



RULES OF THE GAME

Matawan-Aberdeen Recreation Volleyball League

GUIDE FOR REFEREES **

We play using the current 2017 USAV rules. **Exceptions** are noted/**highlighted** below and under "Miscellaneous". The following is an excerpt of the USAV rules. Please refer to the [USAV](#) website for the complete rules.

1. Definitions

- 1.1. A rally is the sequence of playing actions from the moment of the service hit by the server until the ball is out of play. A completed rally is the sequence of playing actions, which results in the award of a point.
- 1.2. Scoring: A team scores a point by successfully grounding the ball on the opponent's court without committing a fault or when the opponents commit a fault and thus the ball is out of play.
- 1.3. Fault: a) A playing action defined in the rules as a fault; b) A rule violation other than a playing action.
 - 1.3.1. If two or more faults are committed by opponents simultaneously, a DOUBLE FAULT is called and the point is replayed.
- 1.4. Penalty for a team committing a fault
 - 1.4.1. Serving Team – loss of point and loss of serve (side out)
 - 1.4.2. Receiving Team – loss of point

2. Service

- 2.1. Service commences each rally. The HEAD referee has the responsibility to begin play in a timely fashion by signaling for service with a whistle. Prior to the whistle, the head ref. should check to see that both the serving and receiving team are ready. If, in the JUDGMENT of the head ref, a team purposely delays the game beyond a reasonable time, a warning should be issued to the offending team. A second violation should result in a charged time out against the offending team. If the offending team is out of timeouts, then a fault occurs.
- 2.2. The server has 8 seconds to release or toss the ball for service after the head ref has whistled the start of play. Failure to serve the ball after the whistle has blown, results in a loss of rally.
- 2.3. A service executed before the referee's whistle is cancelled and repeated. A player may not repeat this more than once during any term of service. A second occurrence is a fault.
- 2.4. The server must put the ball into play anywhere between the right and left sideline (the feet cannot be in contact with the sideline when the ball is served) and from behind the end (the service area).

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- 2.4.1. **Standing Serve** – If using a Standing Serve, no foot may touch or cross the service line. If the foot touches or crosses the line, it is a foot fault.
 - 2.4.2. **Jump Serve** – If using a Jump Serve, one foot (the one used to jump) may touch, but not completely cross, the service line. If either foot crosses the line and makes contact with the floor within the court, before the ball is served (struck by the server), it is a foot fault.
 - 2.5. The server must clearly release or throw the ball before contact. First violation should result in a warning. Subsequent violations result in loss of service.
 - 2.6. After the service whistle has blown and a player tosses or releases a ball for service, the ball **MUST** be struck for service. Only one attempt is allowed.
 - 2.7. Service Criteria: Ball **MUST** pass **OVER** the net and between the antenna. The ball must not contact antenna, ceiling, travel outside of antenna, or land outside of the opponents court area. A violation results in a service fault. If the serve contacts the net **BUT** then goes over, the play is then considered legal and play continues.
 - 2.8. Service Rotation - The rotation or order of players on the court must conform to the service order as set by the captain before the start of the game, at the time of service. No player shall completely overlap his adjacent teammate's position, either front to back or side to side. A front row player (4, 3, 2) must be closer to the net then his/her corresponding back row (5, 6, 1) player. Players in positions 1, 2, 4, & 5 (the outside positions) must be closer to the sideline then their corresponding adjacent row mate. A player's position/overlap is determined by the position of their feet in contact with the floor at the time of service. Players may change from their service order only after the server contacts the ball. Service order must remain the same until the game is completed. The only exception is injury substitution and positional substitution (also, see "Substitution Rules" below). Overlap is a violation of the service rotation. Violation of this rule is a fault for the offending team.
 - 2.8.1. **We play power sixes in this league. Whether you have 4, 5, 6 (or more) players you must follow the standard rotation for sixes. With 4 players, the server is always the back row player. With 5 players there will be two back row players and 3 front row players on court. Under no circumstances do we allow a back row player to attack or block at the net.**
 - 2.9. All players (except the server - who is to be within the service area) must be fully within the court during service.
- ### 3. Playing the Ball
- 3.1. A maximum of 3 consecutive team contacts of the ball is allowed, except, when a block is the first contact. Then, the player(s) participating in the block shall have the right to make the next contact, which becomes the 1st of 3 allowable team contacts. Even if the blocker fails to make the next contact, the team is still allowed 3 consecutive contacts after the block. 4 contacts is a fault.

