

Victorian Rules 1866

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Drafted by delegates of the Carlton, Melbourne, Royal Park and South Yarra clubs at the Freemasons' Hotel, Melbourne, 8 May 1866

1. The distance between the goals shall not be more than 200 yards; and the width of the playing space to be measured equally on each side of a line drawn through the centres of the two goals, not more than 150 yards. The goal posts shall be seven yards apart, of unlimited height.
2. The captains of each side shall toss for choice of goal; the side losing the toss, or a goal, has a kick off from the centre point between the goals. After a goal is kicked the sides shall change ends.
3. A goal must be kicked fairly between the posts without touching either of them, or any portion of the person of one of the opposite side. In case of the ball being forced (except with the hand or arms) between the goal posts in a scrimmage, a goal shall be awarded.
4. Two posts, to be called the 'kick off' posts, shall be erected at a distance of 20 yards on each side of the goal posts and in a straight line with them.
5. In case the ball is kicked behind goal, any one of the side behind whose goal it is kicked may bring it 20 yards in front of any portion of the space between the 'kick off' posts and shall kick it towards the opposite goal.
6. Any player catching the Ball directly from the foot or leg may call 'Mark'; he then has a free kick from any spot in a line with his mark and the centre of his opponent's goal posts; no player from the opposite side being allowed to come inside the spot marked, or within five yards in any direction.
7. Tripping and hacking are strictly prohibited. Pushing with the hands or body is allowed when any Player is in rapid motion. Holding is only allowed while a player has the ball in hand except in the case provided in Rule 6.
8. The ball may be taken in hand at any time but not carried further than is necessary for a kick, and no player shall run with the ball unless he strikes it against the ground every five or six yards.
9. When the ball goes out of bounds (the same being indicated by a row of posts) it shall be bought back to the point where it crossed the boundary-line, and thrown in at right angles with that line.
10. The ball, while in play, may, under no circumstances, be thrown.
11. In case of deliberate infringement of any of the above Rules by either side, the Captain of the other side may claim that any one of his party may have a free kick from the place where the breach of the rule was made.
12. Before the commencement of a match each side shall appoint an umpire, and they shall be the sole judges of goals and breaches of the rules.. The nearest umpire shall be appealed to in every case of dispute.