



**OFFICIAL LOOKOUT  
VOLLEYBALL RULES**

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# **1. PLAYING AREA**

## **1.1 DIMENSIONS**

The playing area consists of a rectangular playing court measuring 59' x 29'6".

## **1.2 PLAYING SURFACE**

The surface of the playing area must be as flat and uniform as possible, free of rocks, sprinkler heads and any other objects which may cause injury. Sand courts consist of fine grained sand and should be at least 12" deep. Any hazardous areas should be designated as out of play.

## **1.3 LINES ON THE COURT**

Boundary lines consist of two sidelines and two end lines which mark the playing court. They are made of 1/4-3/8" rope or 2-3 1/8" wide flat bands or tape. The centre line divides the playing court into two square team courts, but is not marked. All lines are considered to extend indefinitely. Attack line is 10" from net and not marked by any visible line, and is under the referee's discretion.

It is the players' responsibility to assure that all lines are in their proper location prior to the start of each play. Lines moved during play do not cause the rally to stop. If it cannot be determined whether a ball lands in bounds or out of bounds, it is a replay.

## **1.4 SERVICE ZONE**

The service zone is behind the end line and between the extensions of the side-lines and extends to the end of the free zone.

# **2. NET AND POSTS**

## **2.1 HEIGHT OF THE NET**

The height of the net is 7'115/8" for men, measured at the centre. A net failure occurs when there is a sudden loss of net height or tension. If the net failure is the result of a fault or does not affect the outcome of the rally, the rally counts. Otherwise, it is replayed.

# **3. BALL**

## **3.1 BALL**

The ball must be spherical, made of a flexible leather or water-resistant leather-like cover and a rubber or rubber-like bladder. Its circumference must be 251/2-261/2" and its weight 9-10 oz. It may be of any color or multi-colored.

## **4. TEAMS**

### **4.1 COMPOSITION**

**Co-ed 6's:** Must consist of 3 men and 3 women, with the “Girl Rule” enforced.

All competitions must involve teams with the required numbers of players, minimum of 4 players. Teams with fewer than the required number of players must forfeit at the discretion of the referee and the opposing team.

Mixed teams are composed of male and female players competing on a men's height net. Mixed teams must contain equal numbers of males and females on each team.

### **4.2 CAPTAIN**

The captain is the one player who represents their team in dealings with the officials and the coordinator.

## **5. PLAYERS' EQUIPMENT**

### **5.1 EQUIPMENT**

A player's clothing must be presentable and appropriate for the competition. Players on the same team are permitted to wear clothing of different colors and designs. Players may wear hats, visors or sunglasses at their own risk. Players may play barefoot, in socks or in booties. Shoes may be worn but they cannot have any type of cleats or spikes.

### **5.2 FORBIDDEN OBJECTS**

It is forbidden to wear any objects that may cause an injury to a player, such as jewelry, pins, bracelets, casts, etc. Players may wear glasses or flat-band rings at their own risk.

## **6. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **6.1 PLAYERS**

All participants must know the **Official Lookout Volleyball Rules** and abide by them.

Participants must behave respectfully and courteously in the spirit of fair play towards the referee, teammates, opponents and spectators. They must refrain from actions aimed at delaying the game or taking unfair advantage.

Participants must accept referees' decisions with sportsmanlike conduct. In case of doubt, clarification may be requested. A captain may protest the referee's interpretation of a rule, but not the referee's judgement.

## **7. SCORING SYSTEM**

### **7.1 TO WIN A MATCH**

Matches will consist of three games. A team wins a match by winning two games, all three games will be played and points awarded for each game.

### **7.2 TO WIN A GAME**

1st and 2nd game are rally scored to 25 points, cap is 27. 3<sup>rd</sup> game will be rally scored same as first two games unless you have reached the max on time, then the referee will announce a point total change to 15 with the cap being 17.

### **7.3 TO WIN A RALLY**

Whenever a team fails to serve or return the ball, or commits any other fault, the opposing team wins the rally.

If the serving team wins a rally, it scores a point and continues to serve. If the receiving team wins a rally, it gains the right to serve, but does not score a point (side-out). You have to serve to win a game.

## **8. PREPARATION OF THE MATCH**

### **8.1 Challenge**

Before the warm-up in the first game and before each deciding game, the referee will conduct a challenge in the presence of the team captains. The winner of the challenge chooses either:

- To select to serve or receive service of the first ball
- The side of the court on which to start the game.

The loser takes the remaining alternative and, for the second game in a 2 out of 3 match, gets to select from the above choices. The challenge may consist of a coin toss, odd/even number, or paper/rock/scissors.

