

GAA Handball Competition Regulations



ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Competition Regulations of G.A.A. Handball revised and corrected up to date and published by authority of the GAA Handball Central Council. This publication replaces all previous versions published.

NOTE:

All Rules set out below are binding on all Units of GAA Handball. They do NOT form part of the Constitution of GAA Handball, and they are subject to amendment by Central Council in accordance with General Rule, NOT by way of Motion to Annual General Meeting.

Table of Contents

1.	Internal County Championship	3
2.	Adult All Ireland Championships	3
3.	Adult Team Championships	5
	Substitute – Explained.....	5
4.	Juvenile County & Provincial Championships	5
(A)	Under 12 Competitions/Championships.....	5
(B)	Under 13 Competitions/Championships.....	5
5.	Juvenile All Ireland Championships	6
(A)	4-Wall and Softball.....	6
6.	Juvenile Team Championships & Competitions.	7
(A)	4-Wall & Softball Boys Team of 6 U12/13.....	7
(B)	4-Wall & Softball Boys Team of 6 U14/15.....	7
(C)	4-Wall & Softball Boys Team of 4 U16/U17	8
(D)	Softball Interprovincial Girls Team of 6.....	8
(E)	4-Wall Interprovincial Girls Team of 10.....	9
(F)	Gael Linn 4-Wall Mixed Doubles	9
(G)	Feile na nGael.....	10
7.	Post Primary Championships (Where Played)	10
(A)	Boys Colleges (4-Wall & 60x30 Championships).....	10
(ii)	Junior Competitions:	11
(iii)	Intermediate Competitions:.....	11
(iv)	Senior Competitions:	11
(B)	Girls Colleges (4-Wall & 60x30 Championships)	11
(ii)	Junior Competitions:	11
(iii)	Senior Competitions:	11
8.	Championships / Competitions Qualification & Age Criteria.....	12
9.	Adult Grading.....	13
(F)	Junior B	13
(G)	Junior	14
(H)	Intermediate	14
(I)	Definition of a Senior Player.....	14
(J)	Senior Eligibility in 4-Wall and Softball:.....	14
(K)	Overage Grades Eligibility	15
(L)	All-Ireland Inter Club Championships.....	15
10.	All Ireland Championships and National Competitions General	16
(N), (i), (ii) & (iii), (O), (i), (ii) & (iii), (P), (Q).		17
12.	Qualification for Team Ireland Squads.....	19
13.	Permits for Tournaments	20
14.	County / Club Colours.....	20
15.	National Fixtures & Postponements Policy	21

1. Internal County Championship

It is envisaged that County championships will mirror the national structures where feasible. However, Counties may run additional competitions. In such instances, bye laws must be submitted for approval by Ard Chomairle & the GAA Rules Advisory.

2. Adult All Ireland Championships

Adult All-Ireland Championships under the jurisdiction of the Ard Comhairle shall be held each year in 4-Wall and Softball, in both Singles and Doubles, 1-Wall (Certain Grades Only) & Hardball (Certain Grades Only), and to be completed according to the annual Clár, with the following stipulations:

- (A)** Female players cannot compete in male All Ireland Singles and Doubles Championships, and male players cannot compete in female All Ireland Singles and Doubles Championships.
- (B)** A minimum of eight entries per grade of singles or four doubles pairs, will be required for any All-Ireland Championship to take place, except in a case where all four provinces will be represented at All Ireland semi-final stage. In that situation the minimum requirement will not apply.
 - (i) If all four provinces do not have a representative, and if the combined entries of the remaining provinces are unable to reach the minimum number of eight in singles or four pairings in doubles, then the All-Ireland Championship will not be held for that grade, and those entries will instead be moved to the nearest qualifying grade until such time as the minimum number is reached.
- (C)** Players can only compete in one grade of singles and one grade of doubles each year in 4-Wall and Softball Inter- County, except those taking part in the Junior and Intermediate grades who can also enter the Senior Singles and Doubles Championship in the same code and in the same championship year, in addition to playing in their own grade.
- (D)** Players can only compete in one grade of singles and doubles each year in Hardball Inter- County.
- (E)** Senior 4-Wall, Hardball and Softball Singles and Doubles.
 - (i) 1-Wall Singles
- (F)** Intermediate 4-Wall and Softball Singles and Doubles.
 - (i) 1-Wall Singles
- (G)** Junior 4-Wall, Hardball and Softball Singles and Doubles.
 - (i) 1-Wall Singles
- (H)** Minor 4-Wall, Hardball and Softball Singles and Doubles.
 - (i) 1-Wall Singles
- (I)** Under 21 4-Wall and Softball Singles and Doubles.
 - (i) Must not have won an All- Ireland Minor Singles Championship, in that code.
- (J)** Junior B 4-Wall and Softball Singles and Doubles.
 - (i) 1 Wall Singles
- (K)** Over 35 Singles and Doubles 4-Wall & Softball Championship.
 - (i) Over 35 - Confined to players over 35 years of age. Must have not won a Provincial Singles in Minor, Junior, Intermediate, Masters (all overage) or Senior, or an All-Ireland Singles titles U14, U16, Junior B, O35A, O35B.

