



## **Rough Guide to Water Polo**

**Each team starts with seven players in the water. Up to six substitutes can also take part in a game.**

**The game consists of four quarters. Each quarter lasts for seven minutes (eight minutes in National League).**

**When an event occurs such as a foul, corner or goal, the clock is stopped so it can take about 12 minutes to play each quarter.**

**Each team is entitled to two one-minute time-outs in a game.**

**To start the game, and each quarter, the teams line up across the width of the pool at opposite ends. When the whistle blows the referee drops the ball into the centre of the pool and the two teams swim for the ball.**

**At the end of each quarter the teams change ends.**

**At the start of each quarter and after a goal, corner or foul inside 5m at least two players must touch the ball before a shot at goal can be made. If a foul is awarded outside 5m then a shot at goal can be made straight away.**

**After a goal both teams must return to their half of the pool.**

**When the goalkeeper deflects the ball out of play at their end of the pool a corner throw is awarded to the attacking team.**

**A free throw is given to the other team if:**

- **a player stands on the bottom of the pool catches the ball with two hands takes the ball under the water hits the ball with their fist**
- **pushes or prevents the free movement of another player who is not holding the ball is in the other team's 2metre area**
- **does not shoot at goal within 30 seconds of their team gaining possession of the ball**

**A player will be 'excluded' (sent to the sin-bin for 20 seconds) if they:**

- **try to stop a player from taking a free throw or corner throw**
- **throw the ball away when the opposition is awarded a free throw**
- **splash a player in the face hold, pull back or sink a player who is not touching the ball hit or kick an opponent**
- **A player is unable to take any further part in the game if they have three exclusions.**

**A player will be sent to the changing room, and take no further part in the game, for swearing, back-chatting the referee or fighting.**

**A penalty throw is given to the other team if:**

- **a player fouls a player in the 5metre area who was just about to score**
- **a player kicks or hits a player in the 5metre area**
- **a player moves the goals to stop someone scoring**
- **The team has more than seven players in the water.**