

# FIXTURE GUIDE

2023 TOYOTA AFL  
PREMIERSHIP SEASON



# 2023 TOYOTA AFL PREMIERSHIP SEASON

## ROUND 1

**Thursday, March 16**  
Richmond vs. Carlton (MCG) (N)  
**Friday, March 17**  
Geelong Cats vs. Collingwood (MCG) (N)  
**Saturday, March 18**  
North Melbourne vs. West Coast Eagles (MRVL)  
Port Adelaide vs. Brisbane Lions (AD) (T)  
Melbourne vs. Western Bulldogs (MCG) (N)  
Gold Coast SUNS vs. Sydney Swans (MS) (N)  
**Sunday, March 19**  
GWS GIANTS vs. Adelaide Crows (DS)  
Hawthorn vs. Essendon (MCG)  
St Kilda vs. Fremantle (MRVL) (T)

## ROUND 2

**Thursday, March 23**  
Carlton vs. Geelong Cats (MCG) (N)  
**Friday, March 24**  
Brisbane Lions vs. Melbourne (G) (N)  
**Saturday, March 25**  
Collingwood vs. Port Adelaide (MCG)  
Adelaide Crows vs. Richmond (AD) (T)  
Western Bulldogs vs. St Kilda (MRVL) (N)  
Fremantle vs. North Melbourne (DS) (N)  
**Sunday, March 26**  
Sydney Swans vs. Hawthorn (SCG)  
Essendon vs. Gold Coast SUNS (MRVL)  
West Coast Eagles vs. GWS GIANTS (DS) (N)

## ROUND 3

**Thursday, March 30**  
Western Bulldogs vs. Brisbane Lions (MRVL) (N)  
**Friday, March 31**  
Collingwood vs. Richmond (MCG) (N)  
**Saturday, April 1**  
Hawthorn vs. North Melbourne (UTAS)  
GWS GIANTS vs. Carlton (GS) (T)  
St Kilda vs. Essendon (MCG) (N)  
Port Adelaide vs. Adelaide Crows (AD) (N)  
**Sunday, April 2**  
Gold Coast SUNS vs. Geelong Cats (MS)  
Melbourne vs. Sydney Swans (MCG)  
Fremantle vs. West Coast Eagles (DS) (T)

## ROUND 4

**Thursday, April 6**  
Brisbane Lions vs. Collingwood (G) (N)  
**Friday, April 7**  
North Melbourne vs. Carlton (MRVL) (T)  
**Saturday, April 8**  
Adelaide Crows vs. Fremantle (AD)  
Richmond vs. Western Bulldogs (MCG) (T)  
St Kilda vs. Gold Coast SUNS (MRVL) (N)  
Sydney Swans vs. Port Adelaide (SCG) (N)  
**Sunday, April 9**  
Essendon vs. GWS GIANTS (MRVL)  
West Coast Eagles vs. Melbourne (DS) (T)  
**Monday, April 10**  
Geelong Cats vs. Hawthorn (MCG)

## ROUND 5

**Thursday, April 13**  
Adelaide Crows vs. Carlton (AD) (N)  
**Friday, April 14**  
Fremantle vs. Gold Coast SUNS (ND) (T)  
Richmond vs. Sydney Swans (AD) (N)  
**Saturday, April 15**  
Brisbane Lions vs. North Melbourne (AH)  
Essendon vs. Melbourne (AD) (T)  
Port Adelaide vs. Western Bulldogs (AD) (N)  
**Sunday, April 16**  
Geelong Cats vs. West Coast Eagles (AD)  
GWS GIANTS vs. Hawthorn (MCG)  
Collingwood vs. St Kilda (AD) (N)

## ROUND 6

**Friday, April 21**  
Fremantle vs. Western Bulldogs (DS) (N)  
**Saturday, April 22**  
Port Adelaide vs. West Coast Eagles (AD)  
GWS GIANTS vs. Brisbane Lions (MD) (T)  
Geelong Cats vs. Sydney Swans (GMHBA) (N)  
**Sunday, April 23**  
Hawthorn vs. Adelaide Crows (UTAS)  
Carlton vs. St Kilda (MRVL)  
Gold Coast SUNS vs. North Melbourne (MS) (T)  
**Monday, April 24**  
Melbourne vs. Richmond (MCG) (N)  
**Tuesday, April 25**  
Collingwood vs. Essendon (MCG)