- (L)** Masters Singles and Doubles and Masters “A” and “B” 4-Wall, Hardball and Softball Singles & Doubles. (Over 40).
- (i) 1-Wall Singles (“A” & “B” Combined)
 - (ii) Masters’ ‘A’ - Open to players over 40 years of age.
 - (iii) Masters’ ‘B’ - Confined to players over 40 years of age who have not won Minor, Under 21, Junior B, Junior, Intermediate, Senior, Over 35 (A or B) or any Masters ‘A’ or ‘B’ All-Ireland titles.
- (M)** Silver Masters ‘A’ and ‘B’ 4-Wall and Softball Singles and Doubles (Over 45).
- (i) Silver Masters ‘A’ - Open to players over 45 years of age.
 - (ii) Silver Masters ‘B’ - Confined to players over 45 years of age who have not won Minor, Under 21, Junior B, Junior, Intermediate, Senior, Over 35 (A or B), or any Masters ‘A’ or ‘B’ All-Ireland titles.
- (N)** Golden Masters ‘A’ and ‘B’ 4-Wall and Softball Singles and Doubles (Over 50).
- (i) 1-Wall Singles (“A” & “B” Combined)
 - (ii) Golden Masters ‘A’ - Open to players over 50 years of age.
 - (iii) Golden Masters ‘B’ - Confined to players over 50 years of age who have not won Minor, Under 21, Junior B, Junior, Intermediate, Senior, Over 35 (A or B) or any Masters ‘A’ or ‘B’ All-Ireland titles.
- (O)** Emerald Masters ‘A’ and ‘B’ 4-Wall and Softball Singles and Doubles (Over 55).
- (i) Emerald Masters ‘A’ - Open to players over 55 years of age.
 - (ii) Emerald Masters ‘B’ - Confined to players over 55 years of age who have not won Minor, Under 21, Junior B, Junior, Intermediate, Senior, Over 35 (A or B) or any Masters ‘A’ or ‘B’ All-Ireland titles.
- (P)** Diamond Masters ‘A’ and ‘B’ 4-Wall and Softball Singles and Doubles (Over 60).
- (i) 1-Wall Singles (“A” & “B” Combined)
 - (ii) Diamond Masters ‘A’ - Open to players over 60 years of age.
 - (iii) Diamond Masters ‘B’ - Confined to players over 60 years of age who have not won Minor, Under 21, Junior B, Junior, Intermediate, Senior, Over 35 (A or B) or any Masters ‘A’ or ‘B’ All-Ireland titles.
- (Q)** Ruby Masters 4-Wall and Softball Singles and Doubles (Over 65).
- (R)** Over 70’s Singles and Doubles Championships in 4-Wall and Softball Grades.

3. Adult Team Championships

- (A) GAA Handball Ireland shall organise Inter-Club Championships in Junior B, Junior and Senior in 4-Wall and Softball.
- (i) Regulations for the Inter Club Championships shall be decided each year by the Central Competitions Control Committee (CCCC).
 - (ii) Each team consists of four players and one substitute and can be made up of male or female players.
 - (iii) Duplication in different teams is not permitted.
 - (iv) The order of play is as follows:
 - (v) 1st Singles = 2 x 15 points, Doubles = 2 x 15 points, 2nd Singles = 2 x 15 points
 - (vi) Before the match commences each team shall exchange lists showing the team members in order of play, plus a substitute if available.
 - (vii) Accumulated scores shall decide the winner. In the event of a tie, any pair from each team shall play one game of 15 points to decide the winner.

Substitute – Explained

If a game has commenced and a player gets injured, the named sub can take his place for the remainder of the game – only 1 sub can be used in a match, and the injured player cannot return to the court once the sub has been used.

The same rule applies if a player gets injured during the warmup. In the event of a match being tied after the 3 games are played, the sub can be used in the tie break, even if he has not played earlier in the match.

In the event of a second or subsequent player getting injured within a match and being unable to continue, then the opponent(s) is awarded the 15 points for that game, and the injured player(s) score remains as it was when the injury occurred. If there is a second game and a player(s) is unable to continue, the game is awarded to the opponent(s) on a scoreline of 15-0.

4. Juvenile County & Provincial Championships

(A) Under 12 Competitions/Championships

- (i) Full rules apply for players in the 4-Wall.
- (ii) Rules for players in the 60x30:
 - a) The service (inside) line shall be the short line, and the player shall serve between the service lines.
 - b) A ball reaching the back wall in service before the second hop shall be a "dead ball" and shall not count.
- (iii) Under 12 players, play best of three games to 15 points.
- (iv) The Challenger No. 2 Ball will be used in 4-Wall and 60x30.
- (v) Gloves are mandatory in the 4-Wall and eye-guards are mandatory in Softball and 4-Wall.

(B) Under 13 Competitions/Championships

- (i) Full rules apply for players in 4-Wall and 60 x 30.
- (ii) Under 13 players, play best of three games to 15 points.
- (iii) The Challenger No. 3 Ball will be used in 60x30 and Dark Blue Ball in 4-Wall.
- (iv) Gloves are mandatory in the 4-Wall and eye-guards are mandatory in Softball and 4-Wall.

5. Juvenile All Ireland Championships

Juvenile All-Ireland Championships under the jurisdiction of the Ard Chomairle shall be held each year in 4-Wall and Softball, Singles and Doubles, 1-Wall (Certain Grades Only) and to be completed according to the annual Clár.

(A) 4-Wall and Softball

- (i) Under 14 Singles & Doubles
- (ii) Under 15 Singles & Doubles
- (iii) Under 16 Singles & Doubles
- (iv) Under 17 Singles & Doubles

(B) 1-Wall, as decided by CCCC

(C) The Under 15 is for non-winners of Provincial Gold at U14 or All-Ireland Gold at Under 15.

(D) The Under 17 is for non-winners of Provincial Gold at Under 14 or Under 16 or All-Ireland Gold at Under 15 or Under 17.

(E) Duplication is not permitted, i.e., a player may not play in both Singles and Doubles nor in more than one age group in the same year.

(F) In the case where a player/s are the only entry in a grade, in their province, they are not deemed a provincial winner, unless they win a subsequent match.

(G) In cases where no entries exist in a grade, a player/s may be nominated by their province, they are not deemed a provincial winner, unless they win a subsequent match.

(H) Full playing rules apply to Championships in both 4-Wall and 60x30, Singles and Doubles, for Under 14 to Under 17 levels.

(I) Gloves and eye-guards are mandatory in the 4-Wall court. Gloves are optional in the 60x30 court, but eye-guards are compulsory for players up to and including Under 18 level.

(J) Scoring:

- (i) Under 14 and Under 15 levels, play best of three games to 15 points.
- (ii) Under 16 and Under 17 levels, play two games to 21 points and a tie breaker to 11 points if needed.

