

VOLLEYBALL RULES

Updated 7/30/25

Recent changes will appear in italicized and highlighted text

Situations not specifically covered or implied by these rules shall be governed by the 2024-2025 National High School Volleyball Rules except where a special University of Colorado Colorado Springs Intramural Sports rule applies.

Rule 1: Facility

1. All games will be played at the Recreation and Wellness Center on Courts A-D.

Rule 2: Eligibility

1. The Intramural Sports Program is open to all University of Colorado Colorado Springs undergraduate and graduate students currently enrolled, as well as faculty, staff, and affiliate members, provided they have a valid membership with Campus Recreation and a valid Sport Pass. The Semester Sport Pass can be purchased for \$20 per semester or \$15 Volleyball Sport Pass for the season.
2. Prior to participating, all players must check-in with the Sport Programs Supervisor. To check-in, each participant must present their University issued virtual ID, or must provide a University or must provide a government-issued photo ID.
 - a. No participant may participate in Intramural Sport under any identification other than their own. Any player using an assumed name, false gender identity, or an illegal I.D card will cause their team to forfeit the contest they participated in. The individual will also be suspended from intramural competition and their case will be forwarded to the UCCS Dean Students Office.
3. Varsity athletes may participate in other intramural activities outside of their varsity sport. However, they may not participate in their varsity sport or its related activities at the intramural level.

Rule 3: Team Composition

1. There shall be 6 players on a team,
2. The minimum number of players needed to begin a match is 4.
 - a. If an injury or disqualification reduces the number to fewer than 4, the game shall be defaulted.
3. Open
 - a. The team shall be open, meaning there are no gender requirements.

Rule 4: Equipment

1. Any exposed jewelry (ear rings, nose rings, necklaces, etc.) will not be permitted.
2. Teams are asked to wear similarly colored shirts.
3. Players must be wearing non-marking, closed toe, athletic shoes while participating.
4. The net height will be set directly in-between standard men's and women's net heights.

Rule 5: Positions

1. All players except the server shall be within the team's playing area and in correct serving order with no overlapping of adjacent player's front-to-back or side-to-side at the instant the ball is contacted for the serve.
2. All players except the server shall be within the team's playing area and in correct serving order with no overlapping of adjacent player's front-to-back or side-to-side at the instant the ball is contacted for the serve.
3. The center front shall not be as near the right side line as the right front nor as near the left sideline as the left front.
4. The center back shall not be as near the right sideline as the right back nor as near the left sideline as the left back.
5. No back line player shall be as near the centerline as the corresponding front line player. After the ball is contacted for the serve, players may move from their respective positions.

Rule 6: Start of Game

1. Forfeit Time
 - a. Forfeit time is 10 minutes after game time.
2. The match will be started using rock, paper, scissors, or a coin toss to determine which team will serve first.
3. This will be conducted by team captains at the captains meeting before each match. The winner may defer the serve and choose a side or choose to serve.
4. The losing captain will have the remaining choice after the winning captain makes their decision.
5. At the beginning of the second set, the team that received first in the previous game shall have first serve in the following game.
6. Before the third set, the officials shall conduct another coin flip or rock paper scissors with the same options available as the beginning of the match.

Rule 7: Match Format

1. Sets will be played until either team has won two sets.
2. The first two sets are played to 21 points, win by two points, cap at 25 points.
3. If a third set is needed, the game is played to 15 points, win by two points, cap at 18 points.
4. Time allowed between sets is limited to two minutes.
5. Weather
 - a. If for any reason the game must be called before completion, it will be called official if two sets have been played.
 - i. Whichever team is ahead in the third match will be declared winner.

Rule 8: Timeouts

1. Each team is allowed 1, 30 second timeout per set.

Rule 9: Service

1. The match begins with the serve, which the right back position designated as the server during the rotation.
2. The official will whistle to signal the server that they can start the serve.
3. The server has five seconds to complete the serve after the official has signaled service.
4. The order in which teams are to serve shall be called the serving order. Players must be in the correct serving order when the ball is served. If the serving or receiving team is out of the correct serving order at the time of service, a point shall be awarded to the other team.



5. A server shall continue to serve until their team commits a fault. If the serving team wins the rally, it scores a point and continues to serve.
6. If the receiving team wins the rally, it scores the point and gains the serve. Each time a team gains the serve it must rotate one position clockwise before serving.
7. A server shall hit the ball with one hand, fist or arm.
8. Let serves are allowed and will not stop gameplay.
9. Each player may have one re-serve during a team's term of service. A re-serve shall be called when the server releases the ball for service, then catches it or it drops to the floor. The referee shall cancel the serve and direct a second and last attempt at serve. The server is allowed a new five seconds for the re-serve.

