



BERKSHIRE PREMIER NETBALL LEAGUE RULES 2026/2027

The Berkshire Premier Netball League is a Saturday League with fixtures played in accordance with the fixture list. Unless otherwise stated below, the rules of England Netball shall apply.

For avoidance of doubt, please see Appendix A for the sanctions table.

1. REGISTRATION

All players playing in the Berkshire Premier Netball League (BPNL) should hold membership of England Netball, Netball South and Berkshire Netball. All players must also be registered to their team via Engage.

A team may register a maximum of 20 players. Team lists complete with individual England ID numbers must be submitted to the EN membership & BPNL Results Secretary 14 days prior to the first game of the season.

Teams may add eligible players (see 1.1) to their registration list after the start of the season provided that their registration does not exceed 20 players and they do so by request to the BPNL Results Secretary before midnight of the Thursday before the player's first game. It is the joint responsibility of the team and BPNL Results Secretary to ensure eligibility is confirmed prior to the fixture in which any new player is to play. It is the responsibility of the team to ensure they have no more than 2 higher regional division players per fixture.

Should a player wish to change teams she can be de-registered and re-registered with another team once during the season for a permanent playing position, not deemed as borrowing, the registration secretary must be notified. This must be done in writing by both teams.

Any team playing a player not registered in the Berkshire Premier League will forfeit the game and will lose 2 points. The non-offending team will be awarded 5 points and 20 goals.

No team may take the court with fewer than 5 registered players (England Netball rule 5) and borrow only 2 other players.

All players and officials, including scorers, must print and sign their names on the Results Form for each match.

Each team will have a team bench and a separate spectators bench. The team bench may have a maximum of 10 consisting of the coaching team, managers, first aid and substitutes. It must be made clear to the match official who is on the team bench at the start of the game.

1.1. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY FOR BPNL PARTICIPATION

Teams may field players from Regional Leagues (Divisions 1, 2, and 3), as well as U16 and U19 Regional competitions. There are no quarter restrictions for these players.

However, the following limitations apply:



- No team may field more than two players in any one BPNL match who are currently registered in Regional Division 1 or Regional Division 2. For the avoidance of doubt, this limit applies to the whole match, not simply the number on court at any one time. Any team that breaches this rule will forfeit the match and be deducted 2 league points. The non-offending team will be awarded 5 points and 20 goals.
- All regional players must be clearly identified on the **BPNL Registration Sheet**, including the specific division they compete in. They must also be marked clearly on each results sheet.
- If a registered player moves up to a higher regional division after registering, they must inform the BPNL Committee immediately. From that point forward, they will be classified as a higher-division player and subject to the **maximum two-player rule**.

Please note:

- Players registered in a **higher national league** (Premier League, Superleague, or National Leagues) are **not eligible** to participate in the BPNL.

NPL Player Eligibility

- Players who are part of **NPL training squads (U15–U19)** are eligible to play in the BPNL **as long as they have not taken to court in an official NPL match**.
- Once a player steps onto court in an **NPL match**, they become **ineligible** to participate in the BPNL.
- Players involved with **U21 or U23 NPL squads**, including training partners, are **not eligible** to play in the BPNL under any circumstances.

These rules are in place to maintain fair and competitive balance within the league and to ensure that all teams adhere to the standards expected across our divisions.

1.2. DE-REGISTERING/RE-REGISTERING PLAYERS

a) A player/Captain wishing to remove themselves/a player from a team's registration should contact the EN membership BPNL Results Secretary.

b) A player may only de-register from one team and re-register for another once during any season. If a player de-registers they cannot later re-register for the same team.

c) If a player re-registers games already played, including those for the team with which the player was previously registered, will be considered a "Borrow" (See sections 11.2 and 12.2). The exception is where the league has adopted Divisional play. In this structure, if the player is moving between Division 1 teams only games played for Division 1 teams for which the player was not registered will count towards the maximum number of borrows. If at the point of re-registering at the player has exceeded the maximum number of borrows, the team in question will not be penalised but no further borrowing can occur.

d) The maximum number of players that any individual team can deregister and replace is 5 and will be at the committee's discretion. A team may deregister more than 10 players however this will reduce the maximum number of players listed on their team sheet.



