

REGULATIONS



Secondary School Competition

Olympic Handball Regulations 2025/26

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INTRODUCTION

Over 30 million people in 183 countries take part in the game of (Olympic) Handball. Olympic Handball Ireland (OHI) acts as the National Governing Body (NGB) for the sport of Olympic Handball for the whole island of Ireland.

Established in 1975, OHI is recognized by Sport Ireland, the Federation of Irish Sport, the Olympic Federation of Ireland, the European Handball Federation, and the International Handball Federation as the sole governing body for the sport of Olympic handball in Ireland.

Olympic Handball is applicable to all age groups, with adaptations to the rules dependent on physical space conditions (hall sizes, indoor/outdoor), equipment (balls, goals), time restraints, and human resources (referees volunteers, OHI representatives).

1. REGISTRATION

1.1 REGISTRATRATION PROCESS

The process for registration will happen through the "GameDay" platform. Schools will register ONLY the number of teams they wish to enter in the blitz day and the school will be automatically affiliated with Olympic Handball Ireland, having access to discounts on equipment, education and etc.

1.2 PROVINCIAL BLITZ DAYS

Registration will be open for BLITZ DAY events in the 4 provinces of Ireland and Northern Ireland:

- LEINSTER - 12th of November, Gormanston College, Meath
- MUNSTER - 19th of November, Neptune Stadium, Cork
- CONNAUGH - 26th of November, Knocknarea Arena ATU, Sligo - Date to be confirmed with venue in early September.
- ULSTER - TBC

Teams will register for the event they wish to attend. The number of teams is limited in each of the blitz days and places will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

In the case of spots being sold out, we will have an interest form open for schools who wish to take part. In the case the minimum number of teams is accomplished, a second date will be opened for the Province.

To allow more schools to participate, we will initially limit entries to ONE team per category per school. If spots remain after registration closes, we may open up the opportunity for additional teams from each school.

Schools should register for the blitz day in the province where they are located.

The winners of the Provincial Blitz Days will be qualified to the ALL-IRELAND Finals.

1.3 COSTS

The cost to take part in the Provincial Blitz Days is €50 per team.

Teams qualified to the ALL-IRELAND will not have any additional entry fee cost.

1.4 OPENING & CLOSING DATES

Early Bird Registrations (with 10% discount) will open on the 12th of May 2025 until the 8th of June 2025. From the 9th of June until the 20th of September, the regular fee will be applied (see 1.3)

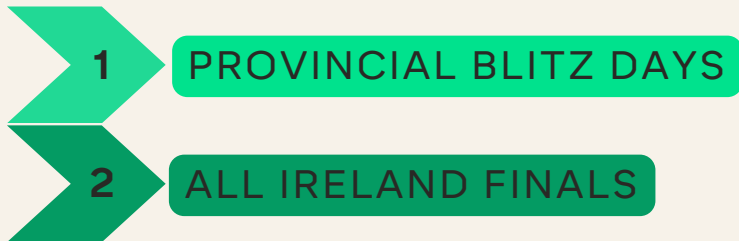
A complete table with dates is in the appendix section.

1.5 REFUNDS

Refunds will not be provided in any circumstance.

2. COMPETITION FORMAT

The Secondary School competition format will be divided into 2 phases – Provincial Blitz Day (1) & All-Ireland Finals (2).



2.1 PROVINCIAL BLITZ DAYS

The Provincial Blitz Days, organised by Olympic Handball Ireland, aim to bring together schools from counties across the provinces of Ireland and Northern Ireland to compete for a spot in the All-Ireland Finals.

Teachers/coaches must register their teams for the event they want to take part.

The number of teams taking part in the events in each category is limited and may vary from each province. Teams will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

The Provincial Blitz Days will be held on a blitz day format with group stage and finals.

Matches draw will be done prior to the event by GameDay Platform and schools will receive the schedule in advance.

2.4 ALL-IRELAND FINALS

The All-Ireland finals will be organised by Olympic Handball Ireland and will happen in April 2026.

The provincial winners of each category in the provinces of Ulster, Munster, Leinster & Connacht will be qualified for the All-Ireland.

The All-Ireland will be held on a blitz day format with group stage and finals.

Matches draw will be done prior to the event by GameDay Platform and schools will receive the schedule in advance.

3. AGE GROUPS, COURT SIZE, BALL, GAME TIME AND ALTERNATIVES OF THE SPORT

The students that participate on the Secondary School competitions will be distribute by the following age groups, accordingly to the table below:

CATEGORY	CLASS/YEAR
JUNIORS	1st, 2nd & 3rd Years (ROI) Year 9, Year 10 & Year 11 (NI)
SENIORS	4th, 5th & 6th Years (ROI) Year 12, Year 13 & Year 14 (NI)

The alternatives for the different competitions and for the different age groups are as follow:

CETOGORY	COURT SIZE (minimum)	BALL SIZE	GAME LENGTH/BREAK	NUMBER OF PLAYERS
JUNIORS	30m x 20m	2	At least 2 halves of 7 minutes	5x5 or 7x7 Depending on hall size
SENIORS	30m x 20m	2	At least 2 halves of 7 minutes	5x5 or 7x7 Depending on hall size

a) See technical-pedagogic rules

b) Length of matches can be adapted depending on agreement between schools and/or the organiser.

