

# The Australian Polo Federation

## SunSmart policy



The following policy is in place to help the Australian Polo Federation and its affiliated Clubs & Players minimise the risks of overexposure to UV.

### Rationale

A balance of ultraviolet radiation (UV) exposure is important for health.

Too much UV from the sun can cause sunburn, skin damage, eye damage and skin cancer. Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. Two in three Australians will develop some form of skin cancer before the age of 70.

People often experience sunburn and skin damage when playing or watching sport due to extended periods exposed to high levels of UV without appropriate sun protection.

Too little UV from the sun can lead to low vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is essential for the development and maintenance of healthy bones and muscles, and for general health.

### Sun protection times

- Club officials, coaches and participants are encouraged to access the daily local sun protection times at [sunsmart.com.au](https://sunsmart.com.au), on the free SunSmart app or in the weather section of the newspaper to assist with the implementation of this policy.
- Sun protection is needed whenever UV levels are 3 and above. Particular care should be taken during the middle of the day when UV levels are most intense.
- During cooler months, sun protection isn't usually needed unless near highly reflective surfaces such as snow or water, outside for extended periods or when the UV reaches 3 and above.

### Schedules, fixtures and rule modifications (including a cancellation policy)

- Where possible, training, events and competitions are scheduled to minimise exposure to UV and heat.
- Cancellation of training, events or competition occurs (according to the rules of Australian Polo Federation) when high risk conditions are forecast.

Where it is not possible to avoid peak UV and heat periods, the following interim steps are taken to minimise the risk of overexposure to UV and heat illness:

- Warm-up activities are limited in duration and intensity.
- The duration of the activity is reduced.
- Activities start earlier in the morning or later in the evening.
- Rest breaks and opportunities to seek shade and rehydrate are increased.
- Officials rotate out of the sun more frequently than usual.
- Officials, coaches and senior members act as role models by wearing sun-protective clothing and hats, applying sunscreen and seeking shade wherever possible.

### Sun protection measures

#### 1. Clothing

- Sun-protective clothing is included as part of on and off-field uniform and uniform for officials and volunteers.
- Tops/jerseys are made from UPF (UV protection factor) 50+ material and have long sleeves and a collar.
- Tops/jerseys are loose fitting and lightweight.
- Where the competition uniform does not provide adequate sun protection, participants are reminded to apply SPF 30 or higher sunscreen to all exposed skin and wear covering clothing whilst not on the field.

#### 2. Sunscreen

- SPF 30 or higher broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen is promoted and/or provided to participants. People with naturally very dark brown or black skin (not a tan or olive skin) may not need to wear sunscreen.
- Participants are encouraged to apply sunscreen 20 minutes before training or playing and to reapply every two hours.
- Sunscreen is stored below 30°C and replaced once it is past the use-by date.
- Participants are encouraged to apply a generous amount of sunscreen (the equivalent of one teaspoon per limb).
- The first aid kit includes a supply of SPF 30 or higher broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen.

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### 3. Hats

- Wide-brimmed or bucket style hats are included as part of the on and off-field uniform (even if they can't be worn in actual play). Caps and visors do not provide adequate sun protection to the face, ears and neck and are not recommended.

### 4. Shade

- An assessment of existing shade has been conducted (using the SunSmart shade audit resource) at commonly used outdoor venues.
- When not actively playing or between individual events, participants are able to rest in shaded areas.
- Where there is insufficient natural or built shade, temporary shade structures are provided or participants are notified to bring their own temporary shade (e.g. tents or umbrellas).
- The use of shade from buildings, trees and other structures is utilised where possible (e.g. for player interchange, marshaling areas, spectator areas).
- Marshaling, interchange and presentation ceremony areas are protected by shade.
- Participants and officials rotate to cooler, shaded areas.

### 5. Sunglasses

- Participants are advised to wear sunglasses that meet the Australian standard (ASNZS 1067:2003).

### Education and information

- The times when sun protection is required (as determined by SunSmart's daily sun protection times) are communicated to participants and spectators
- Participants are notified at the beginning of September that sun protection measures need to be implemented.
- Participants are notified at the start of May that sun protection measures are no longer required unless UV index levels reach 3 and above.

### Review

- This SunSmart policy will be reviewed bi-annually to ensure that the document remains current and practical.
- This policy was last updated on 14 May 2014.

### Relevant documents and links

- **SunSmart:** [sunsmart.com.au](http://sunsmart.com.au)
- **SunSmart sun protection times widget:** [sunsmart.com.au](http://sunsmart.com.au)
- **SunSmart apps:** [sunsmart.com.au](http://sunsmart.com.au)
- **Heat and UV Guide:** [sunsmart.com.au/downloads/communities/sports-clubs/uv-exposure-heat-illness-guide.pdf](http://sunsmart.com.au/downloads/communities/sports-clubs/uv-exposure-heat-illness-guide.pdf)
- **Shade audit:** [sunsmart.com.au/shade-audit/](http://sunsmart.com.au/shade-audit/)

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### Disclaimer

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**This information is based on current available evidence at the time of review. It can be photocopied for distribution. Last update: March 2014**