

Vitality Girls U18 County T20

Competition Rules



This competition will use the Girls County T20 20 overs per side Playing Conditions.

1 **Title**

The title of the competitions will be the Vitality U18 Girls County Age Group T20.

2 **Management**

2.1 All decisions relating to the interpretation of these rules or to matches played in the Competition shall be made by the ECB and will be final and binding on all concerned.

The ECB may delegate any of their powers and duties, including (where appropriate) to the Cricket Regulator.

2.2 All potential breaches of these Rules, or disputes arising from the application of interpretation of these Rules, shall be referred to a panel of three members of the ECB Recreational Discipline Panel (the "Panel"), whose decision shall be final and binding. The Panel shall consider any such matter in such manner and following such procedures as it considers appropriate and shall not be bound by rules governing the admissibility of evidence in judicial or other proceedings.

The Cricket Regulator shall confirm the identity of the Panel members to the relevant parties. If any party objects to any member of the Panel on the basis of a conflict of interest, the Cricket Regulator shall consider whether it is necessary to appoint a new member of the Panel.

3 **Entry**

3.1 Entry into any of ECB's County Competitions shall be open to those County Boards recognised by the ECB.

3.2 Counties who participated in the previous year's Competition shall automatically be included for the following season unless written notification to the contrary is given by 1st September in the year prior to the Competition. A County wishing to enter or be re-admitted to a Competition must give written notice to that effect to the ECB Competitions Department by 1st September in the year prior to the Competition.

4 **Competition Structure**

4.1 **Format of the Competition**

For the Under 18 age group the format shall be six groups. Each County will play double-header matches on pre-determined dates. All Counties will therefore all play each other twice over the duration of the competition with league tables being published for all groups.

The top two teams from Groups 1-3 will progress to the knockout stages. The best performing two teams across Groups 4-6 will progress to the knockout stages. Best performing will be determined by total points scored.

If teams cannot be separated on total points, NRR will be used to determine the qualifiers. Please note that the best performing two teams may come from the same Group.

The eight qualifying teams will play in the Quarter Finals on Friday 28th August. The four Quarter Final winners will progress to the National Semi Finals and Final on Sunday 13th September.

4.2 **Fixture setting**

4.2.1 Fixture dates for the 2026 season have been predetermined. Matches will take place at 11:00 and 15:00 on each day.

4.2.2 The dates and times of fixtures have been uploaded onto the Play-Cricket website. It is the responsibility of the host County to inform all visiting County sides of the venue details and ensure that this information is uploaded onto the Play-Cricket website.

4.2.3 Matches that are cancelled or abandoned cannot be rearranged.

4.3 Rescheduled cut off times for affected matches will be as follows:

	Scheduled Start Time	Latest Start Time (5 overs per team)	Cut-off Time (latest possible finish)
Match 1	11:00	13:00	13:45
Match 2	15:00	17:00	17:45

5 **Qualification of players**

Please refer to Generic Rule 3.4 (Qualification Criteria for Junior Cricketers).

5.1 ECB has approved a Dual Registration Scheme for Girls U18 Cricket for the 2026 season. Any player can be dual registered but may only be registered for a maximum of 2 Counties (their home County plus 1 other). In order for a player to play all parties including the ECB are satisfied that the criteria of the scheme have been met, see separate Dual Registration Scheme paper available from sue.laister@ecb.co.uk.

If a County includes in their team a player for whom consent to play them has not been obtained, all points attained by that County in the match or matches shall be forfeited.

5.2 In all ECB CAG U18 competitive T20 fixtures every County can play 3 x under 19 players, Generic Rule 3.4.6 states age groups are defined by the player's age at midnight on 31st August in the year prior to the relevant season. The exception to this is for players who are U19 and were involved in the England Women's U19 World Cup squad (including non-travelling reserves) who can only play with agreement from ECB (to ensure participation is aligned to player development and not the outcome of a fixture). Any U18 player involved in the England Women's U19 World Cup programme is eligible to play.