(K) Ball use for Boys Grades:

- (i) Under 14 players shall play with the Challenger No. 3 Ball in 60x30 and the Dark Blue Ball in 4-Wall.
- (ii) Under 15 players shall play with the Standard Softball in 60x30 and the Dark Blue Ball in 4-Wall.
- (iii) Under 16 and Under 17 players shall play with Standard Softball in 60x30 and the standard Adult Ball in 4-Wall.

(L) Ball use for Girls Grades:

- (i) Under 13 to Under 17 players shall play with the Challenger No.3 ball in 60x30 and the Dark Blue Ball in 4-Wall.

6. Juvenile Team Championships & Competitions.

(A) 4-Wall & Softball Boys Team of 6 U12/13

- (i) Under 12/13 Team of Six Championships in 4-Wall and Softball. Teams consist of three Under 12 and three Under 13 players who have not represented their County at Under 14 level or over.
- (ii) All counties competing in 4-Wall and Softball Inter-County Team Championship All-Ireland semi- finals and finals, must submit the names of the players on their team of; six in U12/13 and six in U14/15 to the GAA Handball Office not later than the Monday prior to the scheduled Fixture. (Penalty for failure to comply, removal from Championship)
- (iii) A team comprises 6 players (three of whom must be Under 12) and two substitutes.
- (iv) The team plays in three doubles partnerships of any combination.
- (v) Each pair plays two games to 15 points.
- (vi) Total aces scored minus total aces conceded decides the winner.
- (vii) If a Round Robin is to be played, Rule A (vi) is replaced as follows. Where only 3 provinces are represented, one point awarded per game won. If teams are level on points, then the place is decided by total aces scored minus total aces conceded.
- (viii) In the event of a tie in (vi) or (vii), any combination of two players from each Team plays a tiebreaker to 11 points.
- (ix) Full rules apply in both 4-Wall and 60x30.
- (x) Challenger No 2 is the official ball in 4-Wall and Challenger No 3 is the official ball in 60x30.
- (xi) Players must wear eye-guards and gloves in 4-Wall and eye-guards in 60x30 with gloves optional.
- (xii) In juvenile team competitions, if a player gets injured during a game, a substitute is allowed to take the injured player's place.

Within a match only 2 substitutes are allowed, as long as the team has named sub(s). Otherwise, in the event of a second or subsequent player getting injured within a match and being unable to continue, and there are no subs, then the opponent(s) is awarded the 15 points for that game and the injured player(s) score remains as it was when the injury occurred. If there is a second game and a player(s) is unable to continue, the game is awarded to the opponent(s) on a score-line of 15-0.

(B) 4-Wall & Softball Boys Team of 6 U14/15

- (i) Under 14/15 Team of Six Championships in 4-Wall and Softball. Teams consist of three Under 14 and three Under 15 players who have not won a provincial Championship in any age group.
- (ii) All counties competing in 4-Wall and Softball Inter-County Team Championship All-Ireland semi- finals and finals, must submit the names of the players on their team of; six in U12/13 and six in U14/15 to the GAA Handball Office not later than the Monday prior to the scheduled Fixture. (Penalty for failure to comply, removal from Championship)
- (iii) A team comprises 6 players (three of whom must be Under 14) and two substitutes.
- (iv) The team plays in three doubles partnerships of any combination.
- (v) Each pair plays two games to 15 points.
- (vi) Total aces scored minus total aces conceded decides the winner.
- (vii) If a Round Robin is to be played, Rule B (vi) is replaced as follows. Where only 3 provinces are represented, one point awarded per game won. If teams are level on points, then the place is decided by total aces scored minus total aces conceded.
- (viii) In the event of a tie in (vi) or (vii), any combination of two players from each Team plays a tiebreaker to 11 points.
- (ix) Full rules apply in both 4-Wall and 60x30.
- (x) The Dark Blue Ball is the official ball in 4-Wall, and the adult ball is the official ball in 60x30.
- (xi) Players must wear eye-guards and gloves in 4-Wall and eye-guards in 60x30 with gloves optional.

- (xii) In juvenile team competitions, if a player gets injured during a game, a substitute is allowed to take the injured player's place.

Within a match only 2 substitutes are allowed, as long as the team has named sub(s). Otherwise, in the event of a second or subsequent player getting injured within a match and being unable to continue, and there are no subs, then the opponent(s) is awarded the 15 points for that game and the injured player(s) score remains as it was when the injury occurred. If there is a second game and a player(s) is unable to continue, the game is awarded to the opponent(s) on a score-line of 15-0.

(C) 4-Wall & Softball Boys Team of 4 U16/U17

- (i) Under 16/17 Team of Four Championships in 4-Wall and Softball. Teams consist of two Under 16 players and two Under 17 players who have not won a provincial Championship in any age group, including Team events.
- (ii) All counties competing in 4-Wall and Softball Inter-County Team Championship All-Ireland semi-finals and finals, must submit the names of the players on their team of; four in U16/17 to the GAA Handball Office not later than the Monday prior to the scheduled Fixture. (Penalty for failure to comply, removal from Championship)
- (iii) A team comprises of 4 players (two of whom must be Under 16) and two substitutes.
- (iv) The team plays in three doubles partnerships of any combination.
- (v) Each pair plays two games to 15 points.
- (vi) Total aces scored minus total aces conceded decides the winner.
- (vii) If a Round Robin is to be played, Rule C (vi) is replaced as follows. Where only 3 provinces are represented, one point awarded per game won. If teams are level on points, then the place is decided by total aces scored minus total aces conceded.
- (viii) In the event of a tie in (vi) or (vii), any combination of two players from each Team plays a tiebreaker to 11 points.
- (ix) Full rules apply in both 4-Wall and 60x30.
- (x) The adult ball is the official ball in 4-Wall and 60x30.
- (xi) Players must wear eye-guards and gloves in 4-Wall and eye-guards in 60x30 with gloves optional.
- (xii) In juvenile team competitions, if a player gets injured during a game, a substitute is allowed to take the injured player's place.

