# **Gameplay Rules:**



1. **All players are able to use any part of their body to move the ball up the oval; most common is kicking, handballing and running while holding the ball. However there are specific rules laid out which distinctly explain manners in which to advance the ball:**
	1. When a player is running while holding the ball they must perform what is known as a running bounce at least every 15 meters. If a player fails to do so, the umpire calls a free kick for the opposing team at the point where the player overstepped the mark.  The ‘running too far’ signal by the umpire is indicated by rolling clenched fists around each other. Running bounces are normally carried out by attacking half-back flankers, or link-men, who would receive the ball off a rebound and attack into wide space allowing their team mates to create playing options. Due to the odd shape of the ball, the running bounce is quite a skill, and some players prefer to touch the ball to the ground which is considered the same technically, however slows momentum.
	2. One of the major SAFL rules is holding the ball which helps prevent players from deliberately slowing down the play. This is put into practice when a player is tackled and they must dispose of the ball by either kicking it or handballing it, and is usually interpreted by the umpire as to whether or not it is a held ball. If it is called as a hold ball the team who performed the tackle is awarded a free kick.
	3. When handballing, the ball must be punched from one hand with the alternate fist, and is not allowed to be punched like a volleyball serve. The ball is also not allowed to be simply handed to a teammate.
	4. The ball cannot be thrown.
	5. In the SAFL, there is no offside rule, so all 18 players on both teams are allowed on any part of the oval at any point in the match.

## KICKING:

1. **In the SAFL kicking is the most common method for advancing the ball up the field, with a variety of techniques, depending on the players form. Here are a few of the more common methods of kicking seen in the SAFL:**
	1. *Drop punt:* The most used kick where the ball is dropped vertically and kicked before it hits the ground. As the ball moves through the air it spins backwards and is regarded as more accurate, and easier for a teammate to mark.
	2. *Grubber:*Is used to make it harder for the opposition to gain control of the ball, as it rolls and skids along the ground. Usually used in the SAFL as a scramble to score a goal, the kick is quite rare due to its unpredictability.
	3. *Torpedo Punt:* Is harder to catch as it spins on its long axis, but is used because it can travel slightly further.
	4. *Checkside Punt:* Also known as a banana kick, it bends away from the body and is often used for a set shot on goal with a narrow angle. It comes off the inside of the boot with the ball spinning in the opposite direction to the swing of the leg.

## MARKING:

1. **One distinguishing feature of Aussie Rules is the mark:**
	1. This is when a player catches a ball which has been kicked and traveled over 15 meters without being intercepted by a person or the ground, cleanly.
2. **After a mark has been awarded the player then receives a free kick. There are a variety of types of marks which can be awarded:**
	1. *Overhead mark:* Catching the ball with hands above the head.
	2. *Contested mark:* Catching the ball against one or more opponents who are also attempting to mark or spoil that player from achieving the mark.
	3. *Pack mark:* Catching the ball while another player, either an opponent or teammate, is in close distance to the fall of the ball.
	4. *High mark:* Catching the ball while jumping.
	5. *Spectacular mark:* Often named ‘screamer’ or ‘speckie’, is when the player catches the ball in the air using their legs to elevate themselves further by springing off the back of another player on the oval. It is a popular trademark of the sport as the vulnerability of the player jumping often produces spectacular results.
	6. *Chest mark:* Catching the ball and drawing it into the chest.
	7. *Out in front:* Catching the ball with arms extended in front of the body.
	8. *One handed mark:* Catching the ball with one hand.
	9. *Diving mark:* Catching the ball when jumping horizontally.
	10. *With the flight of the ball:*Catching the ball when running in the same direction the ball is travelling in.
	11. *Standing one’s ground:* Catching the ball when standing still which is often difficult as it gives opportunities for opponents to intercept the ball.
	12. *Backing into a pack:* Catching the ball when travelling backwards but facing the ball.
	13. *Half Volley:*Not technically a mark, however sometimes a player catches the ball so close to the ground it is often hard to decipher whether or not it bounced off the ground – up to the umpire to decide.
	14. *Juggled mark:* Catching the ball with two or more touches to gain control.
	15. *Fingertip mark:* Catching the ball with only the player’s finger tips catching it at full stretch.
	16. Spoiling the mark is a technique used by the defense to stop a player from making the mark, but legally. It is normally a hand or a fist used in a punching motion either just prior to, or just after, a player catches the ball. However a player is not allowed to push other players out of the marking contest.