## ROUND 7

**Friday, April 28**  
St Kilda vs. Port Adelaide (MRVL) (N)  
**Saturday, April 29**  
Brisbane Lions vs. Fremantle (G)  
Sydney Swans vs. GWS GIANTS (SCG)  
Western Bulldogs vs. Hawthorn (MRVL) (T)  
Melbourne vs. North Melbourne (MCG) (N)  
West Coast Eagles vs. Carlton (DS) (N)  
**Sunday, April 30**  
Essendon vs. Geelong Cats (MCG)  
Richmond vs. Gold Coast SUNS (MRVL)  
Adelaide Crows vs. Collingwood (AD) (T)

## ROUND 8

**Friday, May 5**  
Carlton vs. Brisbane Lions (MRVL) (N)  
**Saturday, May 6**  
Richmond vs. West Coast Eagles (MCG)  
Geelong Cats vs. Adelaide Crows (GMHBA)  
Gold Coast SUNS vs. Melbourne (MS) (T)  
GWS GIANTS vs. Western Bulldogs (MD) (N)  
Fremantle vs. Hawthorn (DS) (N)  
**Sunday, May 7**  
Port Adelaide vs. Essendon (AD)  
Collingwood vs. Sydney Swans (MCG)  
North Melbourne vs. St Kilda (MRVL) (T)

## ROUND 9

**Friday, May 12**  
Richmond vs. Geelong Cats (MCG) (N)  
West Coast Eagles vs. Gold Coast SUNS (DS) (N)  
**Saturday, May 13**  
Sydney Swans vs. Fremantle (SCG)  
North Melbourne vs. Port Adelaide (BA)  
Hawthorn vs. Melbourne (MCG) (T)  
Brisbane Lions vs. Essendon (G) (N)  
Carlton vs. Western Bulldogs (MRVL) (N)  
**Sunday, May 14**  
Adelaide Crows vs. St Kilda (AD)  
Collingwood vs. GWS GIANTS (MCG) (T)

## ROUND 10

**Friday, May 19**  
Port Adelaide vs. Melbourne (AD) (N)  
**Saturday, May 20**  
North Melbourne vs. Sydney Swans (MRVL)  
Western Bulldogs vs. Adelaide Crows (MARS)  
Fremantle vs. Geelong Cats (DS) (T)  
Brisbane Lions vs. Gold Coast SUNS (G) (N)  
Essendon vs. Richmond (MCG) (N)  
**Sunday, May 21**  
Hawthorn vs. West Coast Eagles (UTAS)  
Carlton vs. Collingwood (MCG)  
GWS GIANTS vs. St Kilda (GS) (T)

## ROUND 11

**Friday, May 26**  
Sydney Swans vs. Carlton (SCG) (N)  
**Saturday, May 27**  
St Kilda vs. Hawthorn (MRVL)  
Geelong Cats vs. Fremantle (MCG)  
Melbourne vs. GWS GIANTS (GMHBA) (T)  
Gold Coast SUNS vs. Western Bulldogs (TD) (N)  
West Coast Eagles vs. Essendon (DS) (N)  
**Sunday, May 28**  
Richmond vs. Port Adelaide (MCG)  
Collingwood vs. North Melbourne (MRVL)  
Adelaide Crows vs. Brisbane Lions (AD) (T)

## ROUND 12

**Friday, June 2**  
Melbourne vs. Carlton (MCG) (N)  
**Saturday, June 3**  
Port Adelaide vs. Hawthorn (AD)  
West Coast Eagles vs. Collingwood (DS) (T)  
Western Bulldogs vs. Geelong Cats (MRVL) (N)  
Gold Coast SUNS vs. Adelaide Crows (TD) (N)  
**Sunday, June 4**  
GWS GIANTS vs. Richmond (GS)  
Essendon vs. North Melbourne (MRVL) (T)  
**Byes:** Brisbane Lions, Fremantle, St Kilda, Sydney Swans