Within a match only 2 substitutes are allowed, as long as the team has named sub(s). Otherwise, in the event of a second or subsequent player getting injured within a match and being unable to continue, and there are no subs, then the opponent(s) is awarded the 15 points for that game and the injured player(s) score remains as it was when the injury occurred. If there is a second game and a player(s) is unable to continue, the game is awarded to the opponent(s) on a score-line of 15-0.

(D) Softball Interprovincial Girls Team of 6

- (i) A team consists of 6 players, two in each age group at Under 13, Under 15 & Under 17.
- (ii) The order of play is from Under 13 to Under 17.
- (iii) Team to be supplied in writing to official in charge before play commences.
- (iv) Each pair plays two games to 15 aces.
- (v) Total aces scored minus total aces conceded decides the winner.
- (vi) If a Round Robin is to be played, Rule D (v) is replaced as follows. Where only 3 provinces are represented, one point awarded per game won. If teams are level on points, then the place is decided by total aces scored minus total aces conceded.
- (vii) In the event of a tie in (v) or (vi), any combination of two players from each Team plays a tiebreaker to 11 points.
- (viii) Full Playing rules apply.

- (ix) The Challenger 3 is the official ball.
- (x) Players must wear eye-guards in the 60x30 with gloves optional.
- (xi) In juvenile team competitions, if a player gets injured during a game, a substitute is allowed to take the injured player's place.

Within a match only 2 substitutes are allowed, as long as the team has named sub(s). Otherwise, in the event of a second or subsequent player getting injured within a match and being unable to continue, and there are no subs, then the opponent(s) is awarded the 15 points for that game and the injured player(s) score remains as it was when the injury occurred. If there is a second game and a player(s) is unable to continue, the game is awarded to the opponent(s) on a score-line of 15-0.

(E) 4-Wall Interprovincial Girls Team of 10

- (i) A team consists of 10 players, two in each age group at Under 13, 14, 15, 16 & 17.
- (ii) The order of play is from Under 13 to Under 17.
- (iii) Team to be supplied in writing to official in charge before play commences.
- (iv) Each pair plays two games to 15 aces.
- (v) Total aces scored minus total aces conceded decides the winner.
- (vi) If a Round Robin is to be played, Rule E (v) is replaced as follows. Where only 3 provinces are represented, one point awarded per game won. If teams are level on points, then the place is decided by total aces scored minus total aces conceded.
- (vii) In the event of a tie in (v) or (vi), any combination of two players from each Team plays a tiebreaker to 11 points.
- (viii) Full Playing rules apply.
- (ix) The Dark Blue Ball is the official ball in 4-Wall.
- (x) Players must wear eye-guards and gloves in 4-Wall.
- (xi) In juvenile team competitions, if a player gets injured during a game, a substitute is allowed to take the injured player's place.

Within a match only 2 substitutes are allowed, as long as the team has named sub(s). Otherwise, in the event of a second or subsequent player getting injured within a match and being unable to continue, and there are no subs, then the opponent(s) is awarded the 15 points for that game and the injured player(s) score remains as it was when the injury occurred. If there is a second game and a player(s) is unable to continue, the game is awarded to the opponent(s) on a score-line of 15-0.

(F) Gael Linn 4-Wall Mixed Doubles

- (i) The competition is for mixed pairs at Under 13 level (on 1st January of the year of competition).
- (ii) One entry per Club. A team consists of one boy and one girl.
- (iii) Provincial competitions will be held to decide on two teams from each province for the All-Ireland competition.
- (iv) Defeated All-Ireland quarterfinalists will play in a Sólaís competition.
The format will be games as follows:
Girl v Girl 1 x 15 Aces
Boy v Boy 1 x 15 Aces
Pair v Pair 1 x 15 Aces
- (v) Accumulated score decides the winners.
- (vi) In the event of a tie, the teams will play one doubles game to 11 points to decide the winner.
- (vii) Juvenile playing rules apply.
- (viii) **Ball:** Dark Blue **Eye-Guards & Gloves:** Mandatory

(Note: Úsáid na Gaeilge is to be encouraged during the competition. Terms such as isteach, amach, fada, scór, aon, liathróid, cluiche and simple phrases should be used.)

(G) Feile na nGael

- (i) Club team of four players in two pairs and one substitute, team and substitute can interchange before each match. Team in order of play to be supplied to the referee before each match. (The order of play may be changed for second or subsequent matches).
- (ii) If a player gets injured during a game the substitute is allowed to take the injured player's place.
- (iii) Each pair plays one game to 21 aces or maximum of 15 minutes game, with two points for each win. (If a game ends in a draw after 15 minutes, then one point shall be given to each team). The first service is decided on the toss of a coin. The team receiving in the first game will have first service in the second game.
- (iv) When two or more teams in a group tie on points, the placings are decided on total aggregate aces (Total points scored first, then subtract scores against, highest aggregate will be awarded highest placing). Where aggregate scores are still equal, a play-off to 11 aces between any pair from each side decides the places.
- (v) In case of a tie in any final, rules as in 4 apply. The first service to be decided on the toss of a coin.
- (vi) Full playing rules apply in all games for all divisions (As there is a time element to this competition, no time outs are allowed and each player can only serve 1 fault before it's a hand/side out, i.e. if player 1 serves a short ball it's a serve out and player 2 serve's, if player 2 serve's a long serve it's a handout).
- (vii) If a player serves the ball and it hits their partner before crossing the short line, then a hinder is called. But if a player serves two consecutive hinders this results in a handout.
- (viii) Féile is a Boys or a Girls event - no mixed teams allowed.
- (ix) Teams wear Club colours in all matches unless requested to change when colours clash.
- (x) Teams must comprise of Players who are 11 years or over on the 1st of January and must not have turned 15 before the 1st of January, in the year of the competition.
For example, in 2026 players eligible must be born in 2011, 2012, 2013, or 2014.
- (xi) Division 5 for the boys and division 3 for girls, players must not have turned 13 prior to the 1st of January.
- (xii) Division 6 for boys, players must not have turned 12 prior to the 1st of January.
- (xiii) The following balls will be used in each code.
 - a) In the 4-Wall competition the Dark Blue Ball is used.
 - b) In the 60x30 (Softball) competition the Challenger 3 Ball is used.
 - c) In the 1-Wall Ball competition the One Wall Ball is used.
- (xiv) Within a match only one substitute is allowed, if the team has named a sub. The clock is stopped and the sub continues the game, if no sub is available, a 15min injury timeout can be utilised by the player affected. If the player is deemed unfit to continue then the opponent(s) are awarded the 21 points for that game and the injured player(s) score remains as it was when the injury occurred. The Venue may start the next game while the injury is being accessed.

