

FIXTURE GUIDE

2023 TOYOTA AFL
PREMIERSHIP SEASON



2023 TOYOTA AFL PREMIERSHIP SEASON

ROUND 1

Thursday, March 16
Richmond vs. Carlton (MCB) (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 (HBS) (N)
Sunday, March 19
GWS GIANTS vs. Adelaide Crows (GS)
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 (GS) (N)
Sunday, March 26
Sydney Swans vs. Hawthorn (SCG)
Essendon vs. Gold Coast SUNS (MRVL)
West Coast Eagles vs. GWS GIANTS (GS) (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 (HBS)
Melbourne vs. Sydney Swans (MCG)
Fremantle vs. West Coast Eagles (GS) (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 (GS) (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 (MD) (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 (MD)
Collingwood vs. St Kilda (AD) (N)

ROUND 6

Friday, April 21
Fremantle vs. Western Bulldogs (GS) (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 (HBS) (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 (GS) (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 (HBS) (T)
GWS GIANTS vs. Western Bulldogs (MD) (N)
Fremantle vs. Hawthorn (GS) (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 (GS) (N)
Saturday, May 13
Sydney Swans vs. Fremantle (SCG)
North Melbourne vs. Port Adelaide (BA)
Hawthorn vs. Melbourne (MD) (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 (GS) (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)
Melbourne vs. Fremantle (MCG)
Geelong Cats vs. GWS GIANTS (GMHBA) (T)
Gold Coast SUNS vs. Western Bulldogs (TIO) (N)
West Coast Eagles vs. Essendon (GS) (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 (GS) (T)
Western Bulldogs vs. Geelong Cats (MRVL) (N)
Gold Coast SUNS vs. Adelaide Crows (TIO) (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 (GS) (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)
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 (GS) (N)
Sunday, June 25
Collingwood vs. Adelaide Crows (MCG)
Gold Coast SUNS vs. Hawthorn (HBS) (T)
Byes: Carlton, GWS GIANTS, North Melbourne, Port Adelaide, Richmond, Western Bulldogs

ROUND 16

Thursday, June 29
Brisbane Lions vs. Richmond (G) (N)
Friday, June 30
Sydney Swans vs. Geelong Cats (SCG) (N)
Saturday, July 1
Adelaide Crows vs. North Melbourne (AD)
Western Bulldogs vs. Fremantle (MRVL)
Gold Coast SUNS vs. Collingwood (HBS) (T)
Essendon vs. Port Adelaide (MCG) (N)
Sunday, July 2
Hawthorn vs. Carlton (MCG)
Melbourne vs. GWS GIANTS (TP)
West Coast Eagles vs. St Kilda (GS) (T)

ROUND 17

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

ROUND 18

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

ROUND 19

Friday, July 21
Essendon vs. Western Bulldogs (MRVL) (N)
Saturday, July 22
Richmond vs. Hawthorn (MCG)
Carlton vs. West Coast Eagles (MRVL)
Brisbane Lions vs. Geelong Cats (G) (T)
Fremantle vs. Sydney Swans (GS) (N)
Port Adelaide vs. Collingwood (AD) (N)
Sunday, July 23
GWS GIANTS vs. Gold Coast SUNS (MD)
Melbourne vs. Adelaide Crows (MCG)
St Kilda vs. North Melbourne (MRVL) (T)

ROUND 20

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

ROUND 21

Friday, August 4
Western Bulldogs vs. Richmond (MRVL) (N)
Saturday, August 5
Essendon vs. West Coast Eagles (MRVL)
Adelaide Crows vs. Gold Coast SUNS (AD)
Hawthorn vs. Collingwood (MCG) (T)
Geelong Cats vs. Port Adelaide (GMHBA) (N)
GWS GIANTS vs. Sydney Swans (GS) (N)
Sunday, August 6
North Melbourne vs. Melbourne (BA)
St Kilda vs. Carlton (MRVL)
Fremantle vs. Brisbane Lions (GS) (T)

