

**University of Massachusetts Lowell
Campus Recreation Department**



Intramural Volleyball Rules

Current NIRSA (National Intramural Recreational Sport Association) & NFHS (National Federation of State High School Associations) shall govern all intramural rules used for volleyball at University of Massachusetts Lowell unless modified by the Intramural department for program needs. Persons subject to the rules are team representatives, including players, substitutes, replaced players, coaches, trainers, spectators & other persons affiliated with the team are subject to the rules of the game & shall be governed by decisions of officials assigned to the game.

PLAYERS & GAME TIMING

1. It is highly recommend for teams / individuals to arrive 10 minutes early before the scheduled game time. At the scheduled game time, if a team does not have the required number of players a 10-minute grace period is in effect. If a team/individual does not appear within the grace period, a win by forfeit will be accredited to the opposing team.
2. The game shall be played between 2 teams of 6 players
 - a. 4 players are required to start the game to avoid a forfeit

PLAYING REGULATIONS

1. A match shall consist of the best of three games.
 - a. In the first two games:
 - i. If the leading team does not have a two-point advantage, play shall continue until one team has a two-point advantage, unless a team reaches the 28-point cap.
 - b. The third game will determine the winner of the match based on the first team to reach 15-points.
 - i. If the leading team does not have a two-point advantage, play shall continue until one team has a two-point advantage, unless a team reaches the 18-point cap.
2. The time period between games of a match shall be no more than 3 minutes beginning on the referee's signal.
3. Rally scoring
 - a. Every side out/ loss of rally results in a point: results in a point for the opponent.
4. The position of the players in order of the serve shall be Right Back, Right Front, Center Front, Left Front, Left Back & Center Back:
 - a. Rotation must be made in a clockwise manner
 - b. No player shall have any part of the body touching the floor outside the boundary & center lines
 - c. All players shall have at least part of one foot touching the floor closest to the respective sideline or centerline.
 - d. After the ball is contacted for the serve, players may move from their respective positions but must switch back before the next serve is contacted.
 - e. Rotate clockwise when a loss of rally is awarded
 - f. Penalties for illegal positioning
 - i. Point / loss of rally is awarded to opponent for:
 1. Overlapping players other than server @ moment of legal serve

2. Players outside the boundary lines
- ii. Improper serve, loss of rally is awarded:
 1. When discovered prior to the contact of the first serve by opposing team, all points earned by improper server shall be canceled & no further penalty assessed.
 2. When discovered after the serve has alternated & first serve has been contacted, no cancellation of points & no penalty are assessed.

5. Each half will begin with a coin toss between opposing captains. The visiting captain shall call the toss. The winner shall choose either to serve or receive. The loser of the toss shall have the remaining choice.

6. A ball striking the ceiling or an overhead obstruction above a playable area shall remain in play provided the ball contacts the ceiling or obstruction on the side of the net extended that is occupied by the team that last played the ball, and the ball is legally played next by the same team.

TIME-OUTS

1. Each team is limited to three time-outs, which are 60 seconds in length,
 - a. Time-outs requested prior to the start of the game shall be honored.
 - b. Time-out penalties occur when a team delays its return to the floor after time has expired.

SUBSTITUTIONS

1. Substitutes can enter the game on a dead ball. Subs may not enter the game during a live ball or after the referee has signaled for a serve.
2. Substitutes must report to the substitution zone & may enter after recognized by the umpire.
3. Penalty for illegal substitution:
 - a. For serving team, any points known to have been scored during a term of service in which the illegal substitute is discovered in the game shall be canceled.
 - b. For receiving team, prior to the contact of the serve by the opposing team, all points earned during the previous term of service by the violating team while the illegal substitute was in the game, shall be canceled.
4. After the serve has alternated & the first serve is contacted, there shall be no cancellation of points. During a time-out, substitutes from the same team must report @ the same time.

THE SERVE

1. A serve is contact with the ball to initiate play.
2. The server shall hit the ball with one hand, fist or arm while the ball is held, or after it is released
3. The ball shall be contacted within 5-seconds after the referee's signal to serve.
4. The server shall serve from within the serving area & shall not touch the end line or the floor outside the lines at the instant the ball is contacted for the serve.
 - a. Server's body may be in the air over or beyond the serving area boundary lines, having left the floor within the serving area.
5. Service begins when player assumes the right back position & ends when a loss of rally is awarded or a substitution for the player is made.
7. A team continues to serve until a loss of rally is awarded to the opponent or game ends.

