



**MALLING & MAIDSTONE
NETBALL LEAGUE**

**LEAGUE RULES
2026**

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The League is called the “Malling and Maidstone Netball League” (referred to hereafter as The League). The League’s objective is to promote interest, support people participating in and develop the game of netball in the Malling and Maidstone area.

The League comprises of two seasons; the winter league and the summer league. The winter league is the main league. The summer league is a competitive and fun league without promotion or relegation.

The League rules and regulations stipulated in this document should be followed in conjunction with the INF Rules of Netball, with permitted variances noted under England Netball’s Domestic Rules Guidance.

1. MEMBERSHIP

- 1.1. A member of the League is a person who plays or umpires in the League. They must be a member of England Netball (EN) either through a club/team or county. The membership period runs from 01 September to 31 August. Failure to purchase your membership prior to the due date will deem your insurance invalid until such time as your membership fee is received by EN.

2. APPLICATION TO THE LEAGUE

- 2.1. Application forms for club/team admission to the winter league shall be issued prior to the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and should be handed in at the AGM. A representative of each club or team must attend the AGM to ensure their application is considered for entry to the winter league.
 - 2.1.1. Application forms for club/team admission to the summer league must be submitted on the league website by 31 March and are not affected by rule 2.1.
- 2.2. Clubs/teams applying to join the winter league after the AGM shall be considered by the League Committee.
- 2.3. If there is an oversubscription of teams, priority shall be given to those who played in the winter league the previous year.
- 2.4. No team will be accepted into the League with less than 7 players.
- 2.5. Team names must be acceptable to the League Committee.
- 2.6. The League Committee must be notified before a club/team changes its name during the season.
- 2.7. No two teams shall have the same name.

3. ANNUAL REGISTRATION

- 3.1. A Player Registration Form for each participating team must be completed in full and returned in the format requested, with fees, to the named Committee Officer(s) by the appointed date, prior to the start of the League.

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4. ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

- 4.1. Annual subscriptions and other fees will be determined by the League Committee and announced at the AGM for adoption at the start of the forthcoming winter season.
- 4.2. All teams shall pay a deposit which will be determined and held by the League. Any team cancelling two or more matches will forfeit their deposit and a new deposit will be payable on request.
- 4.3. Match fees and any additional fees will be collected by way of invoicing each team.
- 4.4. Any outstanding or refundable monies will be adjusted on the next invoice.
- 4.5. In the event of any outstanding monies owed to the League by a team, that team and all members of that team will be ineligible to play within the League, until such times as an agreement has been reached or the outstanding amount has been paid in full.
- 4.6. Consistent late payment of fees will result in referral to the League Committee and points may be deducted at the League Committee's discretion.

5. UNIFORM

- 5.1. Team Captains shall ensure that their players wear club or team colours for all fixtures.
- 5.2. Playing uniforms will be polo/t-shirts, netball skirts, netball dresses and sweatshirts, hooded sweatshirts (hood must be tucked in) in uniform colours.
 - 5.2.1. Tracksuit bottoms, leggings, cycle shorts or shorts may be worn under a netball skirt or netball dress.
- 5.3. You will be asked to leave the court if you are wearing inappropriate uniform, which will be at the discretion of the umpires. Bra type tops are deemed inappropriate.
- 5.4. Appropriate footwear must be worn by all players and umpires to ensure health and safety of all. Leisure trainers are deemed unacceptable footwear. The umpire's decision is final.
- 5.5. Bibs or position patches must be worn, front and back, and be visible at all times during play.
- 5.6. In the event of a clash of colours, the first named team shall change bibs or position patch colours.

6. PLAYERS

- 6.1. To qualify to participate in the League, all players must be a registered member of EN. Players must have paid the membership fee due and be in receipt of confirmation of their membership prior to taking the court.
- 6.2. A new player may register with one team/club after the season has started by completing the MMNL New Player Registration Card. This should be completed in full and countersigned by the opposing Team Captain by the end of the match.