## **9. TEAM LINE-UP**

### **9.1 ROTATION ORDER**

The rotation order specified by the starting line-up must be maintained throughout the game. (There is an exception for doubles)

### **9.2 SUBSTITUTIONS**

Substitutions must be completed at the serve position, a player's first act must be a serve. Abnormal substitutions will be allowed in case of injury.

## **10. POSITIONS**

### **10.1 PLAYERS' POSITIONS AT THE TIME OF SERVICE**

Players may be anywhere within their court. If you are switching a setter and hitter the original hitter must be outside of the setter.

## **11. STATES OF PLAY**

### **11.1 BALL IN PLAY**

The ball is in play from the service contact until the ball is out of play.

### **11.2 BALL OUT OF PLAY**

The ball is out of play from the moment the ball lands or a fault is committed. The rally ends when a referee halts play or the ball is out of play.

### **11.3 BALL IN (OR IN BOUNDS)**

A ball is in when its first contact with the ground is on the playing court or a boundary line.

### **11.4 BALL OUT (OR OUT OF BOUNDS)**

The ball is out when:

- Its first contact with the ground is completely outside
- The playing court, and it does not cause boundary lines to move
- It completely crosses the net outside the posts or under the net
- After the attacking team's third contact
- It touches an object out of play

## **12. PLAYING FAULTS**

### **12.1 DEFINITION**

Any playing action contrary to the rules is a fault. If two or more faults are committed successively, only the first one is counted, except when the first fault is the ball contacting the ground and the second fault occurs during the continuation of the play. If two or more faults are committed by two opponents simultaneously, the rally is replayed.

## **13. PLAYING THE BALL**

### **13.1 TEAM CONTACTS**

Each team is entitled to a maximum of three contacts to return the ball to the opponents. A player may not contact the ball two times consecutively except during or after blocking or at the team's first contact. Blocking does not constitute a team contact, and any player may make the first contact of the ball after the block.

The “Girl Rule” is in effect, meaning that if a ball is contacted two or more times, a “Girl” must have contacted it prior to crossing the net. Any contact by two or more men resulting in the ball crossing the plane of the net is a violation and a side out will be awarded to the other team.

Example: The ball is served and two men contact it (with no woman contacting it) and it crosses the plane is a fault.

Example: The ball is served and a woman contacts it, then it is contacted by two men (i.e.; bump, set, spike) is not a fault.

### 13.2 SIMULTANEOUS CONTACTS

If two opponents simultaneously and instantaneously contact the ball over the net, the ball remains in play and the team receiving the ball is entitled to another three hits. If such a ball lands out of bounds, it is the fault of the team on the opposite side of the net from where the ball lands.

A joust occurs when players of opposing teams cause the ball to come to rest above the net through simultaneous contact. A joust is not a fault and play continues as if the contact was instantaneous.

### 13.3 ASSISTED HIT

A player is not permitted to take support from a teammate or any object in order to reach the ball. However, a player who is about to commit a fault may be stopped or held back by a teammate.

### 13.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF CONTACT

A player may touch the ball with any part of the body. A player may have successive contacts with the ball during a single attempt to make the team's first contact with the ball, provided that the fingers are not used to direct the ball. The ball must be contacted cleanly and not held (including lifted, pushed, caught, carried or thrown). The ball cannot roll or come to rest on any part of a player's body.

An exception is allowed during the defensive play of a hard-driven ball, which is an attack-hit or blocked ball traveling at a high rate of speed (as judged by the referee). In that case, the ball may be momentarily lifted or pushed, providing that the attempt is one continuous motion and the player does not change the direction of the motion while contacting the ball. A contact of the ball with two hands, using the fingers to direct the ball, is a set. A player may set the ball in any direction towards his/her team's court, provided that the ball is contacted simultaneously by both hands and does not visibly come to rest.

Rotation of the ball after the set may indicate a held ball or multiple contacts during the set, but in itself is not a fault. A legal set directed towards a teammate that unintentionally crosses the net is not a fault, regardless of the player's body position. Intent is judged by the referee. If the ball is intentionally set into the opponent's court, the player must contact the ball above his/her shoulders and must direct the ball perpendicular to the direction his/her shoulders are facing.

When contacting the ball with one hand, it must be cleanly hit with the heel or palm of the hand (a roll shot), with straight, locked fingertips (a cobra), knurled fingers (a camel toe) or the back of the hand from the wrist to the knuckles. One-handed placement or redirection of the ball with the fingers (a dink or open hand tip) is not a fault and is at the discretion of the referee.