ROUND 22

Friday, August 11
Collingwood vs. Geelong Cats (MCG) (N)
Saturday, August 12
North Melbourne vs. Essendon (MRVL)
Sydney Swans vs. Gold Coast SUNS (SCG)
Brisbane Lions vs. Adelaide Crows (G) (T)
Carlton vs. Melbourne (MCG) (N)
West Coast Eagles vs. Fremantle (GS) (N)
Sunday, August 13
Hawthorn vs. Western Bulldogs (UTAS)
St Kilda vs. Richmond (MRVL)
Port Adelaide vs. GWS GIANTS (AD) (T)

ROUND 23

Friday, August 18
Collingwood vs. Brisbane Lions (MRVL) (N)
Saturday, August 19
Richmond vs. North Melbourne (MCG)
Gold Coast SUNS vs. Carlton (HBS)
GWS GIANTS vs. Essendon (GS) (T)
St Kilda vs. Geelong Cats (MRVL) (N)
Adelaide Crows vs. Sydney Swans (AD) (N)
Sunday, August 20
Western Bulldogs vs. West Coast Eagles (MRVL)
Melbourne vs. Hawthorn (MCG)
Fremantle vs. Port Adelaide (GS) (T)

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 (GS)



(T) Twilight match; (N) Night match; (AH) Adelaide Hills (Paramang and Ngarrindjeri), Adelaide; (AD) Adelaide Oval (Kooraa), Adelaide; (BA) Blundstone Arena (Palawa), Hobart; (G) The Gabba (Yuggera-Iooraba), Brisbane; (GMHBA) GMHBA Stadium (Wadawurrung), Geelong; (GS) GIANTS Stadium (Waa-pal), Sydney; (MD) Manuka Oval (Ngemawal), Canberra; (MARS) Mars Stadium (Wadawurrung), Ballarat; (MRVL) Marvel Stadium (Wurundjeri), Melbourne; (MCG) Melbourne Cricket Ground (Wurundjeri), Melbourne; (HBS) Heritage Bank Stadium (Yugambal), Gold Coast; (NO) Norwood Oval, (Kaurna), Adelaide; (OS) Optus Stadium (Waadai), Perth; (SCG) Sydney Cricket Ground (Brigidig-E Gadiagal), Sydney; (TIO) TIO Stadium (Larrakia), Darwin; (TP) TIO Traeger 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 150TH 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 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	TOP 6 v TOP 6 Minimum 2 return meetings Maximum 3 return meetings	MIDDLE 6 v TOP 6 Minimum 1 return meeting Maximum 2 return meetings	BOTTOM 6 v TOP 6 Minimum 1 return meeting Maximum 2 return meetings
MIDDLE	TOP 6 v MIDDLE 6 Minimum 1 return meeting Maximum 2 return meetings	MIDDLE 6 v MIDDLE 6 Minimum 2 return meetings Maximum 3 return meetings	BOTTOM 6 v MIDDLE 6 Minimum 1 return meeting Maximum 2 return meetings
BOTTOM 6	TOP 6 v BOTTOM 6 Minimum 1 return meeting Maximum 2 return meetings	MIDDLE 6 v BOTTOM 6 Minimum 1 return meeting Maximum 2 return meetings	BOTTOM 6 v BOTTOM 6 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

CLUB REQUESTS	Accommodating, where possible, the requirements and requests of the clubs.
OPPONENT DISTRIBUTION	All teams to play each other once and six teams twice, with double match-ups determined by 'weighted rule.'
PLAYER WELFARE	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.
TRAVEL	Travel load to be spread as evenly as possible between all clubs.
FANS	All matches scheduled with fans in mind to maximise attendances and television audiences.
GAME DEVELOPMENT	Clubs playing home matches in developing regional markets.
BROADCASTING AGREEMENTS	All matches scheduled in line with the AFL's contractual obligations to its broadcast partners.
VENUE AGREEMENTS	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

