

# WELCOME / Fáilte



**G**AA Handball has become a rapidly growing and progressive association both at home and around the world, and we now bring you our latest publication as part of our ever-growing range of resources.

This complete 'Fundamental Handball' Coaching Resource guide will provide clubs & schools with many of the tools and guidelines to aid development of the sport in your area.

The long-term motto of 'Handball – a GAA Sport for Life' is so relevant in relation to the health and education policies being researched and implemented throughout Ireland at present. GAA Handball is played by boys and girls of all ages, with children adapting to the sport from six years of age, and adults still playing competitively and for fun in their eighties.

The resource provides a comprehensive range of game cards aimed at developing the fundamental movement skills required to play Handball. A key aspect of the fundamental concept is to encourage the children to develop movement competency through fun learning. The pack is also available to download online in the Coaching Resources section on the newly revamped [www.gaahandball.ie](http://www.gaahandball.ie) website, alongside numerous other coaching articles. Each individual game card can also be downloaded individually to create your own personalized coaching resource.

We sincerely hope that this guide will help you generate even more interest in this terrific sport, which provides healthy fun and competition for so many, and that your club or school will continue to reap the benefits in the same manner which thousands have enjoyed to date.

Finally, on behalf of GAA Handball, I thank our National Coaching Committee for their time and commitment in this area of our games, and to our Chairman Ryan Daly for his significant assistance with the development of this new resource. I would also like to thank the GAA, the Irish Sports Council and Coaching Ireland for their continued support with our sport.

Ádh mór agus ar mhianta is fear I bhur n- iarrachtaí Liathróid Láimhe agus thar aon rud eile – go bhfuil spraoi!

**DARRAGH O'DALAIGH,**  
National Development Officer,  
GAA Handball

# THE HANDBALL CODES...

## CÓID LIATHRÓID LÁIMHE

THE GREAT THING ABOUT HANDBALL IS THAT THERE ARE VARIOUS CODES TO PLAY. IN IRELAND THERE ARE FOUR CODES, PLAYED IN THREE DIFFERENT COURTS.

### ONE-WALL

With the name being a giveaway, One-Wall Handball is the most fundamental form of Handball as it requires only a wall and a ball. Due to its simplicity, it can be played indoor or outdoor. The front wall has dimensions 20 ft by 16 ft, whilst the ball used is similar to a racquetball. It is exciting times for the One-Wall code, with the game growing significantly not only in Ireland, but also worldwide. Efforts are currently being made internationally to make it an Olympic sport. The One-Wall season runs from May through to August.



### 40X20 (FOUR WALL):

The 'Small Alley' as it is commonly referred to is named after its dimensions (40 ft by 20 ft). It is played in an indoor facility enclosed with four walls and a roof. The game requires players to wear gloves and eyeguards as the handball used is a small rubber ball, and can travel at speeds up to 100mph. The 40x20 has an international outlet, and is played by over ten countries worldwide. The 40x20 season runs from October through to April.

## 60x30 SOFTBALL:

The 'Big Alley' or 'Softball' game is widely regarded as the traditional Handball code to Ireland, and like the 40x20, it gets its name by the dimensions of its indoor court (60 ft by 30 ft). The ball used is much bigger and bouncier than the small alley handball, and therefore gloves and eyeguards are not compulsory. The game is generally played in the summer months, due to the fact that traditionally the game was played in an outdoor court, before new roofed indoor alleys erected, during the latter half of the 20th Century. The 60x30 season runs from June through to September.



## HARDBALL

Hardball is the most ancient of our games in Ireland, and it is also played in the 60x30 court. As the name suggests, the ball used is small and hard, and is made from cork and leather. Padding on the hands is required due to the hardness of the ball, that can travel at speeds over 100mph. The hardball season runs from May to June.



## ARE YOU UP FOR THE CHALLENGE?

If anyone is interested in the excitement or the challenge of playing the different codes of Handball, then don't hesitate to contact National Development Officer Darragh Daly who will help you find your nearest Handball club from the hundreds all over Ireland.

Email: [development.handball@gaa.ie](mailto:development.handball@gaa.ie)

Tel: +353 (0) 1865 8649

Alternatively, you can check our club locator on [www.gaahandball.ie](http://www.gaahandball.ie)

# WHY PLAY HANDBALL?

## CÚISEANNA LIATHRÓID LÁIMHE A IMIRT

**1) FUN FOR ALL** – The most redeeming aspect of handball is that it can be played by everyone, at any age. This is highlighted at the World Championships which has grades at Under 11 and Over 80 years of age. The game can be played on an individual basis, and also on a team basis (doubles), so it is suitable for everyone!

**2) FITNESS** – Handball is fast and furious and a great way to keep fit! It is also recognized by the United States President's Council on Physical Fitness & Sports as being the best activity to improve cardio-respiratory endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility and balance. It beats both swimming and jogging to the number one spot.

**3) FRIENDS** – As well as the friends you train with, travelling to competitions all over Ireland, and indeed the world, enables the opportunity to make new lifelong friends.



**4) EASY TO TEACH** – There is no need to worry about coaching ideas for children! GAA Handball Ireland have developed a vast array of coaching resources to suit all ages and abilities. Check out the website [www.gaahandball.ie](http://www.gaahandball.ie) for all your free coaching ideas and lesson plans. We also run regular coaching courses and teacher in-service days, led by some of Ireland's top Handball coaches, which provide modern coaching techniques and principles, aimed at developing top quality coaches of the future.