## ROUND 13

**Thursday, June 8**  
Sydney Swans vs. St Kilda (SCG) (N)  
**Friday, June 9**  
Western Bulldogs vs. Port Adelaide (MRVL) (N)  
**Saturday, June 10**  
Hawthorn vs. Brisbane Lions (MCG)  
Adelaide Crows vs. West Coast Eagles (AD) (T)  
Fremantle vs. Richmond (DS) (N)  
**Sunday, June 11**  
North Melbourne vs. GWS GIANTS (BA)  
Carlton vs. Essendon (MCG) (N)  
**Monday, June 12**  
Melbourne vs. Collingwood (MCG)  
**Byes:** Geelong Cats, Gold Coast SUNS

## ROUND 14

**Thursday, June 15**  
Port Adelaide vs. Geelong Cats (AD) (N)  
**Friday, June 16**  
Brisbane Lions vs. Sydney Swans (G) (N)  
**Saturday, June 17**  
GWS GIANTS vs. Fremantle (GS) (T)  
Richmond vs. St Kilda (MCG) (N)  
**Sunday, June 18**  
Carlton vs. Gold Coast SUNS (MCG)  
North Melbourne vs. Western Bulldogs (MRVL) (T)  
**Byes:** Adelaide Crows, Collingwood, Essendon, Hawthorn, Melbourne, West Coast Eagles

## ROUND 15

**Thursday, June 22**  
Geelong Cats vs. Melbourne (GMHBA) (N)  
**Friday, June 23**  
St Kilda vs. Brisbane Lions (MRVL) (N)  
**Saturday, June 24**  
Sydney Swans vs. West Coast Eagles (SCG) (T)  
Fremantle vs. Essendon (DS) (N)  
**Sunday, June 25**  
Collingwood vs. Adelaide Crows (MCG)  
Gold Coast SUNS vs. Hawthorn (MS) (T)  
**Byes:** Carlton, GWS GIANTS, North Melbourne, Port Adelaide, Richmond, Western Bulldogs

## ROUND 16

**Thursday, June 29 - Sunday, July 2**  
Adelaide Crows vs. North Melbourne (AD)  
Brisbane Lions vs. Richmond (G)  
Essendon vs. Port Adelaide (MCG)  
Gold Coast SUNS vs. Collingwood (MS)  
Hawthorn vs. Carlton (MCG)  
Melbourne vs. GWS GIANTS (TP)  
Sydney Swans vs. Geelong Cats (SCG)  
West Coast Eagles vs. St Kilda (DS)  
Western Bulldogs vs. Fremantle (MRVL)

## ROUND 17

**Thursday, July 6 - Sunday, July 9**  
Brisbane Lions vs. West Coast Eagles (G)  
Essendon vs. Adelaide Crows (MRVL)  
Fremantle vs. Carlton (GS)  
Geelong Cats vs. North Melbourne (GMHBA)  
GWS GIANTS vs. Hawthorn (GS)  
Port Adelaide vs. Gold Coast SUNS (AD)  
Richmond vs. Sydney Swans (MCG)  
St Kilda vs. Melbourne (MRVL)  
Western Bulldogs vs. Collingwood (MRVL)

## ROUND 18

**Thursday, July 13 - Sunday, July 16**  
Adelaide Crows vs. GWS GIANTS (AD)  
Carlton vs. Port Adelaide (MRVL)  
Collingwood vs. Fremantle (MCG)  
Geelong Cats vs. Essendon (GMHBA)  
Gold Coast SUNS vs. St Kilda (MS)  
Melbourne vs. Brisbane Lions (MCG)  
North Melbourne vs. Hawthorn (MRVL)  
Sydney Swans vs. Western Bulldogs (SCG)  
West Coast Eagles vs. Richmond (DS)

## ROUND 19

**Friday, July 21 - Sunday, July 23**  
Brisbane Lions vs. Geelong Cats (G)  
Carlton vs. West Coast Eagles (MRVL)  
Essendon vs. Western Bulldogs (MRVL)  
Fremantle vs. Sydney Swans (DS)  
GWS GIANTS vs. Gold Coast SUNS (MD)  
Melbourne vs. Adelaide Crows (MCG)  
Port Adelaide vs. Collingwood (AD)  
Richmond vs. Hawthorn (MCG)  
St Kilda vs. North Melbourne (MRVL)