5.3 In the event of a dispute, the matter shall be referred to the ECB, whose decision shall be final.

5.4 Players from the Channel Islands shall be eligible to play for any County in the County Cup provided that they only represent one County in the Competition in any one season.

6 **Number of Players**

Each team may have a squad of up to 12 players, no more than 11 players can bat or be on the field at any time.

All players must be nominated to the umpires in writing before the toss is made. There is no requirement to nominate which 11 players will bat. Any replacement/ substitution of a member of the fielding side can only be made with the approval of the umpires and only at the end of an over, the fall of a wicket or during an interval. Once a player has taken the field they can play a full part in the match, subject to the provisions of Law 17.6 (Bowler changing ends).

7 **Cricket Balls**

The Home side shall provide two new cricket balls for each match when balls are not provided by the ECB. The balls shall be of the standard laid down by the ECB for each Competition and shall be given to the umpires prior to the commencement of the match. The Home side will also be responsible for supplying enough spare balls of equal standard. A new ball must be used at the start of each innings.

7.1 For U18 matches, a 5oz white Newbery Elite hardball will be used for all matches, therefore the use of black sightscreens will be necessary.

7.2 Each host County will receive enough match balls to cover all of the matches over the days on which they are hosting.

7.3 For U18 matches all Counties are required to play in coloured kit. It is recommended that coloured clads are applied to all batting pads.

8 **Helmets and Faceguards**

Any player under the age of 18 playing in any ECB Competition shall be bound by the ECB Regulations.

9 **Umpires**

Host Counties shall appoint an appropriate number of umpires to cover all matches on the day of competition. All appointed umpires shall be Full Members of the ECB Association of Cricket Officials (ECB ACO). ECB shall appoint to all knockout stage matches.

10 **Scorers**

Each team shall provide their own competent, non-playing scorer in all matches. If a team fails to provide a scorer a player has to be nominated from the team to take up the duty for the entire duration of the match.

The use of live electronic scoring is strongly encouraged for all matches.

11 **Team Sheets**

Each side must provide the umpires with a team sheet before the start of the match identifying any player who has not reached the age of 18 on the date of the match and showing the specific age of any player who is 19 years old or younger. It is recommended that the ECB Team Sheet card (available from the local County Board) is used whenever possible.

12 **Match Results**

It is the responsibility of the WINNING side to enter the result and full scorecard details onto the Play-Cricket website within 24 hours of the conclusion of the competition.

In the event of the match being cancelled or abandoned it is the responsibility of the first named team to enter the fact on Play-Cricket.

13 **Points**

13.1 The following points system shall apply:

Win	4
Abandoned & Cancelled	2
Loss	0
Conceded games	0
Team Conceded Against	4

In matches where scores are tied a Super Over shall be used to determine a winner (matches cannot end as a tie in these competitions). Please refer to Reg 10 of the 20 Over Playing Conditions with details of how a Super Over shall be managed (including Reg 10.12-10.14 if a Super Over has started). If a Super Over is not possible at all for any reason, the result will be determined on countback from Powerplay overs from 6 down to 1. If this does not provide a result, a coin toss shall be used to determine the winner.

14 **Group Matches**

In the event of teams finishing on equal points in a Group, the final league finishing positions will be decided in the following order of priority:

- a) When two teams have equal points, the team which was the winner of the Group Match(es) played between them will be placed in the higher position. When more than two teams have equal points, the team which was the winner of the most number of matches played between those teams will be placed in the higher position.
- b) If still equal, the team with the higher net run rate in the Group Matches in which a result was achieved will be placed in the higher position.
- c) If still equal, the team with the higher number of wickets taken per balls bowled in the Group Matches in which a result was achieved, will be placed in the higher position.
- d) In the highly unlikely event that teams cannot be separated by (a) to (c) above this will be done by drawing lots.

15 **Code of Conduct**

All players, coaches or match officials shall be bound by the MCC Spirit of Cricket and the ECB General Conduct Regulations.