8. The team not serving first in the previous game of a match shall serve first in the second game.
9. "Let serve" is a ball that when served, hits the net without touching the net antenna and continues across the net into the opponent's court.
10. A serve is illegal when:
 - a. Touches the ceiling or any obstruction (Out of Bounds)
 - b. Hits the ball illegally (Illegal Hit)
 - c. Is touching the end line or the floor outside of serving area when the ball is contacted (Line Violation)
 - d. Does not contact the ball to serve within 5-seconds (Delay of Service)
 - e. Is out of serving order or is from the wrong team (Illegal alignment/Improper Service)
 - f. Deliberately serves before the referee's signal (Unsportsmanlike Conduct)
 - g. Releases the ball for service, then catches it or drops it to the floor more than once during one term of service (Illegal Hit)
11. A served ball becomes dead when:
 - a. A re-serve shall be called when:
 - i. Server releases the ball for service and then drops it to the floor
 - ii. Server will be given a new 5-second count for re-serve from referee
 - b. Does not legally cross the net
 - c. Ball passes under the net (Net Foul/ Net Serve)
 - d. Touches one of the server's teammates (Ball Lands Inbounds)
 - e. Touches the floor on the server's side of the net (Ball Lands Inbounds)
 - f. Crosses the net & lands out of bounds (Out of Bounds)

SERVICE PENALTIES:

- a. Loss of rally is awarded when:
 - i. Illegal serve, service fault or receiving team out of position during an illegal serve
- b. Point is awarded when:
 - i. Receiving team is out of position during a service fault

LIVE & DEAD BALLS

1. A live ball remains live when the following occurs:
 - a. "Let serve" is a ball that when served, hits the net without touching the net antenna and continues across the net into the opponent's court.
 - b. The let serve is a playable live ball
 - c. The let serve is a strategy use to keep the game moving
 - d. A ball striking the ceiling or an overhead obstruction above a playable area shall remain in play provided the ball contacts the ceiling or obstruction on the side of the net extended that is occupied by the team that last played the ball, and the ball is legally played next by the same team.
 - e. Brooks: the ceiling is in if the ball comes down on the same side, & out of bounds if it touches the ceiling on the way over the net.
2. A live ball becomes dead when the ball touches, contacts or lands:
 - a. Ball touches the net antennas
 - b. Ball lands out-of-bounds or touches the floor
 - c. Is not legally played by the offending team
 - d. A wall or ceiling obstruction over a non-playable area

- e. Ball becomes motionless in the net or overhead obstruction
- f. Ball passes completely under the net
- g. Ball contacts a non-player in a playable area
- h. Ball from the direction of the court or player breaks the plane of a non-playable area
- i. Player commits a foul
- j. Official sounds whistle

CONTACTING THE BALL

1. Contact is any touch of the ball by a player excluding a player's loose hair
2. A team shall not have more than 3 hits before the ball crosses the net into opponent's playing area.
 - a. A team's 1st contact is simultaneous contact by opponents or an action to block, the next contact is considered the team's first hit
3. A ball crosses the net when:
 - a. Legal contact is a touch of the ball by a player's body which does not allow the ball to visually come to rest or involve prolonged contact.
4. Illegal contact, illegal successive contacts or illegal multiple contacts of the ball.
 - a. Passed completely beyond the vertical plane of the net
 - b. It is partially over the net & is contacted by an opponent
 - c. No part of the ball has crossed the net & is legally blocked
5. A block & simultaneous contact does not count as a hit.
6. Simultaneous contact is more than one contact of the ball made at the same instant.
 - a. A team has more than 3 hits
 - b. One player contacts the ball with two or more parts of the body at the same instant
 - c. Teammates contact the ball at the same instant
 - d. Opposing players contact the ball at the same instant, the player on the opposite side of the net from which the ball falls shall be considered the player to have touched the ball last. The other player may participate in the next play & simultaneous contact shall not count as a hit.
 - e. A "joust" occurs when two opponents cause the ball to come to rest above the net through simultaneous contact.
 - f. Successive contacts by a player whose first contact is a block
 - i. Permitted & considered 1 hit & any player may make the next hit
 1. Except a block which does not count as a hit
 - ii. Joust" is not a foul & play continues as if contact was instantaneous
 1. Permitted & considered 1 hit
 - g. Successive contacts two or more separate attempts to play the ball by one player with no interrupting contact by a different player between the two plays.
 - h. Multiple contacts are more than one contact by a player during one attempt to play the ball.
 - i. Multiple contacts are permitted only:
 - ii. A player shall not have successive contacts of the ball unless:
 1. Simultaneous contact by teammates
 2. Simultaneous contact by opposing players
8. PENALTIES FOR ILLEGAL PLAY: Point or loss of rally is awarded to the opponent