1.3. SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PLAYERS

Unless otherwise agreed by the committee all players in BPNL will be aged 14 or over on 1st September prior to the commencement of the league (Proof of age may be requested). The committee reserve the right to consider younger applicants on the evidence supplied, for example the player has been identified by The Berkshire Netball Development Officer (Sarah Feast) an accredited Regional Talent ID coach.

All U18 players/umpires/coaches must be always accompanied by a Team Manager/Coach/Responsible Adult. In the event of any safeguarding issue concerning an U18 young person, it should be reported immediately to the league safeguarding officer who will follow England Netball Safeguarding Young People procedures.

2. DURATION OF GAME

Games will consist of four quarters of 15 minutes with an interval of 2 minutes at quarter time and five minutes at half time. Timing will be controlled by a competent timekeeper from the home team and listed on the fixture sheet. Time will not be held during a game for injury or any other reason prohibiting safe play. Umpires may stop play for injuries, issues with the court or for any game management issue, but the timekeepers must not stop the timer. Injured players should leave the court immediately to allow play to continue. Care should be taken when moving injured players. No team may take to the court with fewer than 5 registered players (England Netball rule 5) and borrow only 2 other players.

3. LATE ARRIVALS

Teams arriving late for a match will be penalised by losing two goals for being late plus one goal for every minute after the game has started. These goals will be added to the non-offending team's final score by the Umpires in charge of the game. If a team does not arrive 10 minutes after the start time of the match, the team shall forfeit the game and be deducted 5 points. The non-offending team will be awarded 5 points and 20 goals.

4. MATCH OFFICIALS

- a) Each team must provide an umpire for a game who is qualified to a minimum "C" award.
- b) In line with England Netball's guidance, umpires must be 18 years or older to officiate BPNL matches. While EN permits umpires aged 16–18 to officiate, they recommend that U18s do not umpire adult matches. If a club wishes to request an exception, they must submit an appeal (request?) at least 7 days before the match, including details of a suitable courtside mentor (non-parent). This process must be followed for each match, even if using the same umpire and mentor.
- c) Should an umpire fail to arrive before the start of the game, the team on behalf of which he/she is umpiring, will be deducted 5 points. In the event that a substitute umpire can be found the game will go ahead and the team providing the umpire will not be deducted points. The substitute umpire must be qualified to "C" or above. If a substitute umpire cannot be found, the teams due to play can choose to play the match in their own time within 4 weeks of the fixture date or alternatively email a request to the committee to use the reserve date. Should a team regularly fail to provide an umpire (deemed 3 times or more across the season) their position in the league will be reviewed by the committee.



d) If an umpire becomes unwell/injured a substitute umpire may be used but only if immediately available. The substitute umpire must be qualified to "C" award or above. A delay of up to 5 minutes to the timing will be permitted to make this arrangement. If an umpire cannot be found the result will stand if play has commenced in the third quarter. If the game is abandoned prior to the start of the 3rd quarter, the game must be replayed within 4 weeks of the fixture date, or alternatively, email a request to the committee to use a reserve date.

e) Each team must provide a competent scorer for their fixture. Teams that fail to provide a scorer will be deducted 1 point.

f) Umpires will adhere to the England Netball Code of Conduct:
<https://d2cx26qpfwuhvu.cloudfront.net/englandnetball/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/01095413/Codes-of-conduct.pdf>

5. RESULTS

A Results Form must be fully completed for every match and submitted in accordance with the league process by **midnight on the Sunday** following the fixture.

A Results Form will only be treated as fully completed if all required match details, player details, officials' details, captain details, and required printed names and signatures are included.

Failure to submit a fully completed Results Form will result in a deduction of **1 league point**.

Failure to submit the Results Form and/or result by the stated deadline will result in a deduction of **5 league points**.