(Note: Feile rules may change each year as per the National Feile or Handball Feile Committee and sanctioned by CCCC)

7. Post Primary Championships (Where Played)

(A) Boys Colleges (4-Wall & 60x30 Championships)

(i) First Years Competitions:

Singles and Doubles to Provincial level only for pupils in their first year in Second Level education.

- a) **Scoring:** Best of 3 games to 15 points.
- b) **Ball:** 4-Wall – Dark Blue Softball – Challenger 3
- c) **Gloves:** 4-Wall – Compulsory Softball – Optional
- d) **Eye-guards:** 4-Wall – Compulsory Softball – Compulsory

(ii) Junior Competitions:

Singles and Doubles to All-Ireland level for pupils Under 15 on 1st September at start of School Year.

- a) **Scoring:** Best of 3 games to 15 points.
- b) **Ball:** 4-Wall – Dark Blue Softball – Challenger 3
- c) **Gloves:** 4-Wall – Compulsory Softball – Optional
- d) **Eye-guards:** 4-Wall – Compulsory Softball – Compulsory

(iii) Intermediate Competitions:

Singles and Doubles to All-Ireland level for pupils Under 17 on 1st September at start of School Year.

- a) **Scoring:** Best of 3 games to 15 points.
- b) **Ball:** 4-Wall – Adult Ball Softball – Adult Ball
- c) **Gloves:** 4-Wall – Compulsory Softball – Optional
- d) **Eye-guards:** 4-Wall – Compulsory Softball – Compulsory

(iv) Senior Competitions:

Singles and Doubles to All-Ireland level for pupils Under 19 on 1st September at start of School Year.

- a) **Scoring:** Best of 3 games to 15 points.
- b) **Ball:** 4-Wall – Adult Ball Softball – Adult Ball
- c) **Gloves:** 4-Wall – Compulsory Softball – Optional
- d) **Eye-guards:** 4-Wall – Compulsory Softball – Compulsory

(B) Girls Colleges (4-Wall & 60x30 Championships)

(i) First Years Competitions:

Singles and Doubles to Provincial level only for pupils in their first year in Second Level education.

- a) **Scoring:** Best of 3 games to 15 points.
- b) **Ball:** 4-Wall – Dark Blue Softball – Challenger 3
- c) **Gloves:** 4-Wall – Compulsory Softball – Optional
- d) **Eye-guards:** 4-Wall – Compulsory Softball – Compulsory

(ii) Junior Competitions:

Singles and Doubles to All-Ireland level for pupils Under 16 on 1st September at start of School Year.

- a) **Scoring:** Best of 3 games to 15 points.
- b) **Ball:** 4-Wall – Dark Blue Softball – Challenger 3
- c) **Gloves:** 4-Wall – Compulsory Softball – Optional
- d) **Eye-guards:** 4-Wall – Compulsory Softball – Compulsory

(iii) Senior Competitions:

Singles and Doubles to All-Ireland level for pupils Under 19 on 1st September at start of School Year.

- a) **Scoring:** Best of 3 games to 15 points.
- b) **Ball:** 4-Wall – Dark Blue Softball – Challenger 3
- c) **Gloves:** 4-Wall – Compulsory Softball – Optional
- d) **Eye-guards:** 4-Wall – Compulsory Softball – Compulsory

8. Championships / Competitions Qualification & Age Criteria

- (A)** A Minor player must be 15 years or over on the 1st of January and must not have turned 18 before the 1st of January, of the current year's Championship.
- (B)** An Under 21 player must be 18 years or over on the 1st of January and must not have turned 21 before the 1st of January of the current year's Championship.
- (C)** A Juvenile player in all underage Championships and Competitions must be the specified age on the 1st of January. e.g. In the Under 14 grade a player must not have turned 14 before the 1st of January of the current year's Championship.
- (D)** Overage players are defined by meeting the age criteria on the 31st of December, prior to the year of championship.
- (E)** Players in Adult Inter-County Championships must be 18 years or over on the 1st of January of the Championship year.
- (F)** Players in Adult Inter-Club Championships must be 17 years or over on the 1st of January of the Championship year.

9. Adult Grading

- (A)** There shall be separate Grading for all 4-Wall, 1-Wall, Softball and Hardball Championships.
- (B)** Players are confined to one Grade of Singles and Doubles in Inter-County Competition in 1-Wall and Hardball.
- (C)** Players competing in the following Grades, Junior and Intermediate, can enter the Senior Singles and Doubles Championship and play their own Grade also, in 4-Wall and Softball, in the same championship year.
- (D)** Re-Grading in 4-Wall, 1-Wall and Softball Codes is subject to the approval of the County Committee, Provincial Council and Ard Comhairle.
 - (i) Any player who does win a Senior All Ireland, may be regraded with the approval of the County Committee, Provincial Council and Ard Comhairle.
 - (ii) A non-senior player who represents his/her county in any code at senior level and does not win the All-Ireland title in that grade, will not need to be regraded prior to returning to his/her own grade.
- (E)** A player retains his/her Grade for the duration of that Championship year and is not promoted on winning an All-Ireland title until the start of the next Championship year in that Code.
- (F) Junior B**

The Junior B Singles and Doubles All-Ireland Championship shall be confined to the following players:

 - (i) A Junior B shall not have won a Provincial and/or All-Ireland Singles or Doubles Championship in Minor, Under 21, Junior, Intermediate or Senior, in this code.
 - (ii) A Junior B shall not have won an All-Ireland Championship in Junior B, O35 'A' or 'B', Masters 'A' or 'B', Silver Masters 'A' or 'B', or Golden Masters 'A' or 'B', Emerald Masters 'A' or 'B', Diamond Masters 'A' or 'B', in this code.
 - (iii) A Junior B shall not have won a Junior or Senior All-Ireland Inter Club Championship, in this code.
 - (iv) A Junior B shall not have won an Under 16 All-Ireland Singles or Doubles Championship, in this code.
 - (v) A Junior B player must be over 18 years of age, except when competing in the Inter-Club Championship.
 - (vi) That Women's Junior B All Ireland Singles and Doubles Championship in 4-Wall and Softball be confined to players who have not won a Women's All Ireland Junior B Singles or Doubles Championship or any All-Ireland Championship above this Grade. Provincial Junior B Championship success does not prevent a player from competing in the Women's Junior B Championship in the years following said success.