## TACKLING:

1. When the ball is considered to be in an opposing team’s possession, a player usually carries out a tackle to gain possession, or prevent the other team from maintaining control of the ball. Due to the contact nature of the sport, and the no offside rule, a player can be tackled from any direction. Because of this, teams often employ a shepherding method – where a player is protected by their own team when they have the ball as they are advancing on the field.
2. When tackling, the person conducting the tackle must do so below the shoulders and above the knees of the person they are tackling, and that player can be thrown to the ground. The tackler is not allowed to push in the back when tackling – making it quite a skill to do so correctly.
3. When a player is tackled, they must dispose of the ball, by either kicking or handballing it. If they do not, and had prior opportunity to have done so, they are penalized for ‘holding the ball’ and therefore a free kick is handed to the team of the player who made the tackle.
4. **There are a variety of types of tackles which can be carried out in SAFL:**
	1. *Perfect tackle:* Conducted when the opponent has had prior opportunity to dispose the ball, but makes it impossible for them to do so, such as pinning their arms which makes them not able to kick or handball it.
	2. *Gang tackle:*When a player is tackled by more than one opponent at the same time.
	3. *Diving tackle:* Tackling when off the ground.
	4. *Broken tackle:* When the player being tackled is able to break free from it.
	5. *Slam tackle:*When the player getting tackled’s head is deliberately slammed into the ground and is not always tolerated.
	6. *Wing tackle:* When an arm is pinned in a tackle.
	7. There are a few rules when it comes to tackling – a high tackle is not allowed, which is when the tackle takes place above the shoulder, and results in a free kick for the team who’s player was illegally tackled. Spear tackles are also not tolerated, which is when a player throws themself into an opponent using their shoulder to bring them down, and is a reportable offence which can result in suspension.
5. The player who has the ball in the tackle has methods at hand in which to dodge an imminent tackle such as:
	1. *Footwork:* Techniques such as dummying, side stepping and baulking are all common methods.
	2. *Breaking:* Methods such as chopping, fending off with your arms, shrugging, arching the back and ducking the head.
	3. *Lubricant:*Some players wear lubricant on their arms which decreases the amount of grip a tackler can manage.

## SHEPHERDING:

1. Shepherding is a technique used in the SAFL to prevent a player from the opposing side to gain possession of the ball or from tackling a team mate. Shepherding is a legal from of obstruction in the SAFL and can occur even if a player is not in possession of the ball.
2. Normally, shepherding is carried out by a player using their body to stop their opponent from reaching a contest, which is usually achieved by rigid outstretched arms and using body weight between the players.
3. Another form of shepherding is bumping, which is when a player uses their hip and shoulder to bump another player, not using their arms. This technique can be carried out by anyone against any opponent as long as they are within five meters of the ball.
4. Bumping can only occur if the player bumping has their feet on the ground, and no contact can be made with the head. A shirt front, which is a front on bump and usually quite aggressive, is a reportable offence and considered illegal. While a tackle is usually more effective in dispossessing a player, a bump is normally a harder physical hit, although will not result in a free kick, whereas tackles can.

FREE KICKS:

1. **Free kicks are awarded in the SAFL by the umpire, the player who has caused the free kick ‘stands the mark’, while the person with the ball on the other team moves back to kick the ball over the player standing on the mark:**
	1. The person taking the free kicks lines up the player on the mark, and the center of the attacking goal into the same line before they take the free kick.
2. **A free kick does not have to be carried out as a kick, it can also be hand balled. There are a variety of reasons for a free kick to be awarded such as:**
	1. *Holding the ball:*When a player does not dispose of the ball when tackled.
	2. Running too far while carrying the ball.
	3. *High tackling:*Tackling a player above the shoulder.
	4. *Holding the man:*Holding/tackling a player who does not have the ball.
	5. *Tripping:*Tackling a player below the knees.
	6. Pushing in the back.
	7. *Taking/chopping the arms:*Spoiling a mark by restricting an opponent’s arm.
	8. *Out on the full:* When the ball is kicked and travels over the boundary line before bouncing.
	9. *Deliberately out of bounds:* When a player deliberately forces the ball out of bounds.
	10. *Throwing:* When a player throws the ball as opposed to handballing.
	11. Illegal shepherd.
	12. *Kicking in danger:*When a player kicks an opponent while attempting to kick the ball off the ground.