Thoroughly completed means the following is included:

- Home and Away team names
- date and venue of fixture
- final score and winning team name
- opposition player of the match
- quarter-by-quarter scores
- all players named in accordance with their EN registered name
- quarter positions for all players who took to the court
- clear identification of any player playing up or any player of Regional status
- note of any borrowed player, including team name
- home and away umpire names and qualification levels
- home and away scorer names
- printed name and signature for the on-court captain (on each own team sheet)
- any other official details required by the league form

The following points system shall be used:-

5 points for a win

3 points for a draw

2 points for the losing team if their score is within five goals of the opponent's score



1 point for the losing team if they obtain more than 50% of the opponent's score

6. CONCEDED GAMES

If a match is cancelled (not played) for any reason other than rules 8 and 9, then the offending team will have 5 points deducted and the opposition will be awarded 5 points and 20 goals. In the event of a team cancelling more than once in any one half of the season, they could be disqualified from the League in which case all previous results will then be calculated in accordance with rule 10.

Each team captain has the responsibility of informing their umpire, their opponents and the EN membership & Results Secretary of the cancelled game. Failure to notify both opponents and the EN membership & Results Secretary will result in a £35 fine.

7. POSTPONEMENTS

No team may postpone or cancel a match without the agreement of BPNL. Games will be played as set out on the fixture list and according to the Constitution. Any team, which is unable to field a team for a match, should notify their opponents and the EN membership & Results Secretary at least 3 days prior to the fixture. The opponents will be awarded 5 points and 20 goals.

The committee reserves the right to allow a game to be arranged in exceptional circumstances. Any team requesting any postponement must do so in writing at a minimum of 14 days in advance. Should a game be rearranged the full cost of this game will be funded by the team requesting the rearranged fixture, including the payment of both umpires.

Postponed fixtures must be played within 4 weeks of the fixture date. Should the teams be unable to agree upon a mutually convenient date to play the postponed fixture then the Committee will specify when and where it will be played.

Where a game is forfeited (played), the opponents will be awarded 5 points and 20 goals. The forfeiting team will also be deducted 2 points.

8. ABANDONED GAMES

If a game is abandoned due to serious injury to a player or any other unforeseen extra-ordinary circumstances, the result will stand if play has commenced in the third quarter. If the game is abandoned prior to the start of the 3rd quarter, the game must be replayed within 4 weeks of the fixture date.

9. WITHDRAWAL

For teams withdrawing from the League during the first half of the season, all points and goals earned by the opposition shall be considered void.

If a team withdraws during the second half of the season all points and goals earned by the opposition during the second half of the season shall be considered void.

10. FINAL PLACINGS

In the event of teams finishing on the same number of points, goal average will decide placings.



11. SOUTH PLAY OFF ENTRY

- a) Only teams competing in Division 1 of the BPNL will be eligible to contend for a place in the Berkshire Netball Regional Qualifying Tournament, which feeds into the South Open Division 3 Play-Offs.
- b) Entry into the South Open Division 3 Play Offs will be through the Berkshire Netball Regional Qualifying Tournament. This shall be held no later than 2 weeks prior to South Region play offs. Teams may only use players added to the Registration Sheet before Round 11 (date TBA by England Netball South). These players must have played a minimum of 12 quarters within the current BPNL season for the team applying for the tournament.
- c) Teams wanting to enter the Berkshire Netball Regional Qualifying Tournament must be based within Berkshire and should refer to Berkshire Netball for their application rules.
- d) Teams must be aware of the eligibility criteria to enter the South Region play-offs (this can be found on the Netball South website).
- e) If no Division 1 teams apply, the BPNL Committee, in consultation with Berkshire Netball, may review applications from other teams at their discretion.

12. LEAGUE STRUCTURE

In the event of the number of participants in the league being 12 or below the Superleague structure shall apply. The Committee shall have authority to decide the structure of the league if the number of participants is greater than 14. If the Committee decided to move to Divisional play, teams will be divided based on their finishing positions from the previous season. New teams will join Division 2.

13. SUPERLEAGUE PLAY

13.1 STRUCTURE

Each team will play each other once to determine which teams will be in the higher and lower tiers. Teams will then play the teams in their own tier and there will be a winner and runner up for each tier. Points from the first half of the season will be **NOT** be carried forward.

