



YEARS 7 AND 8 • PLAYER GUIDE

GAME READY

Your guide to pregrading and grading. What happens, what the coaches are watching for and how to be ready.

PREGRADING

Thu 15 October
4:00 to 6:15pm

WHERE

Matthews Netball
Centre, Wembley

CHECK IN

New 3:45pm
Returning 4:00pm

FORMAL GRADING

Early 2027
Three sessions

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How grading works

Grading is how we find the right team for you. It is not a trial. Everyone who registers gets a team, as long as we have the numbers to make one.

PREGRADING

Thursday 15 October. One session of short games. It is a first look, so nobody leaves already sorted into a team. It also helps us work out how many teams and coaches we need for 2027.

FORMAL GRADING

Early 2027. Three sessions, and you need to come to all three. This is where teams are decided. Spreading it over three nights means nobody is judged on one game.

How the sessions run

- **You get a number.** It is written on your calf when you check in. Graders write down numbers, not names.
- **You play short games.** At pregrading each game is about ten minutes, so you will play lots of them.
- **You move around.** We move players between courts and games so the graders can see you with different combinations of players and in different positions.
- **You play your positions.** You pick two or three positions when you register, and you get games in them.

BEING MOVED IS NORMAL

Everyone gets moved around. Where you are playing at any point in the session does not mean anything has been decided, so just keep playing.



What the coaches are looking for

Graders are not just watching who scores. They are watching how you play the whole game.

1

Footwork and ball skills

A clean catch, a balanced landing and no stepping. Passes that are flat and firm, and the right pass for the moment: chest, shoulder, bounce or lob.

2

Moving to get the ball

Leading hard and at the right time, driving onto the pass and offering again straight away if you are covered. Standing still and waiting is easy to spot.

3

Defence

Marking your player first, staying between her and the goal, and keeping 0.9 metres with your arms up. Going for intercepts, then getting back into position if you miss.

4

Decisions under pressure

Catch, look, pass inside three seconds. Choosing the safe pass to a free player when the game speeds up, rather than the risky long one.

5

How you play when it gets hard

Calling for the ball again after a turnover. Bouncing back after a mistake. Listening to instructions and giving your best in any position.

6

Being a great teammate

Good sportsmanship and supporting your teammates. Playing well with people you have never played with before. Listening to the umpires and adjusting when they call something.



Lifting your game

A game with more experienced players is not a test you pass or fail. It shows the graders how far you can go.

What lifting looks like

When the game gets faster, the players who stand out keep doing the same good things. They still make smart passes, still call for the ball, still defend when they are tired and get straight back into it after a mistake.

What to avoid

Going quiet. In a faster or more physical game it is tempting to hide and just get through it. Graders notice that. Ask for the ball, even if the players around you are older or more experienced.

WHAT GRADERS FOCUS LESS ON

- A dropped ball or a missed shot. Everyone has them.
- An off game. Everyone has one, and graders see you in lots of games.
- Being asked to play a position you did not pick so a court has a full team. It is noted and it does not count against you.

What graders notice

Graders are looking at your overall performance, not a single mistake. They notice:

- Effort and work rate
- Teamwork and communication
- Decision making
- Court awareness
- Skill execution
- Coachability and attitude
- Consistency across the grading period

REMEMBER

Keep playing hard, stay positive, support your teammates and focus on what you can control. One mistake never defines your grading.



Getting ready in the weeks before

A few minutes of practice a few times a week makes a real difference. You do not need a court, just a wall and a ball.

1

Wall passes

Pick a spot on the wall and hit it with flat, firm chest and shoulder passes. Then do a set with your weaker hand only.

2

Land and freeze

Jump, land on one foot and freeze for two seconds without wobbling. Do both feet. It fixes stepping before it starts.

3

Catch and pass in three

Catch a rebound off the wall and pass to your target within three seconds. Speed it up as you get better.

4

Watch a game properly

Put on a netball game and follow one player in your position for a quarter. Watch where she moves when she does not have the ball.

Choosing your positions

Pick the two or three positions you play best, not just your favourite. If you are a shooter, practise shooting too. And keep active with whatever you already do, so your legs are ready for a couple of hours on court.



On the day

Arrive on time, sorted and warmed up, so all your energy goes into the games.

Pregrading check in times

NEW TO DYNAMITES

3:45pm

On court 4:00pm

RETURNING PLAYERS

4:00pm

On court 4:15pm

FINISH

6:15pm

Matthews Netball Centre,
Wembley

BRING AND WEAR

- ☐ A full water bottle
- ☐ Shorts, so your number can go on your calf
- ☐ Netball shoes, or sneakers if you do not have them
- ☐ Hair tied back
- ☐ No uniform needed at pregrading

BEFORE YOU GO ON

- ☐ Eat something a couple of hours before
- ☐ Nails short and jewellery off
- ☐ Go to the toilet before check in
- ☐ Warm up: jog, stretch and do some quick passing
- ☐ Know your two or three positions

FEELING NERVOUS?

That is completely normal. Almost everyone feels nervous at grading, including players who have been at the club for years. Nerves just mean you care. Things that help:

- **Breathe slowly.** In for four, out for four, a few times before you go on.
- **Keep moving.** Nerves settle once your body is warm and working.
- **Think small.** Focus on your first lead and your first pass, then the next one.
- **Reset after a mistake.** Take a breath and call for the ball again straight away.
- **Say hello.** The player next to you is probably nervous too.



On court

Your teammates change every game. The players who make everyone around them better are the ones graders remember.

- **Introduce yourself.** Say your name to your team at the start of each game. It makes calling for the ball easier.
- **Talk.** Call for the ball, call out the free player and encourage your team.
- **Pass to the best option.** Sometimes that means not taking the shot or the glory pass yourself.
- **Listen.** Follow the instructions from coaches and umpires, and move quickly when your number is called.
- **Play your own game.** Your friends might be on a different court. That is fine. Focus on your netball, not where everyone else is.
- **Want to play with a friend?** Ask a parent to add your friend's name when they complete your 2027 season registration. We do not ask about friends in the pregrading registration.

After pregrading

There is nothing to wait for on the night. Over summer we work out team numbers, and in early 2027 we send out the dates for formal grading. Keep practising, come to all three sessions, and teams are announced after that.

PLAY THE NETBALL YOU LOVE

Nobody expects perfect netball at grading. You already know how to play, so show the coaches the netball you love. Move, talk, back your teammates, have a go and enjoy being out there.

GOT A QUESTION?

Ask a committee member in a Dynamites shirt on the night, ask your coach at training, or get a parent to email us. No question is too small.



SEE YOU ON COURT

BRING YOUR BEST GAME

Grading is about finding the team where you will learn the most and enjoy your netball. Turn up, work hard and back yourself.

KEY DATES

- **Friday 9 October 2026** Pregrading registrations close
- **Thursday 15 October 2026** Pregrading, Years 7 and 8, 4:00 to 6:15pm, Matthews Netball Centre, 199 Salvado Rd, Wembley
- **December 2026** Winter 2027 registrations open in PlayHQ
- **Early 2027** Three formal grading sessions, **dates to be confirmed**

Register for pregrading: playhq.com/netball-australia/register/5887c5

GET IN TOUCH

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Parents: the Year 7 and 8 Parent Guide explains team building, friendships and what happens after teams are announced.