**5) COMPETITIONS** – Aside from the major international

tournaments, there are a wide variety of tournaments that cater for everyone from beginners to professionals. The nationwide Féile na nGael, Gael Linn, and Community Games are some of the events that allow young children to play in teams with their friends whilst competing for titles. The Cumann na mBunscol tournament for boys and girls is played on the basis of fun, where there are no winners or losers. Visit the GAA Handball website for the up to date calendar of tournaments for the year ahead.

**6) TRAVEL** – Handball is the only GAA sport with an International dimension. With 33 countries now competing worldwide, it truly is a global sport. Major tournaments are regularly held in countries including America, Canada, Italy Spain and Puerto Rica. Such tournaments provide the opportunity to travel the world and experience many different cultures.



### 7) DEVELOPS BOTH SIDES OF BODY –

Handball is a great game for developing both sides of the body and the brain as both hands are used to strike the ball on a regular basis.

### 8) OFF PEAK CONDITIONING – GAA

stars across Gaelic, Hurling, Camogie and Rounders have all acknowledged the benefits Handball can bring to their own sports and regularly play during the winter months to stay in shape. It develops numerous qualities that are transferable across most sports such as; speed, hand-eye co-ordination, agility, and increased reaction time. Legendary Hurler DJ Carey, and current Kilkenny Hurling star Richie Hogan are two sportsmen who have benefitted from playing Handball, indeed both are multiple Irish and World Handball Champions.



### 9) LOW COST – Handball is such a simple game to get started, all you need is a ball and a wall!

Children across the country are making use of any wall space accessible to play mini handball games with whatever ball they have available to them. In competitions, players are required to wear gloves and eye-guards, but these are easily obtained from our online store at [www.gaahandball.ie](http://www.gaahandball.ie).

**10) ALL WEATHER** – The game can be played all year round, both inside and outside, due to the four different codes of Handball. The 40x20, as well as the traditional 60x30 and Hardball codes are all played on indoor courts. The One-Wall code can be played either indoor or outdoor, with its season running during the summer months. Due to the variety of codes, there are tournaments throughout the year, providing many opportunities to have fun days out and meet new friends.

**For further information on GAA Handball, contact GAA Handball National Development Officer Darragh Daly on:**

**TEL:** +353 (0) 1865 8649

**EMAIL:** [development.handball@gaa.ie](mailto:development.handball@gaa.ie)

**WEB:** [www.gaahandball.ie](http://www.gaahandball.ie)



# WHAT THE GAA STARS SAY...

## TUAIRIMÍ RÉALTAÍ CLG



**RICHIE HOGAN** Kilkenny Hurler (7 All-Ireland Titles, 4 NHL's & 4 All-Star)  
 'I'm at my best on the field when I'm playing some form of Handball. My first touch is sharper, and the ball to hurl to hand movement is much faster. I think I'm just more comfortable and confident with the ball, probably in the air as well. I played Handball competitively growing up and I truly believe it has enhanced my Hurling development.'

### DID YOU KNOW?

Richie Hogan won a 15&U World Handball Title in 2003.



**ANDY MORAN** Mayo Footballer (8 Connacht Titles & 1 All-Star)

'Handball is a wonderful sport, which I would recommend to any young person interested in sport. It is one of few sports that incorporates all fundamental movements and makes you comfortable moving off both sides. As a young player it was a big part of my life and I look forward to returning to the court in the coming years.'

### DID YOU KNOW?

Andy Moran won an All-Ireland U14 Doubles Title & an All-Ireland Colleges Handball Title.



**KATE KELLY** Wexford Camogie (4 All-Ireland Titles & 9 All-Stars)

'Handball is a fantastic game! The speed, skill and fitness levels required to play the game is immense. There is no question that it can compliment and improve transferrable skills across a multitude of sports, including Camogie!'

### DID YOU KNOW?

Kate's native Wexford is a renowned hot bed for developing excellent juvenile Handballers.



**BRID STACK** Cork Footballer (10 All-Ireland Titles & 6 All-Stars)

'Being a PE Teacher, I know the importance that the game of Handball offers from a young and developmental age. It ticks all the boxes in relation to fundamentally improving a young person's hand-eye co-ordination, agility, speed and overall sharpness – vital qualities that overlap into all sports. Handball is a highly enjoyable game and I would certainly recommend it, especially as an off-season activity.'

### DID YOU KNOW?

Brid trained Cork's international Handball star Catriona Casey for underage football.

# FUNDAMENTALS FOR HANDBALL

## BUNSCILEANNA LIATHRÓID LÁIMHE



It is important that children develop their fundamental movement skills (FMS) at an early age, as they provide the building blocks to competently perform more complex sport specific skills and movement patterns. Fundamental movement skills are the basis for athletic excellence, transferable across all sports, and can influence a lifetime of health and exercise.

The FMS's focused on throughout this pack include the ABC's (Agility, Balance, Co-Ordination) and the RJT's (Running, Jumping, Throwing). A definition of each of these skills is explained below.

### AGILITY:

Agility is the ability to make rapid and efficient changes of direction in quick succession. It involves the deceleration, turning and acceleration of a body whilst maintaining controlled movement of the body.

### BALANCE:

Balance is the ability to maintain and control the body in the desired position, either whilst moving or stationary.

### CO-ORDINATION:

Co-ordination is the ability to integrate all bodily movements together so to perform effective movement patterns.

### RUNNING:

Running is a basic form of movement that involves the integration of arm and leg movements, to carry the body over a set distance.

### JUMPING:

Jumping is the ability to spring off the ground using the muscular force of the legs and feet.

### THROWING:

Throwing involves propelling an object through the air using the motion of the arms and hands.