13.2 BORROWING PLAYERS

Teams may borrow a player from any team within the league. Players may only play twice for the same team and on the 3rd time will be registered with that team in accordance with the rules above.

In the event of a team failing to comply with the above, the team will forfeit the game and lose 2 points. The non-offending team will be awarded 5 points and 20 goals.

14. DIVISIONAL PLAY

14.1 STRUCTURE

Teams will be split into two divisions with a maximum of 10 teams in each. Each team will play each other twice. Depending on the number of entries into the BPNL, the committee shall decide the structure of the two divisions. The maximum number of teams will also be dependent on indoor court availability.



14.2 BORROWING PLAYERS

Division 1 teams may borrow any player from Division 2. A borrowed player may only play for the same team twice during the season.

Division 2 teams may borrow the same registered player from other Division 2 teams 3 times.

In the event of a team failing to comply with the above, the team will forfeit the game and lose 2 points. The non-offending team will be awarded 5 points and 20 goals.

14.3 POOL PLAYERS

Individual players may apply to BPNL to be added to a pool list which shall be made available to teams at the start of the season and upon request throughout the season. The player must link to BPNL on Engage and be confirmed as eligible by the registration secretary before taking to court. No more than 5 players can be on the pool list from the same affiliated club. A pool player can play a maximum of 2 times for the same time in a season. A pool player cannot be registered for the Berkshire Netball Regional Qualifying Tournament. The committee reserves the right to review this rule throughout the season.

14.4 PROMOTION AND RELEGATION

- a) The top two teams in Division 2 will move up into Division 1 and the bottom two teams from Division 1 will go down into Division 2.
- b) If a request is made for a team who has won promotion to Division One to stay in the lower division, the committee will use its discretion to make a decision based on immediate parties involved and in the best interest of the league.
- c) If league is at capacity the bottom two teams from Division 2 will lose their places in the Premier League but may enter the application rally.
- d) An application rally will be held at the end of each season. The vacant Division 2 positions will be offered to the two top teams in that rally. If an application rally is not held, teams may enter the BPNL at the discretion of the Committee. The application rally will be open to any team with the following restriction on individual players:

The application rally will be open to any team. Restrictions and criteria can be found in Appendix B.

15. FINES

If a fine is not received within 14 days of notification the amount payable will be Doubled

16. HEALTH AND SAFETY.

- a) If a player has a blood injury they must immediately notify the umpire and leave the court to tend to the wound. Play will continue whilst the player is off the court. The player can only return to the game once the umpire is satisfied that the wound has been cleaned and covered completely.



b) Gloves which meet All England guidelines may be worn, i.e. are plain, soft leather or microfibre (e.g. neoprene) which are manufactured without seams (or with internally sewn seams) and have no abrasive materials or anything that may constitute a danger to another player.

c). Hats/Headscarves which meet All England guidelines may be worn, i.e. the material used for the head covering is soft and without embellishments, which might constitute a danger to any other player on the court, and with potential flowing/flapping edges held securely around the neck or tucked into the shirt collar. It should be as neat and secure as possible.

d). Fingernails, real or acrylic, shall be short and smooth, even when wearing gloves.

e) BPNL recommends that individuals (player/coach/umpire) if pregnant should only participate with approval from their doctor and in accordance with any guidelines.

England Netball Personal Accident Insurance cover excludes any loss of expense due to pregnancy, childbirth, miscarriage or any consequence thereof. If for example a member who is pregnant is involved in an accident not related to the pregnancy subject to the conditions of the policy the relevant benefits would be payable. However, if any situation (such as hospitalisation) was prolonged as a result of pregnancy, pregnancy complications and even early childbirth then this portion of any claim is not covered.

17. LIABILITY

The Berkshire Premier League does not hold itself responsible for:

a) injuries incurred or any loss of equipment or valuables.

b) pets. Pets should not be brought to League fixtures.

c) children. Children are brought solely at the parent's risk, and should be kept under control at all times, for the safety of both players and children. Failure to comply with this may result in the responsible adult/player being asked to leave the court area with the child, at the discretion of the umpire or a committee member.