(G) Junior

The Junior Singles and Doubles All-Ireland Championships shall be confined to the following players:

- (i) Players who have won an Under 16 All-Ireland Championship in Singles or Doubles, in this code.
- (ii) Players who have won a Minor, Under 21 Provincial Championship in Singles or Doubles, in this code.
- (iii) Players who have won a Junior B Singles or Doubles All-Ireland Championship, in this code.
- (iv) A Junior player in Singles or Doubles Championship shall not have won a Minor, Under 21, Junior, Intermediate or Senior All-Ireland Championship, in this code.
- (v) Players who have won a Junior B All Ireland Inter-Club Championship, can elect to play Junior, in this code, but shall retain their Junior B singles and doubles status until such time as they fail to meet the Junior B eligibility criteria, in this code.
- (vi) A Junior player must be over 18 years of age, except when competing in the Inter-Club Championships.

(H) Intermediate

The Intermediate Singles and Doubles All-Ireland Championships shall be confined to the following players:

- (i) Players who have won a Minor or Under 21 or Junior All-Ireland Singles or Doubles Championship, in this code.
- (ii) Players who have won a Junior All-Ireland Inter Club Championship can elect to play Intermediate, in this code, but shall retain their Junior singles and doubles status until such time as they fail to meet the Junior eligibility criteria, in this code.
- (iii) An Intermediate player must be over 18 years of age.

(I) Definition of a Senior Player

A Senior is a player who has won an All-Ireland Intermediate Singles or Doubles championship, or All Ireland Senior Singles or Doubles championship in this code.

(J) Senior Eligibility in 4-Wall and Softball:

- (i) The All-Ireland 4-Wall/Softball Senior Singles and Doubles Championships shall be open to players who have won an All-Ireland intermediate singles or doubles title or senior singles or doubles title in this code. Players taking part in Junior and Intermediate in this code and in the same championship year can also enter senior as a second grade.

(K) Overage Grades Eligibility

- (i) Overage players are defined by meeting the age criteria on the 31st of December, prior to the year of championship.
- (ii) Players are confined to either the A or B Championship in any one Code, in the championship year and may not compete in both.
- (iii) Players taking part in Overage Singles grades, who do not have a doubles partner in that grade, can play singles in their own grade and doubles in another grade, for which they are eligible.

(L) All-Ireland Inter Club Championships

- (i) All players in the All-Ireland Junior B Inter-Club Championships must be eligible to play Junior B in the Singles or Doubles Championship and not have played on an All-Ireland Junior B/Junior/Senior Club Championship winning team.
- (ii) All players in the All-Ireland Junior Inter-Club Championships must be eligible to play Junior B or Junior in the Singles and Doubles Championships and must not have played on an All-Ireland Junior/Senior Club Championship winning team.
- (iii) The Senior Inter-Club Championships are open to all Grades of players.

10. All Ireland Championships and National Competitions General

- (A) Ard Comhairle shall be the promoting body for all Championships and Competitions organised on an All-Ireland basis and shall be empowered to formulate and administer the rules governing such Championships, Competitions and National Team Trials.
- (B) The annual Clár is to be drafted by CCCC and ratified by Ard Comhairle.
- (C) The All-Ireland Championships, National Competitions and Team trials format shall be decided annually by CCCC and ratified by Ard Comhairle in.
- (i) 1-Wall
 - (ii) 4-Wall
 - (iii) Softball
 - (iv) Hardball
 - (v) All Inter-Club Championships.
 - (vi) All National Competitions/Tournaments/Team Trials
- (D) The All-Ireland 4-Wall, 1-Wall, Softball and Hardball Championships / National Competition shall be played in the period specified on the National Clár each year unless there are extenuating circumstances.
- (E) Men's Singles Rankings shall apply to all Championships, Irish Nationals and Ranking Tournaments.
- (i) Any points that a player has accumulated on the National Rankings will decide their seed/position in any of the competitions listed in (10.E) regardless of their Grade.
- (F) All Women's Championships and National Competitions shall be decided annually by CCCC and ratified by Ard Comhairle, with input by the Women's Committee.
- (i) Any points that a player has accumulated on the National Rankings will decide their seed/position in any of the competitions listed in (10.E) regardless of their Grade, with the exception to the Singles All Ireland Championships in 4-Wall & Softball as listed below.
- (G) The Women's Championships in 4-Wall & Softball shall be run in the dropdown style in singles only. This will encompass the following grades: Senior, Intermediate, Junior, Junior B, & Junior C. The following are the rules associated with the championships:
- (i) All Entries to the Women's' Singles All Ireland Championships are to be submitted by the national entry portal, players wishing to enter the separate provincial championships entry via the Provincial Administrator. Doubles entries for the All-Ireland Championships are submitted to the Provincial Administrator
 - (ii) All players are pre-seeded into grading groups; this is based on their previous year's championship results or your grading following on from juvenile participation.
 - a) The Intermediate champion is graded as Senior player.
 - b) The Minor and Junior Champions are graded as Intermediates.
 - c) The Junior B Champion is graded as a Junior player.
 - d) The Junior C Champion is graded as a Junior B player.
 - (iii) All players will then be ranked using the National Ranking System.
 - (iv) A preliminary grading round is played to determine the grade in which the player will actually compete in the championship. The number of grading games will vary from year to year based on the entry numbers.
 - (v) Players who win a Senior Singles Championship in any of the previous 10 years may not compete in the Intermediate Championships.

