



Essendon Thunder 2026 Representative Selection

Updated: August 2025

1. Policy Objective

The objective of the Essendon Thunder Representative Selection Policy is to ensure there is a transparent process of the selection of players for the Essendon Thunder Representative Teams (representing Essendon District Netball Association (EDNA)) for the 2026 year.

2. Applicable Players

2.1 This policy applies to players who trial (or wish to trial) for the Representative aspect (Essendon Thunder) of the Essendon District Netball Association (EDNA) in 2026.

2.2 Essendon Thunder will offer trials in the following age groups for 2026:

- a. 11 & Under
- b. 13 & Under
- c. 15 & Under
- d. 17 & Under
- e. Open age

3. Eligibility to Trial

3.1 All players that meet the Age Eligibility for 2026 are welcome to trial for the relevant age group (refer to table under section 3.4 for ages in each age group).

3.2. There is no requirement to have played at EDNA in 2025 prior to participating in trials.

3.3 If selected for an Essendon Thunder team in 2026:

- a. 11 & Under, 13 & Under and 15 & Under players **must** commit to play in an EDNA competition in Autumn 2026 (February-June) to be eligible to play with Essendon Thunder.
- b. Players in the 17 & Under and Open age groups will play in the Parkville Netball Competition, which qualifies them for Association representation for Essendon District Netball Association. These players are encouraged to, but are not required to participate in a dedicated EDNA competition in 2026.

3.4 The table below outlines the age groups, and what teams and competitions are relevant for that age group.



ESSENDON THUNDER POLICY

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Age Group	Teams	Weekly Competition	Tournaments
11 & Under Age: 10-11 years (Born in 2015 and 2016)	2 x 11 & Under teams	<u>Parkville Netball Competition</u> Saturday Mornings (before EDNA Saturday competition) @ State Netball Centre – 11 & Under Competition	- 2 Sunday tournaments between February and March
13 & Under Age: 12-13 years (Born in 2013 and 2014)	2 x 13 & Under teams	<u>Parkville Netball Competition</u> Thursday evenings @ Riverside – 15 & Under Competition.	- 2 Sunday tournaments between February and March - Selection of minimum one team for Association Championships
	Development 13 & Under teams <i>*Designed for bottom age players, and any top age players selectors determine warrant development</i>	<u>EDNA Competition</u> Thursday evenings @ Riverside – 13 & Under competition.	- 2 Sunday tournaments between February and March
15 & Under Age: 14-15 years (Born in 2011 and 2012)	2 x 15 & Under teams	<u>Parkville Netball Competition</u> Thursday evenings @ State Netball Centre – 15 & Under Competition; or Tuesday evenings 17 & Under Competition.	- 2 Sunday tournaments between February and March - Selection of minimum one team for Association Championships
	Development 15 & Under teams <i>*Designed for development of bottom age players, and any top age players selectors determine warrant extra opportunity</i>	<u>Parkville Netball Competition</u> Thursday evenings @ Riverside – 15 & Under Competition.	No scheduled tournaments
17 & Under Age: 16-17 years (Born in 2009 and 2010)	Up to 2 x 17 & Under teams	<u>Parkville Netball Competition</u> Tuesday's @ State Netball Centre – 17 & Under <i>*Players with potential may be elevated to play in Tuesday Open Premier teams, but still compete in tournaments with 17 & Under</i>	- 2 Sunday tournaments between February and March - Selection of minimum one team for Association Championships
Open Age: Players 18+ (Born in 2008 or earlier)	Maximum 5 teams selected to compete between Divisions 1 and 6	<u>Parkville Netball Competition</u> Tuesday Open Premier @ State Netball Centre.	No scheduled tournaments



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4. Registration to Trial

4.1 All players wishing to trial and be considered for the 2026 program **must** register via the nominated process which will be communicated via the EDNA Website, Netball Connect and social media.