18. GRIEVANCES AND DISPUTES

Complaints of any nature shall be submitted in writing to the BPNL Secretary or BPNL Chair within seven (7) working days of the incident. Complaints shall be dealt with in accordance with Section 7 of the BPNL Constitution. Outcomes of complaints may be reported to AENA at the Committee's discretion.

Amended April 2026.

Approved at AGM July 2026.



APPENDIX A – Sanctions Table

Breach	Sanction
Playing an unregistered player	Forfeit match, -2 points; opposition awarded 5 points and 20 goals
Playing more than 2 Regional Div 1/Div 2 players in a match	Forfeit match, -2 points; opposition awarded 5 points and 20 goals
Borrowing breach	Forfeit match, -2 points; opposition awarded 5 points and 20 goals
Team 10+ minutes late	Forfeit match, -5 points; opposition awarded 5 points and 20 goals
Failure to provide umpire	-5 points
Failure to provide scorer	-1 point
Incomplete results form	-1 point
Failure to submit results on time (midnight on the Sunday following the fixture)	-5 points
Cancelled / conceded game	-5 points; opposition awarded 5 points and 20 goals
Failure to notify cancellation	£35 fine
Failure to comply with the conditions of entry by a team accepted through the entry process	-20 points



APPENDIX B – Restrictions and Criteria for BPNL Entry Tournament

1. Purpose

The BPNL Entry Play-Off (Application Rally) shall be used to determine which team(s) are offered any vacant place(s) in the Berkshire Premier Netball League for the following season.

2. Date and Venue

The Entry Play-Off shall be held on a date agreed by the Committee at an indoor venue used by the BPNL during the Winter season. The Committee shall confirm the venue, timings and format once entries have been received.

3. Agreement to Enter

By entering a team into the BPNL Entry Play-Off, clubs/teams agree that:

- a) they are able and willing to meet the financial and logistical commitments of participating in the BPNL for the following season, if successful;
- b) they will comply with all obligations and responsibilities set out in the Competition Regulations; and
- c) they are bound by the BPNL Rules and Constitution and by all applicable England Netball rules, policies, Codes of Conduct and Disciplinary Regulations.

4. Player Eligibility

- a) Only players who will be available to play for that team in the following season may participate in the Entry Play-Off.
- b) All players must be aged 14 or over as at 11.59pm on 31 August immediately prior to the start of the relevant season.
- c) All players must hold current England Netball membership and be eligible to play.
- d) Players already registered to, or who have played for, a club/team that has participated in the BPNL during the current season may not play for another team in the Entry Play-Off.
- e) Players who have played 12 quarters or more in any Open Regional Division 1, Division 2 or Division 3 competition, including play-offs, during the current season shall not be eligible to participate in the Entry Play-Off. In addition, no team may field more than two players in the Entry Play-Off who are currently registered in Regional Division 1 or Division 2.
- f) Players registered in any higher national league, including Premier League, Superleague or National Leagues, shall not be eligible to participate in the Entry Play-Off.
- g) Players who are part of NPL training squads (U15–U19) may participate in the Entry Play-Off only if they have not taken to court in an official NPL match. Once a player has taken to court in an official NPL match, they become ineligible. Players involved with U21 or U23 NPL squads, including training partners, are not eligible to participate in the Entry Play-Off under any circumstances.

5. Registration

- a) Teams must submit a completed Registration Sheet, including all players' names and England Netball membership numbers, no later than seven (7) days before the Entry Play-Off.
- b) No additions or changes may be made after this deadline without the prior agreement of



the Committee.

c) Players will also be required to register and provide photo ID on the day of the Entry Play-Off to enable the Committee to monitor eligibility and participation for the following season.

d) Only players listed on the Registration Sheet and confirmed as eligible may participate.

6. **Following Season Commitment**

Any player who takes part in the Entry Play-Off must play a minimum of 12 quarters for that team in the following BPNL season, unless unable to do so due to pregnancy, injury or other exceptional circumstances accepted by the Committee.

7. **Failure to Comply**

Failure to comply with the eligibility or participation requirements set out in this Appendix may result in sanctions being imposed by the Committee, including a deduction of twenty (20) league points in the following season.