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- 6.2.1. It is the responsibility of the team to ensure that the player has not previously registered with another team in the current season. Any player found to be already registered will be treated as an illegal player and rule 6.4 will apply.
- 6.2.2. The team will be invoiced one half of the MMNL Team Registration & ABRFC Membership per session(s) played by their new player.
- 6.3. A player can only play for one club/team during a season, except under transfer. A transfer fee will be invoiced to the new team.
 - 6.3.1. A player can transfer once during a season. A player transferring to a new team must complete a Transfer Card which must be signed by their current Team Captain and then countersigned by their new Team Captain. The card must be submitted to the League Divisional Representative by sending a photo of the card on their new team's Division WhatsApp group. This needs to be done at least seven days before transfer can take place. The Divisional Representative will confirm the receipt of the Transfer Card before the transferring player can play for the new team. No player may transfer after 31 December of that playing year unless there are unusual circumstances which are agreed by the League Committee.
- 6.4. Any team found to have played an unregistered player, illegal player or a player who is registered with another team within the League shall incur a 2 point penalty deduction. They will also forfeit any points gained during the match. 3 points will be awarded to the opposition. All goals will be null and void.
 - 6.4.1. Penalties as in 6.4 will be incurred for any subsequent match the player competes in and remains unregistered or has not transferred.
- 6.5. The minimum age to play in the League is 14.
 - 6.5.1. The eligibility of players aged 13 to play in the League is at the discretion of the League Committee. They must have:
 - a) attended a county/development academy/ or England Netball approved pathway or at least one MMNL league coaching session be deemed able to compete in adult netball by the named, qualified and EN member, league coach(es); and
 - b) be deemed able to compete in adult netball by the named, qualified and EN member, MMNL league coach(es).
 - 6.5.2. The Young Player Registration Form must be completed in full, including the Coaching Support/Age Banding Section and submitted to the Divisional Rep Co-ordinator for approval from the League Safeguarding Officer prior to taking to court. The player may only play once permission has been granted by the League Safeguarding Officer.
- 6.6. All players under 18 years of age must complete a Young Player Registration form in full, submitting to the Divisional Rep Co-ordinator prior to the player taking to the court.
- 6.7. Each team is responsible for providing and administering first aid to its players and officials.

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- 6.7.1. Teams must carry a well-equipped, netball focused first aid kit, including an ice pack.
- 6.7.2. Teams must ensure that each player has completed a Player Emergency Contact Form. A copy of this form should be kept in the team kit bag in case of emergency.
- 6.8. The England Netball Personal Accident insurance cover excludes any loss or 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 direct result of pregnancy, pregnancy complications or even early childbirth, then this portion of any claim is not covered.

7. MULTI TEAM CLUBS

- 7.1. If any club be represented by more than one team they must list them on their registration form in order of highest to lowest teams.
- 7.2. Players from the same club cannot help another team from the same club in the same division. The player can play up i.e if they player in Div 7, they can help a team in the same club in Div 6, but they cannot play for a team in the same division or below.
- 7.3. Players registered for a higher team within a club cannot play down to a lower team except under transfer, subject to the League Committee's prior agreement. The League Committee's decision is final.
- 7.4. If more than one team within a club is playing at the same time interchanging of players is not permitted.
- 7.5. Penalties as in 6.4 will apply for any infringement.

NB: Rule 7.2 and 7.3 will also apply to club teams within the same division and will be interpreted this way by the League Committee.

8. MATCHES

- 8.1. All matches will be played, as per the fixture schedule published by The League Committee, outdoors at the League's netball courts at Aylesford Bulls Rugby Football Club, Hall Road, Aylesford, Kent. ME20 7DS.
- 8.2. All matches will start at 19:10 or 20:35 as specified in the fixture schedule. There is no time allowance for lateness except under rule 9.7.
- 8.3. Duration of play shall be one hour of four quarter hour periods.
- 8.4. All matches shall be played under the rules of EN, except under special circumstances, when the duration of play shall be at the umpires' discretion, or if play in the fourth quarter has begun when the score will stand. If no agreement is reached between umpires and Team Captains, then the match will be replayed in full.