4.TEAMS

4.1 JUNIORS & SENIORS (HANDBALL 5 OR 7):

4.1.1 Seven (7) players minimum and fourteen (14) maximum per team.

4.1.2 At least one (1) teacher being responsible for the Team/Group.

NOTE:

- Outfield Players must have uniform colours across the team.
- Goalkeepers must be in a separate colour from outfield players.
- No gloves allowed.

5. TECHNICAL - PEDAGOGIC REGULATION

5.1 Substitutions are unlimited and can happen at any stage of the game.

5.2 Players need to leave the court before the substitute player can go in.

5.3 Substitution needs to be made in the designated area – near the table official.

5.4 In the case of disciplinary sanction (2 minute exclusion), the team in question remain with one player down for the duration of the exclusion. PEDAGOGIAL REGULATION IS NOT APPLIED FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

6. GENERAL RULES

6.1 JUNIOR (HANDBALL 5 OR 7)

6.1.1 TEAM BUILDING - Per game, each team can use a minimum of 7 players and a maximum of 14 players.

6.1.2 Ball repositioning is done in the middle line after the referee's whistle.

6.1.3 SUBSTITUTIONS:

6.1.3.1 Substitutions are unlimited and can happen at any stage of the game.

6.1.3.2 Players need to leave the court before the substitute player can go in.

6.1.3.3 Substitution needs to be made in the designated area – near the table official.

6.1.4 IT IS MANDATORY to use an individual defence (1x1) in the 1st period and a defence in two lines (e.g. 4:2, 3:3, 5:1) in the 2nd period. "Wall-type" defence (6: 0) is not allowed.

6.2.5. SANCTIONS:

6.2.5.1. The exclusion time is 2 (two) minutes (pedagogical substitution is not allowed).

6.2.5.2. In the event of disqualification from the game (red card), the team in question, after the completion of the 2 minutes of exclusion, may replace the disqualified player.

6.2 SENIORS (Handball 5 or 7)

6.2.1 Regulated by the official rules of the sport, except for the “time-out”, “length of the match”, “number of players” and “tie break”.

6.2.2 TEAM BUILDING

Per game, each team can have a minimum of 7 players and a maximum of 14 players.

7. CLASSIFICATION, SCORING AND TIE DOWN

7.1. The Blitz Days will use the format of blitz day where teams will be allocated in groups made by draw system. The final format of the competition will be dependent on the final number of teams taking part on the blitz day.

7.2. In the event of a tie in points in any competition, the tiebreaker will be made as follows:

- a. By the number of points obtained in the games between them.
- b. The team that has the highest goals scored in total games carried out between all teams.
- c. The lowest number of goals conceded in the respective phase of the competition.
- d. Biggest difference between goals scored and conceded in total games carried out between all teams.
- e. In the event that a tie still exists, it is up to the organisation to determine the tiebreaker to be made.

NOTE:

- When a team, for whatever reason, is removed from the competition, all games played by/against them do not count towards the final ranking.

7.3 At all age groups, at the end of the regular time in the knockout games (Provincial Finals & All-Ireland Finals), if any game ends in a draw, the rule of:

- 1 period of three (3) minutes extra time.
- If the draw subsist, "golden goal" rule will be applied (the first team to score a goal wins).

NOTE:

The start of the extra time and golden goal period will be by throw off done by the referee.

8. REFEREEING

8.1 OHI will be responsible for refereeing all the Blitz Day events in the four provinces, as well as the All-Ireland finals.

8.2 Teachers will be expected to assist with table official (score keeping) during the events.

9. OMITTED CASES

9.1. Omissions in this Specific Regulation are analysed by the Olympic Handball Ireland (by the Director of Operations and the Technical Coordinator). In the event of any omissions during an event where immediate action/decision needs to be made, the group coordinator in conjunction with the teachers involved on the day will take a decision based on fairness, fair play, and the well-being of all involved.

Where an OHI representant is present, it will be in the last instances the final deliberate of a decision over the matter in question - not subject to appeal.

APPENDIX

1. BLITZ DAYS CALENDAR

COMPETITION PHASE	DATE	LOCATION	ORGANISER
BLIZ DAY Qualification	TBC	ULSTER	OHI
BLIZ DAY Qualification	12th of NOVEMBER, 25	LEINSTER Gormanston College, Co. Meath	OHI
BLIZ DAY Qualification	19th of NOVEMBER, 25	MUNSTER Neptune Stadium, Cork City	OHI
BLIZ DAY Qualification	26th of NOVEMBER, 25 TBC with venue in early September	CONNACHT Knocknarea Arena ATU, Sligo	OHI
ALL-IRELAND	22nd of APRIL, 2026	Gormanston College, Co. Meath	OHI