16 **Coaching**

At all times coaching shall not be permitted from the sidelines during a match. In such an event, the umpire shall request the coach/manager/parent/spectator to stop. If this persists, the umpire shall have the power to refer the matter to a Panel in accordance with Rule 2.2.

Playing Conditions – Girls County 20 overs per side

The Laws of Cricket (2017 Code 3rd Edition - 2022) shall apply with the following exceptions:

1 Duration

1 innings per side, each limited to a maximum of 20 overs.

2 Hours of Play

2.1 Start times, close of play and additional time are to be agreed by teams or directed by the competition organiser.

2.2 All sides are expected to be in position to bowl the first ball of the last of their 20 overs within 1 hours 15 minutes playing time.

2.3 Interval should be no longer than 15 minutes.

2.4 In the event of an interruption or delay during the 1st innings, the calculation of the number of overs to be bowled shall be based upon one over for every 3 minutes 45 seconds in the total time available for play up to the scheduled close of play. In the 2nd innings of the match, overs shall be reduced at a rate of one over for every full 3 minutes 45 seconds lost, unless the 1st innings has finished early or the 2nd innings started early, in which case no overs are lost until the time that has been gained is subsequently lost.

3 Rearrangement of overs due to inclement weather

The objective of rearranging overs is to give the greatest opportunity for a match of equal overs without reverting to a Super Over.

4 Over rate penalties

4.1 All sides are expected to be in position to bowl the first ball of the last of their 20 overs within 1 hour 15 minutes playing time. In the event of them failing to do so, the full quota of overs will be completed, one fewer fielder shall be permitted outside the fielding restriction area in 5.1, 5.2 & 5.3 than would normally be the case in the over(s) in progress at the time.

All penalties in this regard will be imposed immediately the ball first becomes dead after the scheduled or re-scheduled cessation time for the innings.

4.2 The Umpires shall inform the Captains of any revisions following an interruption before play resumes. When the game is in play, the Umpires will ensure the fielding Captain is aware of any time allowance adjustments (this matter will not be subject to retrospective negotiation). In addition, in all reduced overs matches, the fielding team will be given one over's leeway. For the avoidance of doubt, one overs leeway means that the fielding side must be in position to bowl the first ball of the penultimate over by the scheduled or rescheduled cut off time

4.3 If the innings is terminated before the scheduled or re-scheduled cut off-time, no over rate penalty shall apply. If the innings is interrupted, the over-rate penalty will apply based on the re-scheduled cessation time for that innings. Over-rate penalties apply only to innings of 10 overs or more duration unless a penalty has been applied before 10 overs have been bowled.

In innings of less than 10 overs duration, Umpires shall apply the penalty run Laws for time wasting especially strictly.

- 4.4 Umpires are instructed to apply a strict interpretation of time wasting by the batter (5 run penalties) specifically; batters are expected to be ready for the start of a new over as soon as the bowler is ready.

5 **Fielding restrictions**

- 5.1 For the first 6 overs of each innings only two fielders are permitted to be outside the fielding circle at the instant of delivery. Fielding circle to be 25 yards.
- 5.2 For the remaining overs of each innings only four fielders are permitted to be outside the fielding circle at the instant of delivery.
- 5.3 In circumstances when the number of overs of the batting team is reduced, the number of Fielding Restriction Overs shall be reduced in accordance with the table below. For the sake of clarity, it should be noted that the table shall apply to both the 1st and 2nd innings of the match.

Total Overs	No. of overs for which fielding restrictions apply
5 – 6	1
7 – 9	2
10 – 13	3
14 – 16	4
17 – 19	5