- (vi) A player who wins a division may not compete again in that division as a “Cooling off period” in their next championship appearance.
 - (vii) The championship then progresses on a knockout basis.
 - (viii) Progression from the grading rounds is dependent on competing in the grading rounds. Giving a walkover in the first match results in elimination from the championships (unless in the case of family bereavement).
 - (ix) The top four seeding players on the current National Rankings List may not compete in the intermediate or lower grades in that year.
 - (x) Players who receive a walkover from a higher seed in the grading round have the choice of what grade they play from the two divisions they are playing for.
- (H)** All National Senior Championships/Competitions shall be done on an Open Draw Format where no Seeding Policy Exists, apart from the winner and runner up from that same competition the previous year, who shall be ranked one and two in the current competition. All others go into an open draw.
- (I)** Where Entries are made on behalf of a player or where a player enters themselves either on-line or by other means for Provincial, All Ireland Championships and National Competitions in 4-Wall, 1-Wall, Softball and Hardball, they do so knowingly that it's on behalf of their respective County. They must be approved by their County who must submit confirmation of the eligibility of players to their respective Provincial Councils and/or CCCC, within the time frame specified. Failure to do so will result in a player being removed from the competition.
- (i) Where a County has confirmed eligibility, but a player is NOT eligible, a fine of €100 will be imposed per offence, and that player will be disqualified from that Championship.
 - (ii) Counties are responsible for their representatives and for any fines a player may incur during any competition regardless of them entering a competition as an individual.
- (J)** Entries for all GAA Handball Competitions/Championships must be accompanied by the appropriate entry fees where applicable. Entries not accompanied by the appropriate fees shall not be entered into the competition.
- (K)** A player who has played, withdrew, conceded a walkover or failed to turn up for a game is deemed to have taken part in that Championship and cannot be listed as a replacement or substitute in the same Championship in the same year. Circulated means by email to County secretaries or via GAA Handball website. Championship means any Singles and/or Doubles Championship run by Provincial Council or GAA Handball Ireland. • Applicable to; **Competition Regulations 2. (A), (i), (B), (C), (D), (i), (E), (F), (i), (G), (i), (H), (I), (i), (J) (i), (K), (i), (ii) & (iii), (L), (i), (ii), (M), (i), (ii) & (iii), (N), (i), (ii) & (iii), (O), (i), (ii) & (iii), (P), (Q).**
- (L)** A Championship Fixture is an Inter-County Fixture and not an individual Fixture.
- (M)** In the Doubles Championship a player must play with a partner from his/her own County.
- (i) Unless in the case of Women's Doubles where the Women's committee can form a doubles team from individual entries from the same province. With the following limitations:
 - (ii) The Player in question does not have a partner available in their own County.
 - (iii) Players ranked in the Top 8 at Senior level cannot be paired together, unless they are from the same County. (Note: (i), (ii) and (iii) are for the Women's championship during a trial period)
- (N)** That Handball, as a virtual non-contact sport, is suitable for female players to only take part in organised challenge games/tournaments/training, playing with both male/female

partners/opponents, organised in accordance with the requirements set out in, **Competition Regulations 11. A, B & C**),

- (O)** All National GAA Handball Finals will have a referee appointed by the National Referee's Committee and sanctioned by CCCC.
- (P)** A referee cannot make an award of a game. The award rests with the relevant Competitions Control Committee acting on the referees' report.
- (Q)** Where a referee fails to submit their report within a period of 14 days after the game, the Competitions Control Committee in charge has power to deal with the facts of the match, to include any webcast material openly available.
- (R)** That in the case where a player cannot fulfil a championship game, (except in the case of the death of an immediate family member, as per **Competition Regulations 13. (C)**) on the dates outlined in the National Clár, then the county must field a substitute or concede the match. This applies in all grades and in all cases except All Ireland semi-finals when, in the event of a county being unable to replace the affected player with a sub, the Provincial Runner-Up in that grade shall be used. This only applies in All-Ireland Semi-Finals.
- (S)** The wearing of protective Eye-guards, lensed or un-lensed, shall be compulsory for All Grades in 4-Wall, 1-Wall and Hardball, and for All Juvenile Grades, including Minor in Softball. Eye-guards shall comply with relevant Safety Standards. **(All players, however, are recommended to always wear Eye-guards while playing handball across all codes and grades).**
- (T)** All Players, Coaches, Trainers, Mentors, Parents/Guardians, Supporters, Referee's, and Officials

12. Qualification for Team Ireland Squads

Criteria for qualification for team Ireland squads shall be as follows:

(A) 4-Wall:

- (i) Open Singles:
The winner of the Senior Singles Championships from the year prior to the event in that code will represent Team Ireland in the Open Singles grade. i.e. winner of the 2027 Senior Singles will represent Ireland in the World Championships in Calgary Canada in 2027.
- (ii) Open Doubles:
Trials will be conducted to select the representatives in the Open Doubles grade.
- (iii) 19&Under:
The winner of the 19&Under Singles in the 4-Wall Junior Nationals prior to the event in that code will represent Team Ireland in the 19&Under Singles grade, must meet age criteria for the international event.
- (iv) 17&Under:
The winner of the 17&Under Singles in the 4-Wall Junior Nationals prior to the event in that code will represent Team Ireland in the 17&Under Singles grade, must meet age criteria for the international event.
- (v) 15&Under:
The winner of the 15&Under Singles in the 4-Wall Junior Nationals prior to the event in that code will represent Team Ireland in the 15&Under Singles grade, must meet age criteria for the international event.