PLAYER ACTIONS

1. Front-row players may contact the ball from any position inside or outside the court above or below the top of the net.
2. Back-row players, while positioned behind the attack line, may contact the ball from any position inside or outside the court above or below the top of the net.
3. Play continues when a back-row player (on or in front of the attack line), contacts the ball, which is completely above the height of the net, on the team's first or second contact, directing the flight of the ball toward a teammate, and the opponent legally contacts the ball that breaks the vertical plane of the net.
 - a. If the ball is hit back into a back-row player, it is ruled as the team's first hit/ contact
 - b. It is a back-row player foul if the flight of the ball is toward the opponent's court and not toward a teammate and is legally touched by an opponent above the net, or completely crosses the net.
4. A back-row player SHALL NOT:
 - a. a. Participate in a block or an attempt to block
 - b. b. Attack a ball which is completely above the height of the net while positioned:
 - i. On or in front of the attack line or its out-of-bounds extension
 - ii. In the air, having left the floor on or in front of the attack line or its out-of-bounds
 - iii. NOTE: An illegal back-row attack shall not be called until the ball has completely crossed the net or is legally blocked by the opponent

NET PLAY

1. A ball contacting & crossing the net shall remain in play provided contact is entirely within the net antennas
2. "Let serve" is a ball that when served, hits the net without touching the net antennas and continues across the net into the opponent's court.
 - a. The let serve is a playable live ball
 - b. The let serve is a strategy use to keep the game moving
3. Recovering a ball hit into the net shall be permitted
4. Only a legal block allows for contact with the ball when it is entirely on the opponents side of the net & the opposing team has had the opportunity to complete its attack
 - a. Attack is complete when:
 - i. Attacking team has completed its 3 allowable hits
 - ii. Attacking team has had the opportunity to spike the ball
 - iii. Attacking team has the ball falling near the net & no play on the ball can be made
5. Attacking or blocking a served ball is not permitted especially when the ball is completely above the height of the net.
6. Any contact is legal & the ball is not out of play until it completely crosses the vertical plane of the net or is legally contacted by an opponent.
7. Point or loss of rally is awarded to opponent for net foul or over-the-net-foul
 - a. A ball may be attacked, excluding a served ball when it has partially crossed the net.
8. A net foul occurs when the ball is in play.
 - a. Players will be ruled "illegally under the net" should their whole foot be over the center line.

9. A player contacts any part of the net including net cables or net antennas
 - a. Not a foul when players' hair touches the net
 - b. Not a foul when the force of a ball hit by an opponent pushes the net or net cables into a player
 - c. A player gains an advantage or there is dangerous contact by contacting the floor / wall cables standards or referee's platform
 - d. Interference by a player occurs when:
 - e. Contact with an opponent which interferes with the opponent's legitimate effort to play the ball
 - f. Intentional contact with the ball which the opponent has caused to pass partially under the net or into the body of the net & the opponent is attempting to play it again

10. PENALTIES FOR ILLEGAL NET PLAY: Net foul or over-the-net foul, point or loss of rally awarded to opponent

FOULS

1. Double foul occurs when opposing players commit rule violations at the same instant
2. A multiple foul occurs when the same team commits rule violations at the same instant
3. Simultaneous foul occurs when a team violates more than one rule at the same instant
4. A double hit occurs when a player's successive or multiple contacts are illegal
5. A foot fault occurs when a player violates the serving area or center line restrictions

6. PENALTIES FOR FOULS:

- a. Single foul (double hit or foot fault) = Point or loss of rally awarded to opponent
- b. Double foul
 - i. Live ball play = replay
 - ii. Dead ball = penalty assessed against serving team followed by receiving team with both teams rotating
- c. Multiple foul = Only one penalty assessed = point, loss of rally or charged time-out
- d. Simultaneous foul
 - i. Live ball play = only one penalty assessed
 - ii. Dead ball = all applicable penalties are assessed

REPLAY

1. Putting the ball in play without awarding a point or loss of rally & without a rotation for the serve
 - a. Official's mistaken whistle
 - b. Double whistle occurs on the serve
 - c. Player unintentionally serves the ball prior to referee's signal
 - d. Double foul occurs during a live ball
 - e. Conflicting calls which cannot be resolved
 - f. Officials judgment, player's legitimate effort to play the ball is affected by:
 - i. Non-player anywhere in a playable area
 - ii. Wall, floor obstacle
 - iii. Ball becomes motionless in the net inside the net antennas or overhead obstruction over the playable area
 - iv. Ball contacts a backboard or its supports hanging in the playable area, which the ball would have been in play, had the backboard not been there

- g. Play is interrupted because:
 - i. Foreign object enter the playing area
 - ii. Official determines the player has been injured