4.2 All current Essendon Thunder players must also register for trials to be considered for the 2026 Program.

4.3 In exceptional circumstances (such as injury), EDNA may allow a player to be selected without trialling.

4.4 Dates will be advertised on the EDNA website and EDNA Facebook page. Information will also be distributed to all clubs at EDNA.

4.5 Fees for trials are paid to cover venue hire, selectors and umpires for trial days.

4.6 Players will be required to nominate two preferred playing positions for selection trials.

- a. Players will be given the opportunity to play in their two nominated positions during the trials, where possible.
- b. Selectors may also request players to trial in another position not nominated by the player.

5. Process of Trials and Selection

5.1 Generally, two days of trials will occur for each age group. This may be altered in certain circumstances, such as high or low registration numbers.

5.2 All players **must** attend the first trial for their age group. If a player cannot attend the first trial, they will not be called back. Exceptions may only be granted for a current Essendon Thunder representative player, and exceptional circumstances

5.3 Players must wear white tops and black or navy shorts/leggings for trials. Players in incorrect attire will be asked to change before trialling.

5.4 After the first selection trial, players will either be requested to attend the next trial or be advised they have not been selected.

5.5 If there are exceptional circumstances for unavailability for trials, EDNA may offer a player the opportunity to form part of the age group squad until such time they can be assessed.

5.6 Squads (players selected in each age group) will be formally announced via the EDNA website and EDNA Facebook at a time determined appropriate by EDNA.



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6. Selectors

6.1 Selection Trials will be facilitated by selectors who are independent of players in the age group (where possible), and understand the competitive demands of the age group.

6.2 Selectors used at Essendon Thunder trials will have the appropriate experience and qualifications to assist in selecting representative netball players. This will include:

- a. all selectors will have a minimum Development Level Coaching accreditation and experience coaching Representative Netball in the age group (or older) they are selecting;
- b. at least one selector will have a minimum Intermediate Coaching accreditation and experience coaching above Representative Netball level (for example, Victorian Netball League Coaching, Talent Academy Coaching, State Titles, A Grade Football/Netball League coaching etc.)

6.3 Current Coaches of an age group will not form part of the selection panel.

6.4 The Selectors decisions are final.

6.5 Individual Feedback from Selectors will not be provided to players.

7. Team selection

7.1 Selectors will be advised of the expected make up of teams, as per section 3.4 in this policy.

7.2 Selectors will be asked to select teams, ensuring:

- a. Team balance (i.e. playing positions required for each team);
- b. Playing combinations, not only individual skill;
- c. Player Variety – a variety of playing styles within teams required to ensure competitiveness of the team.

7.3 Selectors will assess players on individual attributes:

- a. Basic skills – ball handling, footwork, position specific skills;
- b. Physical skills – speed, change of direction, balance, endurance, consistency;
- c. Decision making skills – game awareness, reads entire situation, adaptability;
- d. Potential – qualities or attributes which may be developed over a long period;
- e. Teamwork and Communication – Capacity to take and act upon direction given by Coaches, ability to work with other players on the court.

7.4 Players will be advised of the team they have been selected in upon offers being sent. Should a player not accept their position, players will be elevated from teams below (or the waitlist), based on selectors feedback and advice.

7.5 Teams selected **may** be altered during pre-season by coaches (i.e. assessing maintained level of fitness between trials and start of season) and as player combinations are trialled at the start of each season.



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8. Training Partners

8.1 Essendon Thunder may select Training Partners across all age groups. Training partners can be selected because they have the potential to play representative netball but are not yet at a stage of development of other players at their age group.

8.2 Training Partners must attend weekly training, but are not required for games or tournaments, unless requested.

8.3 Training Partners will be considered as 'reserve' players for teams, so in the event a replacement player is required for a match or tournament they may be given the opportunity to play. It is up to the team coach to select training partners for matches or tournaments based on court positions needing to be filled.

9. Special Circumstances

The Essendon District Netball Association may, in using its reasonable discretion, in exceptional or extenuating circumstances, alter, vary or waive any clauses set out in this policy, to maintain or uphold the integrity of the Essendon Thunder Program.