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- 8.5. Two qualified EN and MMNL registered umpires are required for each match. Responsibility for providing an umpire rests with each team.
- 8.5.1. Teams will be notified if neutral allocation of umpires applies to the division they play in.
- 8.6. Any team who provides a non EN member, unqualified or unregistered or no umpire will incur a 2 point penalty deduction. They will also forfeit any points gained during the match. 3 points will be awarded to the opposition. All goals will be null and void.
- 8.7. It is the Team Captain's responsibility to ensure all players are on court at 19:05 to play at 19:10 and 20:30 to play at 20:35. There is no time allowance for lateness except under 9.7.
- 8.7.1. Failure to take the court will result in the offending team losing the match and incurring a 2 point penalty deduction. 3 points will be awarded to the opposition. There is no time allowance for lateness except under 9.7 or exceptional circumstances as deemed by the Divisional Representative/Committee Officer only.
- 8.8. Teams shall not re-arrange matches themselves.
- 8.9. Any team cancelling a match will inform their Divisional Representative, opposition, and their umpire. The offending team will incur a 2 point penalty deduction for the match and shall be responsible for paying both match fees. 3 points will be awarded to the opposition. All match cancellations should be communicated no later than 6pm on match day.
- 8.10. If a team arrives with less than 5 players to play their match they will incur a 2 point penalty deduction and be responsible for paying both match fees. The opposition will be awarded 3 points.
- 8.11. If both teams have less than five players and/or no umpire the match will be null and void. Both teams will incur a 2 point penalty deduction and be responsible for paying their own match fees.
- 8.12. If a team concedes a match, once play has started, that team will score no points. 3 points will be awarded to the opposition. All goals will be null and void.
- 8.13. The League reserves the right to cancel matches due to unforeseen circumstances and teams will be notified on the day of a match taking place by a member of the League Committee.
- 8.14. In the event of extreme weather or inclement conditions:
- 8.14.1. The League Committee will make a decision whether to postpone matches by 18:00.
- 8.14.2. If the decision is made to postpone matches before 18:00, the League Committee will notify teams via text and email (when possible), as well as on social media and the website. In this situation, both the 19:10 and 20:35 matches will be postponed. Teams must inform their umpire.
- 8.14.3. After 18:00, the decision whether to postpone the match(es) at 19:10 and/or 20:35 will be made at the courts by the League Committee, or in their absence, the umpires present, who must notify the Divisional Representatives on the night.

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- 8.15. In extreme circumstances, matches may be postponed. The decision whether to postpone the match(es) at 19:10 and/or 20:35 will be made at the courts by the League Committee, or in their absence, the umpires present, who must notify the Divisional Representatives on the night.
- 8.16. In the event that matches are postponed, it will not be necessary to return a Results Card to the Divisional Representative.
- 8.17. Postponed matches will be rearranged by the Divisional Representative and teams will be notified of the date and time via email. Teams will be required to provide an umpire of the appropriate standard for this fixture.
- 8.18. In exceptional circumstances replay dates may become mandatory and may not necessarily be on your division's normal night. It may also be necessary to play for double points. This will be at the discretion of the League Committee. Any teams unable to fulfil the rearranged fixture will incur a 2 point penalty deduction. 3 points will be awarded to the opposition.
- 8.19. The umpires shall decide if a match has to be abandoned.
- 8.20. If a team drops out of the League at any time after the season has started, all points and goals scored whilst playing that team will be zeroed.
- 8.21. Each team must provide their umpire with a Results Card that is completed with the following information prior to the start of the match:
- Team names
 - Division
 - Date of match
 - Player names
- 8.22. At the end of the match, the Team Captain must ensure that the score for each quarter has been entered, player of the match selected and that both Umpires and Captains have signed the card to agree the score. The Results Card should be sent to the Divisional rep in the appropriate Division WhatsApp group within 48hrs after the match unless good reason is supplied. Failure to do this will result in a -2 point deduction.
- 8.23. Teams are able to plead mitigation by writing to the League Committee within 10 days of the match in question.

9. UMPIRES

- 9.1. To qualify to participate in the League, all umpires must hold the appropriate qualification and be a registered participant of EN. Umpires must have paid the membership fee due and be in receipt of confirmation of their membership prior to taking to the court.
- 9.2. All Umpires must complete the MMNL Umpire Registration Form with their name, qualification, EN membership number and emergency contact details, submitting to the League's Umpiring Secretary before the beginning of the season.