## ROUND 20

**Friday, July 28 - Sunday, July 30**  
Adelaide Crows vs. Port Adelaide (AD)  
Collingwood vs. Carlton (MCG)  
Essendon vs. Sydney Swans (MRVL)  
Geelong Cats vs. Fremantle (GMHBA)  
Gold Coast SUNS vs. Brisbane Lions (MS)  
Hawthorn vs. St Kilda (MRVL)  
Richmond vs. Melbourne (MCG)  
West Coast Eagles vs. North Melbourne (DS)  
Western Bulldogs vs. GWS GIANTS (MARS)

## ROUND 21

**Friday, August 4 - Sunday, August 6**  
Adelaide Crows vs. Gold Coast SUNS (AD)  
Essendon vs. West Coast Eagles (MRVL)  
Fremantle vs. Brisbane Lions (DS)  
Geelong Cats vs. Port Adelaide (GMHBA)  
GWS GIANTS vs. Sydney Swans (GS)  
Hawthorn vs. Collingwood (MCG)  
North Melbourne vs. Melbourne (BA)  
St Kilda vs. Carlton (MRVL)  
Western Bulldogs vs. Richmond (MRVL)

## ROUND 22

**Friday, August 11 - Sunday, August 13**  
Carlton vs. Melbourne (MCG)  
Brisbane Lions vs. Adelaide Crows (G)  
Collingwood vs. Geelong Cats (MCG)  
Hawthorn vs. Western Bulldogs (UTAS)  
North Melbourne vs. Essendon (MRVL)  
Port Adelaide vs. GWS GIANTS (AD)  
St Kilda vs. Richmond (MRVL)  
Sydney Swans vs. Gold Coast SUNS (SCG)  
West Coast Eagles vs. Fremantle (DS)

## ROUND 23

**Friday, August 18 - Sunday, August 20**  
Adelaide Crows vs. Sydney Swans (AD)  
Collingwood vs. Brisbane Lions (MRVL)  
Fremantle vs. Port Adelaide (DS)  
Gold Coast SUNS vs. Carlton (MS)  
GWS GIANTS vs. Essendon (GS)  
Melbourne vs. Hawthorn (MCG)  
Richmond vs. North Melbourne (MCG)  
St Kilda vs. Geelong Cats (MRVL)  
Western Bulldogs vs. West Coast Eagles (MRVL)

## ROUND 24

**Friday, August 25 - Sunday, August 27**  
Brisbane Lions vs. St Kilda (G)  
Carlton vs. GWS GIANTS (MRVL)  
Essendon vs. Collingwood (MCG)  
Geelong Cats vs. Western Bulldogs (GMHBA)  
Hawthorn vs. Fremantle (MCG)  
North Melbourne vs. Gold Coast SUNS (BA)  
Port Adelaide vs. Richmond (AD)  
Sydney Swans vs. Melbourne (SCG)  
West Coast Eagles vs. Adelaide Crows (DS)



(T) Twilight match; (N) Night match; (AH) Adelaide Hills (Paramang and Ngarrindjeri); Adelaide; (AD) Adelaide Oval (Koorne); Adelaide; (BA) Blundstone Arena (Palawa); Hobart; (G) The Gabba (Yuggera-Ioorabul); Brisbane; (GMHBA) GMHBA Stadium (Wadawurrung); Geelong; (GS) GIANTS Stadium (Waa-gal); Sydney; (MD) Manuka Oval (Ngumanal); Canberra; (MARS) Mars Stadium (Wadawurrung); Ballarat; (MRVL) Marvel Stadium (Wurundjeri); Melbourne; (MCG) Melbourne Cricket Ground (Wurundjeri); Melbourne; (MS) Maccormic Stadium (Tugumbah); Gold Coast; (ND) Norwood Oval, (Koorne); Adelaide; (DS) Optus Stadium (Waadai); Perth; (SCG) Sydney Cricket Ground (Brigidjal-Gadigal); Sydney; (TD) TIO Stadium (Larakia); Darwin; (TP) TIO Traragon Park (Arernte); Alice Springs; (UTAS) University of Tasmania Stadium (Palawa); Launceston