## SCORING:

1. **A goal, worth 6 points (or 9 points if made beyond the 50m line), is scored when the football is propelled through the goal posts at any height (including above the height of the posts) by way of a kick from the attacking team:**
	1. It may fly through "on the full" (without touching the ground) or bounce through, but must not have been touched, on the way, by any player from either team.
	2. A goal cannot be scored from the foot of an opposition (defending) player.
2. **A behind, worth 1 point (or 3 points if made beyond the 50m line), is scored when the ball passes between a goal post and a behind post at any height, or if the ball hits a goal post, or if any player sends the ball between the goal posts by touching it with any part of the body other than a foot:**
	1. A behind is also awarded to the attacking team if the ball touches any part of an opposition player, including his foot, before passing between the goal posts.
	2. When an opposition player deliberately scores a behind for the attacking team (generally as a last resort to ensure that a goal is not scored) this is termed a rushed behind.
	3. A free kick is awarded against any player who deliberately rushes a behind.
3. The goal umpire signals a goal with two hands pointed forward at elbow height, or a behind with one hand. The goal umpire then waves flags above their heads to confirm the goal or behind to the goal umpire at the opposite end of the ground.

## MATCH DURATION:

1. A game consists of four 18-minute quarters and a timekeeper officiates their duration.
2. The clock being stopped for instances such as scores, the ball going out of bounds or at the umpire's discretion, e.g. for serious injury.
3. The umpire signals time-off to stop the clock for various reasons, such as the player in possession being tackled into stagnant play. Time resumes when the umpire signals time-on or when the ball is brought into play.
4. Stoppages cause quarters to extend approximately 5–10 minutes beyond the 20 minutes of play.
5. 6 minutes of rest is allowed before the second and fourth quarters, and 20 minutes of rest is allowed at half-time.
6. The official game clock is available only to the timekeeper(s), and is not displayed to the players, umpires or spectators.
7. The only public knowledge of game time is when the timekeeper sounds a siren at the start and end of each quarter.
8. Coaching staff may monitor the game time themselves and convey information to players via on-field trainers or substitute players.
9. Broadcasters usually display an approximation of the official game time for television audiences, although some will now show the exact time remaining in a quarter.

# **Season Structure:**

1. All SAFL team training camps open 28 days prior to the first regular-season game of the season; a camp solely devoted to first-year players is allowed the 3 days before the main camp opens.
2. The pre-season exhibition schedule is one week long, with each team playing 1 scrimmage in the 1st Saturday of June.
3. **The regular-season is a 13-week schedule during which each team plays 12 games and one bye week:**
	1. The regular season currently starts during the second Saturday of June and runs weekly to the Final Saturday of September.
	2. Each team plays the other 12 teams in their division once (6h/6a).
4. At the end of each regular season, the top 4 teams play in the SAFL playoffs, a single-elimination tournament that culminates with the championship game, known as the SAFL Championship (or SAFL Grand Final).
5. **The SAFL Championship is alternated between the following stadiums:**
	1. Multan Cricket Stadium *(35,000)* in Multan, Pakistan.
	2. Narendra Modi Stadium *(132,000)* in Ahmedabad, India.
6. **Bonus Points System:**
	1. 4 points for winning a game
	2. 2 points for drawing a game
	3. 0 points for losing a game
	4. 1 bonus point for losing by 10 points (or fewer) or in overtime.
	5. 1 bonus point for scoring at least 8 goals (or more)
	6. 1 bonus point for winning while scoring at least 4 more goals than the opponent.
	7. *At the end of the regular season, the team with the best regular season record (i.e. highest point total) is awarded the Indo-Pak Confederation Trophy:*
		1. For those who don't know, it echoes the practice of the top European soccer leagues in which the team with the best record is the champion, similar to the Supporter’s Shield in MLS.
		2. The Indo-Pak Confederation Trophy winner is guaranteed home-field advantage in the first round of the playoffs (excluding the SAFL Championship).
	8. *Tie-breaker - If only two teams are level on league points:*
		1. The team that won the head-to-head match (if applicable) is ranked first.
		2. If this game was a draw, then the team with the more wins is ranked first
		3. Point difference (PD) = is the number of goals (or points) scored in all league matches minus the number of points conceded.
		4. Points for (PF) = is the total number of points scored by a team over the course of the regular-season.
		5. Points against (PA) = is the number of goals scored against them by their opponents over the course of the regular-season.
		6. Fewest disciplinary actions.
		7. Strength of schedule = two-third (66 2/3%) for the opponent's record and one-third (33 1/3%) for the opponents' opponents record.
		8. Total number of points scored on the road.
		9. Road point difference.
		10. Total number of points scored @ home.
		11. Home point difference.
		12. If still identical, a play-off is required.
		13. Coin toss (2 teams) or drawing of lots (at least 3 teams).

# **Roster, Salary, & Substitution Rules:**

1. The salary cap, known officially as *Total Player Payments (TPP)*, is A$1,333,860 or ₹66 million **/** ₨ 213, 343, 240.57per season.
2. Teams consist of 18 players, with an additional 5 substitutes.
3. Maximum number of interchanges per quarter is 30 (or 120 total per game).