(B) Wallball:

- (i) Open Singles:
The winner of the Open Singles at the Wallball Nationals from the year prior to the event in that code will represent Team Ireland in the Open Singles grade.
- (ii) Open Doubles:
Trials will be conducted to select the representatives in the Open Doubles grade.
- (iii) 19&Under:
The winner of the Minor singles Wallball Championship in the year prior to the event in that code will represent Team Ireland in the 19&Under Singles grade, must meet age criteria for the international event.
- (iv) 17&Under:
The winner of the Under 16 singles Wallball Championship in the year prior to the event in that code will represent Team Ireland in the 17&Under Singles grade, must meet age criteria for the international event.
- (v) 15&Under:
The winner of the Under 14 singles Wallball Championship in the year prior to the event in that code will represent Team Ireland in the 15&Under Singles grade, must meet age criteria for the international event.

13. Permits for Tournaments

- (A) All National Ranking Events/Tournaments must have the sanction of CCCC and have prior approval from Provincial and County Committees. Requests for National Ranking Events must be submitted 40 days prior to the date of the event.
- (B) All Inter County Tournaments/Events must be notified of the Provincial Council at least 30 days prior to date of event.
- (C) All Inter Club Tournaments/Events within a County must be notified to the County Committee at least 30 days prior to date of event.

14. County / Club Colours

- (A) Each County/Club shall register before the commencement of that year's Championships with GAA Handball & their respective Provincial Councils/Provincial CCC, its distinctive Jersey & Shorts with County/Club Colours, through a Digital Image, where applicable. Counties/Clubs can also register an alternative Jersey & Shorts if they wish.
- (B) The registered County Colours must be worn in all inter-county championship matches.
 - i. In the event of a clash of colours in inter-county competitions, either or both must wear their county's registered alternative colours or their registered club colours. The players required to change jerseys can be decided by the toss of a coin.
- (C) The registered Club Colours must be worn in all inter-club championship matches.
 - i. In the event of a clash of colours in inter-club competitions, either or both must wear their clubs registered alternative colours. The players required to change jerseys can be decided by the toss of a coin.
- (D) In Doubles Players must have matching Jerseys & Shorts in all Championship matches/games.
 - (i) Regarding a combined Women's doubles Partnership in Rule 10. (M) (i), (ii), (iii), they must wear their provincial colours.
- (E) Penalty per player/pairing for noncompliance of **Competition Regulations 14. (B), (i), (C), i. & (D), (i)** are as follows.
 - (i) €70.00 for the first offence.
 - (ii) €100.00 for any subsequent offence/s by the same player/team.

15. National Fixtures & Postponements Policy

- (A) A Fixture is such only when it has been decided by CCCC when and where a match between two sides is to take place.
- (B) No postponements allowed, (except in the case as outlined in **15 (C)** below.)
- (C) A postponement is allowed only in the case of a death of an immediate family member (Parent, Spouse, Sibling, Child, or Grandparent or other, at the discretion of CCCC) and a re-Fixture shall be made no earlier than seven days after the ceremony, unless by the agreement with the bereaved player.
- (D) All games must be played as per the dates specified on the Clár. Counties can request to play a match before those dates, but in accordance with **15 (E)** below.

(Note: Matches can be played before the Clár Dates but not afterwards)

- (E) Requests for Changes of Date(s) or Seeking a Specific Day scheduled in Clár na Bliana must be submitted on the Official Request Form and comply with the following conditions:
- (i) The request must be submitted to Competitions.handball@gaa.ie and both provincial representatives on CCCC on the Official Request Form, Emailed by the Rúnaí Contae no later than Midday on the Monday Prior to a fixture.
 - (ii) If a county can accommodate a change of date, then they will have a choice of time and venue.
 - (iii) If the opposing county cannot accommodate the request for a change of date, then the county must field a substitute or concede the match, except in the case of an All-Ireland semi-final when Rule **(10. Q)** will apply.

(NOTE: Any request made directly to the office by a player(s) regarding any fixture will not be tolerated under any circumstances.)

- (F) Where a County cannot fulfil a Fixture, the National Competitions Officer must be notified immediately and certainly no less than 48 hours before the time of the Fixture. The office shall then notify the opposing County, the venue official, the referee and CCCC.
- (G) If, for genuine reasons, a County cannot fulfil a Fixture, and the Nationals Competitions Officer is uncontactable (within 48 hours of the Fixture) the Rúnaí Contae must contact his/her counterpart in the opposing County and notify him/her of the County's inability to fulfil the Fixture. He/she must also notify the venue, and the provincial representative of the CCCC.
- (H) A County failing to notify the National Competitions Officer, or the opposing County and venue; as per **Competition Regulations 15. (F) or (G)**, CCCC impose a fine of €70.00. Counties have 10 working days to pay the fine, failure results in the doubling of the fine to €140.00.
- (I) A County failing to notify the National Competitions Officer, or the opposing County and venue with no time notice, will incur a suspension for the offending player for that competition in the code for the following year.
- (J) Players should not re-schedule Fixtures between themselves.
- (i) A fine of €100 per offence will be imposed for breach of **Competition Regulations 15. (J)**.

- (K)** County officers shall not re-schedule the Fixtures already made, without first seeking permission from CCCC, unless as outlined in **Competition Regulations 15. (G)**.
- (i) A fine of €100 per offence will be imposed for breach of **Competition Regulations 15. (K)**.
- (L)** All players must check in with the venue official before the allotted start time of their Match. In the case of a multi game program, Players should assume that each match lasts 30min, to calculate their match time.
- (i) A player who is late for a match start time/calculated start time will have a point deducted from them for every minute they are late up to 30 minutes after the start time/calculated start time, at which stage the match will be forfeited.
- (M)** Where possible there will be no standalone Semi-Final or Final Fixtures.
- (N)** All Adult Championship and Team events, All Ireland Semi Finals & Finals, shall be in neutral central venues where possible, unless outlined in the competitions Rota, National Clár or by decree of CCCC with approval by Ard Comhairle.
- (O)** All Juvenile Championship and Team events, All Ireland Finals shall be in neutral central venues where possible, unless outlined in the competitions Rota, National Clár or by decree of CCCC with approval by Ard Comhairle.
- (i) Semi Finals are run as per Rota on a home and away basis. A home venue is a home provincial venue and not necessarily a home county venue, venues will be decided by CCCC.
- (P)** In exceptional circumstances the CCCC has the right with a majority consenting to change a Fixture.