BROADCAST PARTNERS



# FIXTURE AT A GLANCE

## OPENING ROUND



### ROUND 1



Richmond and Carlton to open the season on Thursday March 16, 7.20pm MCG - Wurundjeri

## ST KILDA 150<sup>TH</sup> YEAR CELEBRATION



### ROUND 3



Saturday April 1, 7.25pm MCG - Wurundjeri

All times are local

## EASTER THURSDAY

### ROUND 4



Thursday April 6, 7.35pm The Gabba - Yuggera - Toorabul

## GOOD FRIDAY

### ROUND 4



Friday April 7, 4.20pm Marvel Stadium - Wurundjeri

## EASTER MONDAY

### ROUND 4



Monday April 10, 3.20pm MCG - Wurundjeri

## GATHER ROUND

### ROUND 5



SA to host all 18-clubs at once for the first time with nine matches played across three venues in the one weekend.

## SA SHOWDOWNS



### ROUNDS 3 & 20



SA Showdown between Adelaide Crows and Port Adelaide in Rounds 3 and 20, Adelaide Oval - Karna

## SYDNEY DERBY



### ROUNDS 7 & 21



Sydney Derby between GWS GIANTS and Sydney Swans in Round 7, SCG - Bidjigal and Gadigal and Round 21, GIANTS Stadium - Wann-gal.

## WA DERBIES



### ROUNDS 3 & 22



Western Derby between Fremantle and West Coast Eagles in Rounds 3 and 22, Optus Stadium - Whadjuk

## Q CLASH



### ROUNDS 10 & 20



Q Clash between Brisbane and Gold Coast Suns in Round 10, The Gabba - Yuggera - Toorabul and Round 20, Metricon Stadium - Yugambah

## ANZAC DAY EVE

### ROUND 6



Monday April 24, 7.20pm MCG - Wurundjeri

## ANZAC DAY



### ROUND 6



Tuesday April 25, 3.20pm MCG - Wurundjeri

## GRAND FINAL REMATCH

### ROUND 6 & 16



On a Saturday night in Round 6 at GMHBA Stadium - Wadawurrung and in Round 16 at the SCG - Bidjigal and Gadigal.

## SIR DOUG NICHOLLS ROUND



### ROUNDS 10 & 11

Played across Rounds 10 and 11 with all clubs to host a match. Featuring the Dreamtime at the 'G match in Round 10 between Essendon and Richmond on Saturday May 20 and, Sydney Swans hosting Carlton in the Marn Grook match on Friday night May 26 in Round 11.

## KING'S BIRTHDAY EVE

### ROUND 13



Sunday June 11, 7.15pm MCG - Wurundjeri

## KING'S BIRTHDAY

### ROUND 13



Monday June 12, 3.20pm MCG - Wurundjeri

## MID-SEASON BYES

now spread over four rounds, Rounds 12 to 15

## NT



Three matches being played in the Northern Territory in Rounds 11, 12 and 16 with the Gold Coast SUNS and Melbourne playing home games in the territory.

## TASMANIA



Eight matches to be played in Tasmania with Hawthorn hosting in Rounds 3, 6, 10 and 22, and North Melbourne hosting in Rounds 9, 13, 21 and 24.

## CANBERRA



GWS GIANTS hosting three matches in the nation's capital in Rounds 6, 8 and 19.

## BALLARAT



Western Bulldogs hosting two matches in their home away from home in Ballarat in Rounds 10 and 20.

## ROUNDS 16-24 FLOATING

and to be confirmed as the season progresses

# THE AFL FIXTURE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The AFL has sought to develop a consistent and equitable schedule of matches which connects with the community, assists in growing the game and continues to build the financial stability of the AFL competition.

## IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THIS, OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES ARE:

1

To develop, as close as is possible, a fixture which gives all clubs equal opportunities.

2

To maximise attendances at AFL matches in all markets, ensuring the best possible accessibility for fans.