Rule 10: Points are Scored For

1. Illegal serves.
2. Failure to return the ball legally to the opponents' court.
3. Catching the ball.
4. Holding the ball (scooping, lifting, and shoving shall be considered holding).
5. Striking the ball more than once in succession.
6. Being the fourth player to play the ball (except when there has been a simultaneous hit).
7. Touching the net with any part of the body at any time except when the ball is dead.
8. Reaching under the net and touch the ball or a player of the opposing team when the ball is in play on that side, or interfering with the play of the opposing team by entering the opponent's court, or touching the floor on the opposite side of the center line when the ball is in play.
9. A centerline foot fault. This shall be called when a players' whole foot or hand crosses the plane of the centerline.
10. Making an illegal substitution.
11. Persistently delaying the game.
12. Leaving the court without permission from the referee except to retrieve the ball.
13. Striking the ball while supported by any player or object.
14. Throwing the ball.
15. Holding or pushing the ball against the net.

Rule 11: Judgment Calls

1. Judgment calls cannot be disputed with the official. Please allow them to call the match while you focus on playing the match.
2. Persistent questioning will result in a point for the opposing team.
3. Sportsmanship will be enforced by the match official and our intramural supervisor.

Rule 12: Playable Area

1. The official will establish playable area.
2. If a legal attempt could have been played, but in the officials' judgment there was interference, a replay shall be awarded.
3. If a team hits a ball which strikes the ceiling and the ball stays on their own side, the ball remains live. However, if a team hits a ball which strikes the ceiling and travels to the other team's side of the court, the other team will be awarded a point.
4. Any ball that strikes the wall, track, backboards, or any overhead hanging obstruction is considered dead.

Rule 13: Court Boundary Line

1. If any part of the ball is contacting the boundary line when the ball lands, the ball is considered **IN**.

Rule 14: Net Boundary Line

1. The ball must cross entirely between the nets' antennas to be a legal play.

Rule 15: Substitutions

1. May be made only during a dead ball and without delay.
2. There is one type of substitution:
 - a. Rotational Substitution
 - i. Players always enter and exit at a specified position on the floor, regardless of who is in the position at the time of rotation.

Rule 16: Playing the Ball

1. Legal Contacts
 - a. All players must legally contact the ball either by passing (digging) or overhead passing (setting action).
 - b. The ball may not have pro-longed contact with the hands, fingers, or any upper body part.
 - c. A player may go out of bounds to play a ball, but not beyond the centerline extended. If a player plays a ball that would have been out of bounds, it is considered good. A player may not enter a non-playable area to play the ball (i.e. bleachers or another court.)
 - d. A foot fault occurs when the server steps on or over the line bounding the serving area during the act of serving. Part or all of the server's body may be in the air over the lines.
 - e. A double foul shall be called when players on opposing teams commit a rules infraction at the same instant. In case of a double foul, the point shall be replayed.
 - f. If a ball is driven into the net with such force it causes the net to contact a player on the opposing team, no foul shall be called, and the ball shall continue to be in play.
 - g. Kicking is legal and will be counted as one of the 3 touches per side.
2. Multiple Contacts (Legal)
 - a. Touches by a player during one play of the ball and are permitted:
 - i. When a ball rebounds from one part of a player's body to another in one attempt to save a hard driven spike not already touched by a teammate, it is a legal multiple contact and considered one hit.
 - ii. When a ball rebounds from one part of a player's body to another in one attempt to block, it is a legal multiple contact and the team's next play is considered its first hit.
3. Multiple Contacts (Illegal)
 - a. The same player may not contact the ball twice in a row.
4. Simultaneous Contact
 - a. Simultaneous contact by the same team is allowed and either player may contact the ball again.

Rule 17: Net Play



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1. Net Violation
 - a. Players may not contact the net during a rally. EXCEPTIONS: The player's hair contacts the net, or the net is pushed into a player by the ball.
2. Encroachment (Illegal)
 - a. A player must not cross the center line with their foot. Any portion of the foot that is in contact with the line or the plane is legal.
3. Block/Attack
 - a. Blocking a served ball is not permitted.
 - b. A ball may be attacked, excluding a served ball, when it has partially crossed the net.
 - c. Legal blocks or attacks are made by any player in the front row.
 - d. Legal attacks for back row players are made when the ball is contacted by the player entirely behind the 10 foot line. It is illegal for back row players to attack or block the ball in front of the 10 foot line after leaving their feet.
 - e. Blocking a ball which is entirely on the opponent's side of the net is permitted when the opposing team has had the opportunity to complete its attack. The attack is considered complete when the:
 - i. Attacking team has completed its three allowable hits;
 - ii. Attacking team has had the opportunity to complete the attack or, in the referee's judgement, directs the ball toward the opponent's court;
 - iii. Ball is falling near the net and, in the referee's judgement, no legal member of the attacking team could make a play on the ball.
 - f. A ball in the vertical plane of the net is free to be played by either team.
4. When Blocking
 - a. If two or more players from opposing teams hit the ball simultaneously, it shall not count as one of the three hits.
 - b. If only one player is attempting to block and in doing so contacts the ball, he/she is permitted to contact it a second time.
 - c. A back line player may not return a ball which is completely above the top of the net while positioned on or in front of the 10 foot line (or it's out of bounds extension).
 - d. Reaching over the net is permitted using:
 - i. A fake hit
 - ii. The follow through on a hit made on the player's own side
 - iii. An attempt to hit
 - iv. A block or attempt to block