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- 3.2. Multiple contacts are legal during blocking and during a single attempt to make the first team play of a ball coming from the opponents, even off a block. At any other time, multiple contacts are a fault (double hit).
- 3.3. Held Ball (AKA carry) - When the ball visibly comes to rest in the hands or arms of a player. Scooping, lifting, pushing, and throwing are also forms of a carry and result in a fault. The penalty is a loss of rally for the offending team.
- 3.4. A "held" ball between two opposing players at the net (i.e. a joust) is no longer a dead ball. The ball remains in play and may be contacted 3 more times by the team on the side on which the ball drops (similar to a block).
- 3.5. The ball may touch any part of the body.
4. Play at the net
 - 4.1. Players contacting the net with any part of the body or uniform, including that portion outside the antennas, are guilty of a fault. If two opposing players contact the net simultaneously, a double fault results and replay is directed. Contact with poles outside of antenna is legal.
 - 4.2. Crossing the centerline – A player may touch the opponents court with their foot or feet so long as the foot or feet does not completely cross the center line. A player may touch the opponent's court with any part of their body above their feet so long as the contact does not interfere with the opponent's play.
 - 4.3. Ball in the Vertical Plane of the Net - A ball that has penetrated the vertical plane of the net may be played by either team.
 - 4.4. Players are not allowed to attack the ball on the opponent's side of the net. Attacking the ball over the opponent's court is a fault.
 - 4.5. Players are allowed to break the plane of the net over the opponent's court, while in the process of blocking or completing an attack hit. They cannot interfere with the opponent's opportunity to play the ball in the opponent's court though. Blocking is the process of rejecting a ball back into the opponent's court, after an opponent's offensive attempt to direct the ball into the blockers court.
 - 4.6. Back row players are not allowed to block (fault). In addition, back row players are not allowed to play the ball into the opponents court while in front of the 10 foot line and from above the top of the net (fault), unless they contact the ball while they are in mid-air, having jumped from behind the 10 foot line.
5. End of Play – The play ends when either the ball touches the court or a fault occurs.
 - 5.1. The sidelines and back lines of the court are considered extensions of the court. Therefore, a ball that contacts these lines is considered to be within the court. Conversely, any ball that falls outside of the court markings is out and a fault results.
 - 5.2. Play ends if the ball touches the antenna or the net outside the antenna.
 - 5.3. Balls contacting objects above a team's court and rebounding into the opponent's court result in a fault.

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- 5.4. Play ends when the ball contacts any of the sidewalls. The team causing the contact commits a fault.
- 5.5. If the ball is played in the vicinity of the rear end bleachers, at least one foot must be in contact with the gym floor at the time the ball is played otherwise it is a fault.
- 5.6. Players must not penetrate the adjacent court before, during, or after playing the ball. Doing so is a fault. Our intermediate B2 league rules further constrains players for safety and they may not even touch the side line of the adjacent court. If they do, it is a fault. A player may pass under the net if that player does not contact the opposite team's court or interfere with any player on the opposite side.