3

To maximise audiences across our television, digital and radio broadcast partners, ensuring national exposure for the game.

4

To take into account the specific requests of AFL clubs, players and other key competition stakeholders, particularly venues and broadcasters.

5

To continue developing the game nationally by scheduling matches across all states and territories throughout the season.

6

To ensure the welfare of the players by providing a maximum of one five-day break, but otherwise minimum six-day breaks between matches for regularly scheduled rounds.

# THE 'WEIGHTED RULE' - DOUBLE MATCH-UPS

	TOP 6	MIDDLE	BOTTOM 6
TOP 6	<b>TOP 6 v TOP 6</b> Minimum 2 return meetings Maximum 3 return meetings	<b>MIDDLE 6 v TOP 6</b> Minimum 1 return meeting Maximum 2 return meetings	<b>BOTTOM 6 v TOP 6</b> Minimum 1 return meeting Maximum 2 return meetings
MIDDLE	<b>TOP 6 v MIDDLE 6</b> Minimum 1 return meeting Maximum 2 return meetings	<b>MIDDLE 6 v MIDDLE 6</b> Minimum 2 return meetings Maximum 3 return meetings	<b>BOTTOM 6 v MIDDLE 6</b> Minimum 1 return meeting Maximum 2 return meetings
BOTTOM 6	<b>TOP 6 v BOTTOM 6</b> Minimum 1 return meeting Maximum 2 return meetings	<b>MIDDLE 6 v BOTTOM 6</b> Minimum 1 return meeting Maximum 2 return meetings	<b>BOTTOM 6 v BOTTOM 6</b> Minimum 2 return meetings Maximum 3 return meetings

With the expansion to 24-rounds for the 2023 Toyota AFL Premiership Season, an adjustment has been made to the 'Weighted Rule' to accommodate for a sixth double match-up.

Top Six v Bottom Six matches will now have a maximum of two return matches.

Bottom Six v Top Six will now have a maximum of two return matches.



# FIXTURE PROCESS

The key factors in determining the 2023 Toyota AFL Premiership Season Fixture include:

## SEASON STRUCTURE

In 2023, the AFL's standard fixture timeslots for the home and away season will consist of the below, with matches broadcast by our partners the Seven Network, Foxtel and Kayo.

### BROADCASTERS

Thursday	Seven	Foxtel	Kayo
Friday	Seven	Foxtel	Kayo
Saturday Early		Foxtel	Kayo
Saturday Afternoon		Foxtel	Kayo
Saturday Twilight		Foxtel	Kayo
Saturday Night	Seven	Foxtel	Kayo
Saturday Night		Foxtel	Kayo
Sunday Night		Foxtel	Kayo
Sunday Afternoon	Seven	Foxtel	Kayo
Sunday Twilight		Foxtel	Kayo

This spread of matches facilitates the widest possible coverage of the game via the outstanding support of our broadcast partners and works to provide fans with alternatives to attend and watch games, taking into account competing demands for supporters' time, such as work, home, junior and community-level sport and other forms of recreation and entertainment.

## ON-FIELD EQUITY

On-field equity is a key component of the AFL's philosophy. As such, providing all clubs with the opportunity to be successful and contest the Toyota AFL Finals Series is a crucial element of the AFL fixture.

Given the AFL competition comprises a 24-round season involving 18 clubs playing 23 matches, it is not possible to achieve complete equity with all teams playing each opponent both home and away.

To best manage on-field equity for all clubs under the current competition model, the 2023 fixture has again been constructed around the 'weighted rule', whereby the final ladder from the previous season is grouped into the top six teams, middle six teams and bottom six teams, with double match-ups for all clubs managed as follows:

- **TOP SIX:** Clubs ranked 1-6 on the 2022 ladder will have a minimum of two and maximum of three return meetings with other top six clubs. They will have a minimum of one and maximum of two return meetings with clubs ranked 7-12. They will have a minimum of one and a maximum of two return meetings with clubs ranked 13-18.
- **MIDDLE SIX:** Clubs ranked 7-12 on the 2022 ladder will have a minimum of one and maximum of two return meetings with clubs ranked 1-6 on the ladder. They will have a minimum of two and maximum of three return meetings with other middle six clubs. They will have a minimum of one and maximum of two return meetings with clubs ranked 13-18.
- **BOTTOM SIX:** Clubs ranked 13-18 on the 2022 ladder will have a minimum of one and a maximum of two return meetings with clubs ranked 1-6. They will have a minimum of one or a maximum of two return meetings with clubs ranked 7-12. They will have a minimum of two and a maximum of three return meetings with other bottom six clubs.