Rule 18: Definitions

1. Illegal Hit
 - a. Occurs when the ball visibly comes to rest or has prolonged contact with a player during contact.
2. Double Hit
 - a. Occurs when a player illegally contacts the ball twice in succession.
 - b. It can be either 2 attempts in succession or the ball rebounding from one part of the body to another part of the body on a single attempt to play the ball.
3. Quick Set
 - a. Approximately 1 foot above the net right next to the setter.
4. Low Set
 - a. Set 2 to 3 feet above the net, either in front or behind the setter.

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5. Normal Outside Set
 - a. Set directed toward the sideline 8 to 15 feet above the net.
6. Shoot Set
 - a. The set will travel quickly about 1 to 3 feet above the net.
7. Dump
 - a. This skill is performed with the shoulders perpendicular to the net. Usually, the setter is trying to be deceptive by sending the ball across the net on the second hit instead of setting to the attacker for a third hit.
 - b. It usually is kept very low so that after reacting to the surprise maneuver, little time will be left for the opponents to recover and make a strong offensive play.
8. Deep Court Overhead Pass
 - a. This is performed by a skilled player from a poorly controlled pass.
 - b. The player must run deep into the court and convert the deep ball to a front striker or send the ball over the net.
9. Jump Set
 - a. The skill is performed with the setter in the air. Depending on how it is used, it can be for the purpose of deception, for a “quick” set, for maneuvering a bad pass into a useful set (usually too close to the net), or it can be poor technique.
10. One Hand Set
 - a. A setter may be forced to set the ball with one hand due to the ball being passed tight to the net.
 - b. Usually the setter is in the air and sets the middle for a quick attack.
11. One Hand Open Dink/Tip
 - a. This skill is similar to the legal setting motion.
 - b. The length of time the hand contacts the ball in execution is the same as a legal set. Wrist action is essential in proper set and therefore is permissible in the “dinking” action.
12. Closed Fist Dink
 - a. This is a rebounding skill where the ball can be bounced off the fist or punched in a certain direction.
 - b. This becomes illegal only when the ball stays on the hand long enough to constitute a carry.
13. Spike
 - a. This may be performed open or close-handed. The hand must contact the ball rapidly enough so the ball is hit, not thrown.
 - b. A ball spiked with the top of the open hand (fingers) may be a miss hit rather than an illegal hit.
14. Backhand Hit
 - a. Usually this deceptive move is used by the hitter to change the obvious intended direction of the ball.
 - b. The hitter jumps and hits the ball with the back of the hand. Be sure the ball is hit, not pushed or thrown.
15. Block
 - a. This is a rebounding skill. Make sure the blocker does not carry or have prolonged contact with the ball. Blocking techniques may involve the use of wrist action. There is no forward motion of the arm in a one-hand block.
16. Forearm Pass



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- a. This is a passing skill. It can be performed with arms together with hands clasped, hands separated with simultaneous contact, or with one hand or arm.
- 17. Receiving with the Overhead Pass
 - a. Look carefully at a hard spiked or served ball received and converted by an overhead pass. This pass is very difficult and requires great strength on the part of the receiver to overcome that forceful momentum and turn it into a quick snappy pass. A held ball may result.
- 18. The Soft Set
 - a. This is a set that is characterized by a deep flex of the wrist followed by extension and wrist snap.

Rule 19: Forfeit Scoring

- 1. Should a team win by forfeit, the reported score for the game will be 2-0.

Rule 20: Sportsmanship

- 1. Intramural Sports expects all participants and spectators to conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner. We have criteria on sportsmanship that are meant to keep teams accountable for their behavior during play. The criteria for sporting-like restrictions are the following:
 - a. 2 UCs on a player in a game = Ejection
 - b. 3 UCs on a team in a game = Forfeit
 - c. 3 UCs on a player in a season = Removal (even in playoffs)
 - d. 4 UCs on a team in a season = Removal (even in playoffs)
- 2. Sports Programs Staff will be keeping the amount of UC a person/team receives in our records. Additionally, you will be able to see how many UCs your team has via FusionPlay on your team name.