6 **Overs per bowler**

- 6.1 No bowler may bowl more than one-fifth of the amount of overs scheduled for the innings. However, in a delayed start, or interrupted match, where the overs are reduced for both sides, or for the side bowling second, no bowler may bowl more than one-fifth of the total overs allowed (unless such a number has been exceeded before the interruption), except that where the total overs are not divisible by five, an additional over shall be allowed to the minimum number of bowlers necessary to make up the balance. e.g. after 8 overs, rain interrupts play and the innings is reduced to 12 overs. Both opening bowlers have bowled 4 overs. Two bowlers can bowl 3 overs and three bowlers can bowl 2 overs. Bowlers 1 and 2 have already exceeded this limit. They count as the two bowlers who were allowed the extra over (4 as opposed to 3) and so any other bowlers are limited to 2 overs.
- 6.2 In a delayed or interrupted match where the overs are reduced for both teams or for the team bowling second;
- 6.2.1 for innings of rescheduled length of at least 10 overs, no bowler may bowl more than one-fifth of the total overs allowed. Where the total overs is not divisible by 5, one additional over shall be allowed to the maximum number per bowler necessary to make up the balance.
- 6.2.2 for innings of rescheduled length of between 5 and 9 overs, no bowler may bowl more than two overs. In these circumstances, the one-fifth limit does not apply.

- 6.3 When an interruption occurs mid-over and on resumption the bowler has exceeded the new maximum allocation, they will be allowed to finish the incomplete over.
- 6.4 In the event of a bowler breaking down and being unable to complete an over, another bowler will bowl the remaining balls. Such part of an over will count as a full over only in so far as each bowler's limit is concerned.
- 6.5 The allocation of overs per bowler will not be reduced as a result of the deduction of any penalty overs.

7 **No Ball**

- 7.1 Law 41.6 (Bowling of dangerous and unfair short pitched deliveries) shall apply with the following additions:

- 7.1.1 Regardless of how wide of the striker a delivery is, there shall be no more than one delivery per over that after pitching pass or would have passed clearly over shoulder height of the striker standing upright at the popping crease.

- 7.1.2 The umpire shall make it clear to the bowler (and any bowler called upon to complete an over) and the batsmen at the wicket when a delivery within the limit in 7.1.1 has been bowled. It is unfair if the limit is exceeded and the umpire shall call and signal No ball on each such occasion and consider it as part of the warning sequence in Laws 41.6.3 and 41.6.4.

- 7.1.3 If a bowler is "No Balled" a second time in the innings for the same offence the Umpire is to invoke Law 41.6.4 and the bowler shall be removed forthwith and shall not be allowed to bowl again in that innings.

Note: For the avoidance of doubt the warnings detailed in Laws 41.6.1, 41.6.2 and those above in 7.1.1 and 7.1.2 are cumulative.

- 7.2 Law 41.7 (Bowling of dangerous and unfair non-pitching deliveries) shall apply.

- 7.3 **Free Hit after a No Ball**

- 7.3.1 The delivery following a no ball shall be a free hit for whichever batter is facing it.

Note: this applies to all modes of No ball with the exception of a short-pitched delivery that passes or would have passed clearly over head-height of the striker standing upright at the popping crease.

- 7.3.2 If the delivery for the free hit is not a legitimate delivery (any kind of no ball or a wide ball), then the next delivery shall become a free hit for whichever batter is facing it.

- 7.3.3 For any free hit, the striker can be dismissed only under the circumstances that apply for a no ball, even if the delivery for the free hit is called wide ball.

- 7.3.4 Field changes are not permitted for free hit deliveries unless there is a change of striker or the No Ball was the result of a field restriction breach in which case the field may be changed to the extent of correcting the breach. However, in all circumstances, any fielder within 15 yards of the striker may retreat to a position on the same line no more than 15 yards from the striker.

7.3.5 The umpires shall signal a free hit by (after the normal no ball signal) extending one arm straight upwards and moving it in a circular motion.

8 Wide Ball - Judging a Wide

Umpires are instructed to apply a very strict and consistent interpretation in regard to this Law in order to prevent negative bowling wide of the wicket.

Any offside or legside delivery which in the opinion of the umpire does not give the batter a reasonable opportunity to score shall be called a wide. For guidance purposes, a legside wide should be called if a ball passes on the legside outside the pads of the batter standing in a normal batting position.