While this process cannot take into account form fluctuations between seasons, and a significant performance increase or decrease by any club may impact the fixture for others, the results of the application of the weighted rule to previous season's fixtures demonstrated a relative parity of double match-ups for all sides in the competition.

## PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Easter again coincides with Round Four of the 2023 season, which will kick off on Easter Thursday with the Brisbane Lions hosting Collingwood at the Gabba. AFL football will then be played on Good Friday for the sixth time, with North Melbourne and Carlton to contest a twilight encounter at Marvel Stadium. The Geelong Cats and Hawthorn will then clash in the traditional Easter Monday holiday match to close out the Easter weekend.

The ANZAC Round will be held in Round 6. The round starts with Fremantle playing the Western Bulldogs on the Friday night in their annual Len Hall Tribute game. Melbourne then play Richmond on the Monday night, ANZAC Day Eve. ANZAC Day follows on the Tuesday, with the traditional blockbuster between Essendon and Collingwood taking centre stage. Port Adelaide will host their annual ANZAC match commemorating Peter Badcoe VC on the Saturday.

Melbourne will host Collingwood in the King's Birthday Monday holiday match to be played at the MCG in Round 13. In a new addition to the fixture, Carlton will host Essendon at the MCG in a King's Birthday Eve match on the Sunday night.

## PLAYER WELFARE AND TRAVEL LOAD

The AFL competition is extremely demanding on its players. From the start of the pre-season, through to the 2023 Toyota AFL Grand Final on September 30, 2023, teams will play week in, week out across the nation. Therefore, player welfare and travel loads are primary considerations in the preparation of the fixture each year.

In 2023 Clubs may receive a maximum of one five-day break between matches but are otherwise ensured a minimum six-day break between matches in regularly scheduled rounds.

A five-day break may be used under the following parameters (excl. ANZAC Round):

1. A maximum of one five-day break per Club (inclusive of matches scheduled around public holidays e.g. ANZAC Day / Eve)
  2. A minimum seven-day break on either side of a five-day break (i.e. minimum 7-5-7)
  3. A maximum six-day break for the opposition team
4. The provision of two consecutive days off for all players over the weekend following a five-day break (or other time in that week where agreed by player and Club)
  5. In relation to travel:
    - a. No five-day break as part of a double travel
    - b. No five-day break travelling out of Perth
    - c. Travel into a five-day break subject to players having a minimum five nights in their home city (where a team has travelled the week before)
    - d. Travel acceptable out of a five-day break (noting this would be into a minimum seven-day break)
    - e. The AFL also determines that as the clubs with the heaviest travel load in the competition, the West Coast Eagles and Fremantle, will always alternate home and away matches so that they do not travel in consecutive weeks at any stage. In doing this, all other clubs will have to travel at least once to Western Australia, to play either the West Coast Eagles or Fremantle. No other team in the competition travels interstate more than two weeks in a row and where possible, any successive travels are accommodated with a trip to the closest state (for instance, Sydney to Victoria or Queensland).

In 2023, the AFL has again elected to schedule a second bye round at the conclusion of the home and away season. This week's break gives the top eight clubs extra time to prepare for the 2023 Toyota AFL Finals Series.

## CLUB REQUESTS

Our clubs make annual submissions relating to the fixture, typically centred on travel, commercial, venue, event and membership-driven requests. The AFL endeavours to accommodate as many of these as possible, on the basis that they help promote the game and maximise attendances and television audiences.

## ATTENDANCES

Maximising attendances is a key objective of scheduling and the AFL, thanks to the outstanding work of our clubs and players and with the passionate support of our members and fans, saw 6,106,629 fans attending the 198 Premiership Season matches in 2022. The AFL has also scheduled showpiece Thursday and Friday night matches in Melbourne, Brisbane, Geelong, Sydney, Adelaide and Perth, giving as many supporters as possible across Australia the opportunity to take part in the blockbuster match-day experience.