## **14. BALL AT THE NET**

### **14.1 BALL CROSSING THE NET**

A ball directed to the opponent's court must go over the net within the crossing space limited as follows:

- A ball must cross between the boundary markers of the net, if no markers are present, it is at the discretion of the referee.
- **BALL TOUCHING THE NET:** The ball may touch the net while crossing the net.
- **BALL IN THE NET:** A ball driven into the net may be recovered within the limits of the three team contacts.

## **15. PLAYER AT THE NET**

### **15.1 REACHING BEYOND THE NET**

While blocking, a player may touch the ball beyond the net, provided they do not interfere with the opponent's play, before or during the attack-hit.

A player is permitted to pass his/her hand(s) beyond the net after an attack-hit, provided that the contact was made within his/her team's playing space.

Within the limits of the three team contacts, a player may contact a ball that has crossed the net below the net (or outside the posts) in an attempt to recover a ball that has not been contacted by the opponents. The recovered ball must cross the net below the net (or outside the posts).

### **15.2 PENETRATION INTO OPPONENT'S PLAYING AREA**

Players may partially or completely cross the center line below the net or outside the poles, either before, during or after a legal play of the ball, provided that this does not interfere with the opponent's play. Incidental contact with an opponent is ignored, unless such contact interferes with the opponent's opportunity to play the ball. While opposing players are not required to avoid the ball or the player, they cannot intentionally interfere with any legal attempt to play the ball on their court.

If a player crosses the center line and interferes with an opponent during the continuation of a play, it is a fault.

### **15.3 CONTACT WITH THE NET OR POSTS**

It is a fault for a player or a player's clothing to touch any part of the net.

Exceptions are as follows;

- Incidental contact of the net by a player's hair, a player's hat, visor or glasses fall off during play and then contact the net
- When a ball is driven into the net or the wind blows the net and causes the net to touch a player, no fault is committed.

Once a player has contacted the ball, the player may touch the posts, ropes or any other object outside the total length of the net, provided that it does not interfere with play.

## **16. SERVICE**

### **16.1 DEFINITION**

The service (or serve) is the act of putting the ball into play by the serving player in the service zone.

### **16.2 SERVICE ORDER**

If the serving team wins the rally or a replay is directed, the player who served the previous rally serves again. If the serving team loses the rally, the next server on the receiving team serves the ball.

If a player is discovered serving out of order, that player continues to serve with no loss of points. The opposing team remains in their service order, but the offending team will reverse their original order of service to ensure that no player will serve two consecutive terms of service. Excessive misuse of this privilege is unsportsmanlike conduct.

### **16.3 AUTHORIZATION OF SERVICE**

It is the responsibility of the server to assure that both teams are ready for service. A player on the receiving team may stop play when not ready for a service as long as no attempt to play the ball is made. In this case, the rally is canceled and replayed. Misuse of this privilege is unsportsmanlike conduct.

### **16.4 EXECUTION OF SERVICE**

The server may move freely behind the end line. At the moment of the service or take-off for service, the server must not touch the ground outside the service zone. The player's foot may not go under a boundary line. After the service contact, the player may land on the court or outside the service zone.

The server contacts the ball with one hand or any part of the arm after clearly tossing or releasing the ball and before the ball touches the playing surface.

## **16.5 SERVICE ATTEMPT**

If the server releases the ball for service but does not attempt to complete the service motion, the referee will cancel the rally and direct a replay. A player may only receive one such replay during any one term of service.

## **16.6 SCREENING**

The server's teammates must not prevent the opponents, through screening, from seeing the server or the path of the ball. On an opponent's request, a player must move sideways, bend over or bend down.

## **16.7 NET SERVES**

Net Serves are legal and normal play will resume as long as the ball passes over the net. If the ball is directed into the middle of the net, or does not cross the plane of the net, the serve is called dead and the rally is awarded to the receiving team.

# **17. ATTACK-HIT**

## **17.1 DEFINITION**

All actions to direct the ball towards the opponent's playing area, except in the act of serving and blocking, are considered to be attack-hits. An attack-hit is completed the moment the ball completely crosses the vertical plane of the net or is touched by a blocker. A player may contact an attack-hit at any height, provided that contact with the ball is made within the player's own playing space.

If a player contacts the ball completely above the height of the net, and the player's foot is touching or has last touched the ground on or in front of the attack line, the attack-hit must have an upward trajectory.

## **17.2 ATTACK-HIT FAULTS**

It is a fault when a player completes an attack-hit on the opponent's service, the first attempt to contact the serve must be in an upward direction or a two handed contact made.

