

HINTS TO UMPIRES

The Umpire should

- Have a sound knowledge of the Rules together with their correct interpretation.
- Apply them in the right spirit.
- Be able to make quick and accurate rulings.
- Practice the skills of umpiring as often as possible.
- Keep fit.

Equipment

The umpire should wear suitable clothing distinguishable from the players.

The Umpire should have

- Warm and waterproof clothing, gloves, kit bag and towel.
- Suitable shoes – indoors/outdoors.
- Current INF Rule Book.
- A good clear sounding whistle
- Stopwatch.
- A coin.
- Tissues.

Optional Extras:

- Spare set of bibs and a pump.
- Nail scissors.

Manner

The Umpire should be firm, clear and concise and have good control of the game. She/he should inspire confidence in all the players. His/her voice should be clear to all players on the court and to the other umpire.

Before the Game

The Umpire should check

- Equipment
- The court
- The posts
- The ball

The Umpire should see that the court, lines, goal posts and rings, nets and balls are up to standard and if something is not, try to rectify the matter. The court surface should be free from loose grit, lines should be clear, goal posts should not protrude on to the court, rings should be secure and circular with a net firmly attached and balls should be well inflated.

Players should be checked for

- Jewellery/Nails
- Bibs/Shoes
- Identify On Court Captain/Vice-Captain
- Identify Primary Carer
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The Umpire should check jewellery, bibs, nails and shoes off the court before play. She/he should see that the uniform is distinguishable, that correctly marked bibs are being worn, that all

adornments have been removed (a wedding ring may be taped) and that the nails should be short and smooth. Identify On Court Captain and Vice-Captain and Primary Carer.

Spectators, when present, are far enough from the edge of the court.

With Co-umpire

- Toss for end.
- Check which centre pass it is and where the other team is shooting.
- Liaise with timekeepers/scores.
- Responsibility of each Umpire at start of play.
- The position of the team before giving the match ball to the centre.
- Check who is the on-court captain – both teams.
- Check who is the primary carer – both teams.

During the Game

The Umpire should:

- Position and reposition continually to ensure a good view of the game.
- Blow the whistle firmly and loudly.
- Use the correct terminology and hand signals.
- Call the centre pass

Positioning and movement are important so that the Umpire is in the most advantageous position to see infringements and take any appropriate action.

At a centre pass

The Umpire should:

- Stand behind the side line in a position where his/her area of vision takes in the two centres and the players positioned on the transverse third line in his/her half of the court.
- Signal direction of centre pass
- Controlling umpire should call which team is to take next centre pass

During Play

The Umpire should:

- Try to stay level or slightly ahead of play as this is the 'action area'.
- Personal contact and obstruction should be dealt with if it interferes with play.
- Develop peripheral vision and train observation.
- Contact v contest.

During Circle Play

The Umpire should:

- Move behind the goal line to observe 'out of court' and to watch for possible rules of obstruction and contact from a good position on the goal line.
- After a goal has been scored, or the direction of the play has suddenly changed, the Umpire should get back into position as quickly as possible.
- The Umpire should stay outside of the court unless it is to drive to the goal line by cutting the corner or to get back to the start after a goal has been scored.
- The players will become frustrated with the Umpire if the start of play, after a goal has been scored, is delayed because the Umpire is not back in position

- After a goal has been scored in his/her half, the Umpire should signal the goal (no whistle) and indicate the next centre pass.
- Blow the whistle to re-start the game as soon as possible – as soon as the centre puts her foot in the centre circle.
- Eye contact with co-umpire confirming next centre pass – indicating next centre pass.

When the Umpire has seen an infringement, which must be penalised she/he must:

- Blow the whistle to stop the game.
- State the infringement.
- State the penalty i.e. 'footwork' – blue team free pass or 'contact' – red team, penalty pass.
- Indicate the point from which the penalty must be taken.

When indicating where the penalty must be taken, the Umpire should try to stay off court. She/he should stand opposite the place where the infringement occurred indicating with the hand and arm where the penalty should be taken. It is the Umpire's responsibility to see that the penalty is taken from the correct place as well as the player's responsibility to take the penalty from the correct place – if not the penalty is not set, and you would need to reset the penalty to the other team.

During the Intervals

The Umpire should check:

- The teams have 3 minutes at quarter and three quarter time and 5 minutes at half time – competitions may vary.
- The next centre pass and team.
- Watch for substitutions and or team changes.
- Be prepared to be asked for clarification of the rules from the team captains.

After the Game

The Umpire should check:

- All necessary paperwork is signed.
- Be prepared to be approached by both team members for any clarification of the rules.

The Good Umpire

- Must know the rules and be able to interpret them fairly.
- Be part of the game.
- Enjoy
- Be fit – even fitter than the players.
- Interact with Coaches and players to further their knowledge of the rules

ADDITIONAL HINTS TO IMPROVE UMPIRING

Timing of 3 seconds

- The Umpire should time himself/herself against a stopwatch. She/he may find it helpful to count – one thousand and one, one thousand and two, one thousand and three.

Assessment of 3 feet

- During play the Umpire can check by looking at the centre circle.

Training of observation of footwork

- In a practice session make a note of the number of times different landings are used by the players:
- Landing right – left
- Landing left – right
- Landing right – left pivot and throw
- Landing left – right pivot and throw
- Landing right – left and lifting right foot before throwing
- Landing left – right and lifting left foot before throwing
- Landing both feet and jumping before throwing

Improving concentration

- Not to get involved with coaching only umpiring – be ready for an appeal by the co-umpire – work as a team.

Playing the Advantage rule

- Practice when to 'hold' the whistle.
- If the non-offending team have possession of the ball it may be an advantage to let play continue without stopping the game.
- Once decided to play advantage the Umpire should call 'advantage' and use the signal – cannot alter decision if the advantage decision goes wrong.

Voice and Whistle control

- Practice speaking in a loud, clear voice and blowing the whistle briefly and firmly.

Knowledge of the Rules:

- Read the rule book and use 'common sense'.

'Common Sense' Umpiring

- In the first 5 minutes of the game blow for all infringements except where the advantage rule applies.
- In a standard match this should be continued throughout the game.
- If the standard of play is low, it may be better for the game to decide on what rule is being broken most frequently explaining, if necessary, what the rule is. As this rule is improved other rules can be tackled – rough or dangerous play should not be overlooked.

Keeping up to date

- Attending courses.
- Talking to other Umpires.
- Watching International/NSL Matches.
- Netball Magazine.
- Rule book.