9 The Result

9.1 When there is no interruption after play has commenced and when both sides have had the opportunity of batting for the same agreed number of overs, the team scoring the higher number of runs shall be the winner. If the scores are level the match will be declared as a tie. Where a winner is required and the scores are tied, the following shall apply:

9.1.1 If tied at the completion of a match, the team that has lost fewer wickets shall be adjudged the winner.

9.1.2 If this gives no result, then the team with the higher score at the end of 6th completed over shall be adjudged the winner.

9.1.3 If still equal, the side with the higher score at the end of 5th, 4th, 3rd, 2nd and 1st completed over shall be adjudged the winner.

9.1.4 If still equal, a Super Over (see 8) should be used to determine the winner.

9.2 For all matches if, due to the suspension of play after the start of the match, the number of overs in the innings of either team has to be revised to a lesser number than that originally allocated (minimum 5 overs), then a revised target score should be set for the number of overs which the team batting second will have the opportunity of facing, this revised method being calculated by the Duckworth/Lewis method (DL Standard shall be used).

A par score will be set for the second innings. If this is exceeded a win for the team batting second shall result. If the par score is equalled then the scores are tied.

9.3 For all matches, if a match is abandoned before it had been played to a conclusion and before the team batting second has received its allocated number of overs (providing that it has received not less than 5 overs), the result shall be decided by the Duckworth/Lewis method.

9.4 In the event of the scores being tied in a match when the Duckworth/Lewis method has been used, no account shall be taken of wickets lost and a Super Over shall be used to find a winner.

10 **Super Over**

- 10.1 The teams shall compete in a Super Over to determine the winner. The following procedure will apply should the provision for a Super Over be adopted in any match.
- 10.2 Subject to weather conditions the Super Over will take place at a time to be determined by the umpires. In normal circumstances it shall commence 10 minutes after the conclusion of the match.
- 10.3 The Super Over will take place on the pitch allocated for the match (the designated pitch) unless otherwise determined by the umpires in consultation with the ground authority.
- 10.4 The umpires shall stand at the same end as that in which they finished the match.
- 10.5 In both innings of the Super Over, the fielding side shall choose from which end to bowl.
- 10.6 Only nominated players in the main match may participate in the Super Over. Should any player (including the batters and bowler) be unable to continue to participate in the Super Over due to injury, illness or other wholly acceptable reason, the relevant Laws and Playing Conditions as they apply in the main match shall also apply in the Super Over.
- 10.7 Any penance time being served in the main match shall be carried forward to the Super Over
- 10.8 Each team's over is played with the same fielding restrictions as apply for a non-Field Restriction Over in a normal match.
- 10.9 The team batting second in the match will bat first in the Super Over.
- 10.10 The Umpires shall select a ball from the box of spare balls which shall be used for both overs of the Super Over. The ball to be used shall not be a new ball.
- 10.11 The loss of two wickets in the over ends the team's one over innings.
- 10.12 In the event of the teams having the same score after the Super Over has been completed, a count-back from the final ball of the Super Over shall be conducted. The team with the higher scoring delivery shall be the winner. If a team loses two wickets during its over, then any unbowled deliveries will be counted as dot balls.
Note that for this purpose, the runs scored from a delivery is defined as the total team runs scored since the completion of the previous legitimate ball, i.e. including any runs resulting from wides, no ball or penalty runs.
- 10.13 If still equal, a second Super Over will take place. If teams have the same score after the second Super Over, another count-back from the final ball of the Super Over shall be conducted. The team with the higher scoring delivery shall be the winner. If a team loses two wickets during its over, then any unbowled deliveries will be counted as dot balls.
- 10.14 If a winner cannot be identified from 10.12 and 10.13 or a Super Over is not possible, a coin toss will be used to determine the winner.

Example:

Runs scored from	Team 1	Team 2
Ball 6	1	1
Ball 5	4	4
Ball 4	2	1
Ball 3	6	2
Ball 2	0	1
Ball 1	2	6

In this example both teams scored an equal number of runs from the 6th and 5th ball of their innings. However team 1 scored 2 runs from its 4th ball while team 2 scored a single so team 1 is the winner.