Example: If only one contact is made it must be in a bump form.

Example: If the first contact is made with one hand or is set, it must move in an upright direction intended for a second contact.

# **18. BLOCK**

## **18.1 DEFINITION**

Blocking is the action of player(s) close to the net to deflect the ball coming from the opponent by reaching above the height of the net.

## **18.2 HITS BY THE BLOCKER**

The first hit after the block may be executed by any player, including the player who touched the ball at the block.

## **18.3 BLOCK WITHIN THE OPPONENT'S SPACE**

In blocking, the player may place his/her hands and arms beyond the net provided that action does not interfere with the opponent's play. The player is not permitted to touch the ball beyond the net until the opponent has made an attack-hit.

## **18.4 BLOCKING CONTACT**

A blocking contact is not counted as a team hit. The blocking team will have three hits after a blocking contact. Consecutive, quick and continuous contacts may occur by one or more blockers, provided that these contacts are made during one blocking action.

The restrictions on which players may participate in a block are as follows

- Back row players may not participate in a block.

When a ball is blocked back into an attacking player, the attacker is not considered to be a blocker. Therefore, that contact counts as the first of the team's three hits.

## **19. TIME-OUTS**

### **19.1 DEFINITION**

A time-out is a regular game interruption. It lasts for 30 seconds. Each team is entitled to a maximum of two time-outs per game or 4 time-outs per match. Successive time-outs are not authorized.

## **20. DELAYS TO THE GAME**

### **20.1 DEFINITION**

A delay is an improper action of a team that defers resumption of the game and includes:

- Prolonging time-outs, after having been instructed to resume the game
- Repeating an improper request in the same game
- Delaying the game
- Delaying a substitution

### **20.2 SANCTIONS FOR DELAYS**

The first delay by a team in a game is sanctioned with a delay warning. The second and any subsequent delay of any type by the same team in the same game constitutes a fault and is sanctioned with a delay penalty, which is the loss of a rally.

## **21. EXCEPTIONAL GAME INTERRUPTIONS**

### **21.1 INJURY**

If an injury occurs as the result of a fault or does not affect the outcome of the rally, the rally counts. Otherwise, the rally is immediately cancelled and replayed.

When no legal or abnormal substitute is available, an injured player is given a five minute injury time-out. This will not be granted more than twice for the same player in one game.

### **21.2 EXTERNAL INTERFERENCE**

If external interference does not affect the outcome of play, the rally counts. Otherwise, the rally is immediately cancelled and replayed. A shouted warning (such as "Ball on!") is sufficient to affect the outcome of play, provided that a player had a chance to make a legal play of the ball. Misuse of this privilege is unsportsmanlike.

## **22. COURT SWITCHES**

### **22.1 COURT SWITCHES**

Court switches are team exchanges of playing courts which occur at specified times during a game:

During the 3<sup>rd</sup> game of each match, teams will switch sides at the half way point in the game. I.E.; a game to 24 a switch will be made at 13, a game to 15 a switch will be made at 8.

## **23. MISCONDUCT**

### **23.1 CATEGORIES**

Incorrect conduct by a team member towards officials, opponents, teammates or spectators is classified in four categories according to the degree of the offense:

- Unsportsmanlike conduct: arguing, intimidating, taking unfair or inappropriate advantage of player privileges, etc.
- Rude conduct: acting contrary to good manners or moral principles, interfering with an opponent's ability to play, expressing contempt.
- Offensive conduct: defamatory or insulting words or gestures.
- Aggression: physical attack or intended aggression.

## **23.2 SANCTIONS**

Depending on the degree of the incorrect conduct, according to the judgment of the first referee, the sanctions to be applied are:

- Misconduct warning: For unsportsmanlike conduct, no penalty is given but the team member concerned is warned against repetition in the same game.
- Misconduct penalty: For rude conduct, the team is penalized with the loss of one rally.
- Expulsion: Repeated rude conduct is sanctioned by expulsion and the player must leave the playing area for the remainder of the game.
- Disqualification: for offensive conduct and aggression, the player is sanctioned by disqualification and must leave the playing area for the remainder of the match. Disqualified players may be subject to further sanctions by the coordinator or general manager.

## **24. REFEREEING CORPS AND PROCEDURES**

### **24.1 PROCEDURES**

Hand signals and/or whistle are used to start a rally and voice commands used in all other situations. When used, whistles halt play, authorize service or accept or deny a request.

The first referee authorizes service by giving the signal for service which begins the rally. The first referee halts play to end a rally provided that he/she is sure that a fault has been committed and has identified its nature.