

Junior cricket

Junior coaching development officers and game coordinators endeavour to develop game formats and playing conditions to allow for appropriate progression from one age group to the next.

So scoring junior cricket can differ from senior scoring due to by-laws, game formats and age progression, and these differences can vary from competition to competition, grade to grade and age group to age group.

For example, junior batting orders are usually set by the coach before the match starts, so you should write the complete list in the scorebook, rather than waiting for each batter to go out, as in senior cricket.

In certain underage matches, batters must retire after facing a certain number of deliveries (e.g. 40 deliveries). They are usually allowed to come back and continue batting, but only after all other batters are out.

For some underage games, a wide ball is counted as a ball faced and a run to the batter. This is due to the fact that young bowlers can struggle with line and length, so this by-law is to keep players interested and stop them from being frustrated.

Listed below are some examples of differing rules and conditions, but **always ensure you are aware of the local by-laws, as they could affect the way you are expected to score the match.**

Under 10s – non-competitive

To ensure fair participation, each batter will face a set number of deliveries, depending on the number of players — the number of deliveries (e.g. 180 balls for 30 overs) is divided by the number of players in the team. At the end of each innings, the batting team's average score is calculated by dividing the total runs scored by the number of wickets lost. The winner of the game is the team with the highest average score.

Under 12s – one-day competition (concrete or synthetic pitches)

All players bowl a minimum of two overs. No over is to continue beyond seven balls, regardless of the number of no balls.

A batter must retire after facing 30 balls (excluding wides or no balls) or scoring 30 runs, whichever occurs first. Retired batters may resume their innings in order of retirement after all other batters have been dismissed.

You need to monitor the number of balls faced by each batter and their progressive score, and inform the umpire when a retirement is due.

Under 14s and Under 16s – two-day competition

For these older age groups, coaches will be preparing and grooming their young players for senior cricket. Under 14 and Under 16 will differ in the number of overs that can be bowled in an innings per day, the number of overs that can be bowled by individual bowlers, and in the retirement conditions for batters. Batters may have to retire when they reach, for example, 50 runs (U14) or 100 runs (U16). Retired batters may resume their innings in order of retirement after all other batters have been dismissed or retired.

Juniors playing below their age group

Although specific competition by-laws and conditions might be set by grade, the conditions and restrictions may be linked to a player's age, not the age group grade the player is participating in.

Coaches must inform the opposing team if they have a player playing below their respective age group, as this can affect the retirement and bowling conditions under which the player can play. The coach must also inform you as scorer prior to the start of the match so that you can monitor such a player if different conditions apply (e.g. number of overs that can be bowled by the player, retirement restrictions).

Juniors playing above their age group

Many clubs encourage their junior players to extend themselves in a higher age group as part of their player development. You will need to check with the coaches or umpires to see what restrictions still apply to that younger player (e.g. number of overs that can be bowled by the player), as again, some of these are age-related, not grade-related.

Bowling spells

Cricket Australia has restrictions on the number of overs junior bowlers may bowl in a spell, the number of overs they may bowl in a day, and the minimum time between spells. The restriction vary according to age, up to, and including, Under 19. In calculating the time between spells, breaks in play such as lunch or tea are taken into consideration.