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- 9.2.1. Any umpire joining the League and wishing to umpire once the season has started must complete the MMNL Umpire Registration Form and submit it to the League's Umpiring Secretary before their first game.
- 9.2.2. In exceptional circumstances, an umpire may register on the night of a match, except for premier and first division matches (see rule 9.9). The MMNL Umpire Registration Form should be submitted via the MMNL Website prior to the start of the match.
- 9.3. Umpires wanting to umpire premier and first and second division matches must refer to rule 9.8
- 9.4. It is the umpire's responsibility to start all matches on time at 19:10 and 20:35. (See EN Rule 8.1.1 Failure to Take the Court).
- 9.5. Umpires cannot be changed once a match has started.
- 9.6. If, once a match has started, an umpire is unable to continue through illness or injury then the match shall be rearranged.
- 9.7. If an umpire is delayed by a previous match a few minutes grace will be given. A decision will be taken, if necessary, by the Divisional Representative at the time.
- 9.8. Qualification:
- Premier, first and second division matches are to be umpired by EN qualified umpires 'C Award' or above, and who have passed the assessment set down by the League Committee.
- Third division matches are to be umpired by EN qualified umpires 'C Award' or above.
- Fourth and fifth division matches are to be umpired by EN qualified umpires 'Beginner/Into-Officiating' and above, and who have passed the assessment set down by the League Committee.
- Sixth and seventh division matches are to be umpired by EN qualified umpires 'Beginner/Into-Officiating' and above.
- NB:** An Into-Officiating umpire on the C Pathway will, with the agreement of the League's Umpiring Secretary and Mentors, be allowed to umpire up to and including third division matches without supervision when their assessment has been requested.
- 9.9. Those umpires returning to netball after a break of more than 3 years will need to complete an assessment to umpire at the level they seek to return to.

10. LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIPS

- 10.1. On completion of the competition the highest placed team shall be adjudged the winner.
- 10.2. In the event of a draw with two or more teams being equal on points, the final position shall be decided on goal average. Goal average is calculated by taking the goals against from the goals for and dividing by the matches played. The scores of any conceded matches or of less than one hour's

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duration, or of any games where penalties have been awarded, shall be excluded from any goal average calculations.

- 10.3. The teams who finish the season first and second in their division will be promoted to the division above, with the exception of the premier division. The two bottom teams in each division will be relegated to the division below with the exception of the bottom division.
- 10.4. Further promotions and relegations within the League will be decided by the League Committee, with such decisions being final.
- 10.5. Any request by a team that has been promoted or relegated to remain in the division they played in during the season must be in writing to the League Committee who will give it due consideration but the League Committee's decision is final. Any such request must be submitted by 30 June.
- 10.6. A new team entering the League shall enter in the lowest division, or may be placed in a vacancy at the discretion of the League Committee. The League Committee's decision is final.

11. POINTS AT A GLANCE

3 points	Win
2 points	Draw
1 point	50% (or more) of the opponent's score
0 points	Less than 50% of opponent's score

12. PENALTIES AT A GLANCE

Any team cancelling a match will inform their Divisional Representative, opposition and their umpire.

OFFENCE	PENALTY	MONETARY PENALTY	OPPOSITION GAIN
Team plays an unregistered or illegal player or one registered to another team	Lose match points and -2 points	-	3 points
Team cancels match	-2 points	Pay both teams match fees	3 points
Team not on court ready to play at appropriate time	-2 points	-	3 points
Team has less than 5 players to start match and/or no registered umpire to start match	-2 points	Pay both teams match fees	3 points
Both teams have less than 5 players and/or no registered umpire to start match	-2 points to both teams	Each team pays own match fees	-
Team concedes match once play has started	0 points	-	3 points

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Team found to have provided an unqualified or unregistered EN or MMNL umpire	Lose match points and -2 points	-	3 points
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Teams are able to plead mitigation by writing to the League Committee within 10 days of the match in question.