6. Scoring

- 6.1. We use "Rally Scoring" – a point is awarded after every completed rally. You do not have to be serving to receive a point. If the server wins the point, they continue to serve. If the non serving team wins the point, the service goes to them.
- 6.2. To win a game, a team must reach "game point" (set at the beginning of a game – typically 25) ahead of the opposing team by a minimum of two (2) points.
 - 6.2.1. For games that start late – we may reduce the "game point"
- 6.3. CAP – we typically set a game CAP of 27 - in the interest of time.
 - 6.3.1. for games that start late, we may reduce the CAP

7. Miscellaneous

- 7.1. Balls that contact objects (lights, beams, vents, etc.) above the teams playing surface are considered part of the ceiling and may be played by the team causing the contact, provided the ball remains in the teams court and the team has not exceeded its legal limit for team contacts.
- 7.2. Rear backboard is in play. Any area above the backboard (ie. backboard supports) is considered part of the ceiling and in play.
- 7.3. A ball contacting the basketball rim/backboard above the head ref should be replayed only if, in the JUDGMENT of the head ref, a legal play could have been made had the backboard not interfered and a player was in proximity to make a play. A dead ball should be ruled if the backboard prevents a ball from going out of bounds and no legal play could have been made. A dead ball should be ruled for any ball hitting the rim/backboard on its way into the opponent's court that could not legally cross above the net and between the antennas. A fault results when a served ball contacts the rim/backboard.
- 7.4. Interruptions of play - As soon as the referees notice an injured player or foreign object on the court (i.e. a loose ball) that could create a hazard to a player(s), play will be stopped and a replay directed. A replay should not be directed if, for example, a loose ball occurs away from the play and simultaneously with the completion of play, and in the JUDGMENT of the referee, the result of the play was unaffected by the loose ball. Players are asked to call a "ball on" when they notice an errant ball from another court which will interfere with play and could cause injury to unsuspecting players.

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- 7.5. Two time outs per team per game. Each time out shall be no more than 30 secs. When a time out is called, both teams are entitled to the FULL 30 seconds.
- 7.6. **Substitution Rules** - No player shall sit out more than 1 full game or the equivalent of one game per evening. Exceptions to this rule will be tolerated only if a team is in compliance with the rules as stated in the "official rules" for rotation/substitution (like libero), **and NO** player(s) on that team object to the inequitable distribution of playing time. If a rotation consisting of all players present at a match is not utilized, in-match substitutions must be pair wise. Once player A is substituted for player B, only player B can be substituted back for player A (except in the case of injury). Players A and B may switch an unlimited number of times, but again, captains are encouraged to give all players equal time on the court. Unlimited Subs!
- 7.7. **Teams automatically forfeit a game if they have less than 4 members.** Teams may play a game with only four -or- may obtain one substitute if they have four or five members.
 - 7.7.1. **Substitutes – Captains need to notify the volunteers when they need a substitute and the volunteers will coordinate with the captain for a substitute (if, one is available – no guarantees). Substitutes may be moved and used on other teams if deemed appropriate.**
- 7.8. Player misconduct - If any player(s) is unacceptably rude (yelling to refs or other players), acts violently (creates a danger to other players well being or the facility), or behaves in any other manner deemed inappropriate during a game, the head referee or volunteers will issue the offending player(s) a warning. If the behavior persists a point or side out will be awarded to the opposing team. Continued mis-conduct will not be tolerated and will result in the dismissal of the player(s) from the game. The volunteers reserve the right to expel any player(s) who demonstrates disregard for our rules.
- 7.9. Refereeing Expectations
 - 7.9.1. The Head Ref must clearly use voice, whistle, and/or electronic whistle during the game.
 - 7.9.2. All Refs and line judges must be standing and focused on the game; no electronics, or discussions, or any other distractions are allowed during the entirety of the game.
 - 7.9.3. The Down Ref is responsible for calling net touches and centerline faults. Of course, if the Head Ref sees these faults, he/she may make the call.
 - 7.9.4. The Head Ref may override any call and has ultimate say.
 - 7.9.5. Only the Captains and/or Co-Captains playing can dispute call with the Head Ref. Any player(s) who was involved in the disputed play may be brought over (by the Captain, Co-Captain, or Ref) to discuss the call.
- 7.10. A copy of this guide will be kept in the equipment bag and also at the back of each of the scoring books for reference. For situations not covered within this guide, the official rulebook applies. Everyone should attempt to familiarize him/herself with the rules.

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