



Tackling

Tackling must be between the knees and shoulders. To avoid being penalised for a high tackle, go well below the shoulders. It's a good idea anyway to tackle around the waist and to include their arms, to limit the arm movement of your opponent so they find it hard to pass the ball off.

For the most, the object of a tackle is to wrap your opponent up, so they can't pass the ball. Sometimes, though, the nature of the tackle will be to force your opponent to the ground. When tackling from behind, make sure you bring your opponent directly down or to the side.

Umpires are really strict if you tackle from behind and force your opponent down in any forward movement – often known as “in the back”.

Being Tackled

The only time you can be tackled is when in possession of the ball. You can be bumped off the ball – but that's a different action. Your opponent can tackle you by wrapping their arms around you between your knees and shoulders and therefore limiting your movement.

An opponent can also charge at you and knock you to the ground – again, only if they tackle you between the knees and shoulders. You only need to be tackled once this way, to realise the importance of not holding onto the ball unless the game situation at that time requires it.

Hopefully, your team members around you should be alerting you by telling you ‘you're hot’ (ie. someone is on your tail and you are about to be tackled) or if you have the time to look for your options ie. kicking / hand-balling to a team mate who is free.

Ball Handling

Developing strength in your hands to grip the ball will increase your better chances at marking. It is a skill that is always needed on the field, whether you are handballing, marking and lowering the ball to kick.

Do figure eight movements around your knees whenever you get the chance! You can do this yourself before and after training and games. You will notice your ball handling skills will increase the more you follow these exercises.

Hand Balling

The ball must rest on the platform hand and be hit with a clenched fist. Players should have their eyes on the ball.

The punching fist is formed by placing the thumb outside, not inside the fingers.

The stance is nearly side on to allow the punching arm to swing through freely. Keep knees slightly bent to maintain balance.

For a right-handed handball, the left foot is forward, and vice versa for a left-handed handball.

Punching arm is also slightly bent.

After contact is made with the ball, the fist remains on the platform hand – “catch the fist”.

Holding the Ball

Part of the excitement of Aussie Rules is the speed of the game. It is considered an offence not to try to be ‘playing’ the ball. If you have the ball, and are tackled and make no effort to handball, or kick away immediately, you will be penalised for ‘Holding the Ball’.

A player cannot lie on the ball, preventing others access to it either. If you have tried to release the ball, but didn’t have the opportunity to get it away, then the umpire will throw the ball up between 2 rucks.