying the wrap-around tackle, should be given a reasonable chance to dispose of the ball by kick or by handball, or by attempting to kick or handball. If he or she fails to do so, a free kick shall be awarded to the tackler for holding the ball.

Modified Rules – TACKLES (cont.)

The field umpire shall conduct a ball-up when the player with the ball has it held to the body by an opponent, unless the player has had a reasonable time to dispose of it prior to being tackled. In that case, a free kick shall be awarded to the tackler for holding the ball.

The field umpire shall allow play to continue if the ball is knocked out of a player's hands by an opponent in the process of applying the wrap-around tackle.

A player, who is held by an opponent when not in possession of the ball, shall be awarded a free kick.

No player shall be deliberately dumped or thrown to the ground by a tackle.

Link to Video: <https://youtu.be/h5YulWsE6lA>

Modified Rules

Common sense
approach

Modified Rules - SUMMARY

In all of the above examples and slides the umpire is encouraged at all times to ensure that the game remains FUN.

Rules are enforced and subsequent free kicks are paid in order to promote a SAFE and FAIR environment for all players

THIS IS JUNIOR FOOTY – NOT THE AFL