## BROADCAST AGREEMENTS

Providing comprehensive coverage of AFL matches on television is a fundamental component of the fixture process, as is ensuring that matches are scheduled in accordance with the AFL's contractual obligations to our broadcast partners in the Seven Network, Foxtel and Kayo.

Some of the factors that must be taken into account from a broadcast perspective include:

- Where possible, the best match in each round to be scheduled on Friday night.
- Matches scheduled in timeslots that enable television coverage of all matches across each round, on the Seven Network and/or Foxtel.
- West Coast Eagles/Fremantle, Brisbane Lions Gold Coast SUNS, Sydney Swans/GWS GIANTS and Port Adelaide/Adelaide Crows cannot be scheduled to play in the same or overlapping timeslots, so that matches featuring local sides may be broadcast in full on free-to-air television in the relevant states (regardless of whether the match is produced by the Seven Network or Foxtel).

## GAME PROMOTION AND DEVELOPMENT

In line with the AFL's strategic imperatives, matches have again been scheduled in all states and territories of Australia.

The matches to be played include:

- **Tasmania** - Hawthorn will play four home matches at Launceston's University of Tasmania Stadium, while North Melbourne will host four matches at Blundstone Arena in Hobart.
- **Ballarat** - The Western Bulldogs will host two matches for premiership points in Ballarat.
- **Northern Territory** - The Gold Coast SUNS will host two matches at TIO Stadium, while Melbourne will host one match at TIO Traeger Park.
- **Australian Capital Territory** - The GWS GIANTS will play three home matches at Manuka Oval.
- **South Australia** - all Round 5 matches to be played in South Australia across three venues - Adelaide Oval, Norwood Oval and, Summit Sport and Recreation Park in the Adelaide Hills.

## VENUE AGREEMENTS

The AFL has various venue obligations which must be fulfilled each year, while many of its clubs also have contractual obligations to play minimum numbers of matches at certain venues around Australia. All of these obligations must be taken into consideration when planning each round of matches, ensuring an even spread across the country throughout the season wherever possible, to best accommodate player welfare, club travel loads, broadcast programming, attendances and promotion of the game.





# A FAIR AND EQUITABLE DRAW

**18**  
CLUBS

**23**  
MATCHES PER CLUB

**24**  
ROUNDS

## PRIMARY FACTORS

<b>CLUB REQUESTS</b>	Accommodating, where possible, the requirements and requests of the clubs.
<b>OPPONENT DISTRIBUTION</b>	All teams to play each other once and six teams twice, with double match-ups determined by 'weighted rule.'
<b>PLAYER WELFARE</b>	Clubs may receive a maximum of one five-day break between matches, but are otherwise ensured a minimum six-day break between matches in regularly scheduled rounds.
<b>TRAVEL</b>	Travel load to be spread as evenly as possible between all clubs.
<b>FANS</b>	All matches scheduled with fans in mind to maximise attendances and television audiences.
<b>GAME DEVELOPMENT</b>	Clubs playing home matches in developing regional markets.
<b>BROADCASTING AGREEMENTS</b>	All matches scheduled in line with the AFL's contractual obligations to its broadcast partners.
<b>VENUE AGREEMENTS</b>	Various contracts require a minimum number of matches to be played at certain venues.

**DOUBLE CHANCE: FINAL 8 SYSTEM PROVIDES DOUBLE CHANCES TO TOP 4 TEAMS**

## 2023 TOYOTA AFL FINALS SERIES

**SEPTEMBER 7-10:** Week One - Qualifying & Elimination Finals (4)

**SEPTEMBER 15 & 16:** Week Two - Semi-Finals (2)

**SEPTEMBER 22 & 23:** Week Three - Preliminary Finals (2)

**SEPTEMBER 30:** Week Four - Toyota AFL Grand Final

## THE FINAL EIGHT: HOW IT WORKS

### QUALIFYING AND ELIMINATING FINALS

