



Beach Volleyball Quick-Guide v6.0

For the complete beach rules, see the USAV DCR (Rulebook) or study online at volleyballretraining.com
For Further information about Rules or Referee Certification, please contact us at info@beachcommission.org
Rules Changes are flagged as **NEW**. **Points of emphasis are highlighted**. *NCAA Collegiate rule differences in underlined italics.*

Equipment and Area:

- Net 28' long. Height at center: Women 7' 4 1/8" and Men 7' 11 5/8". Antennas are required. **Posts and referee stands should be padded.**
- Court **26'3" x 52'6"** square to **37'1"** short diagonal. (8.0m x 16.0m with 11.31m short diagonal)
- Lines 2" wide are inside the court. (Buckles for adjusting the length of the lines, in all four sides, are suggested.)
- Ball: light-colored, 9-10 oz. weight, with approx. 26" circumference, at **2.5 to 3.2 psi**
- When possible, the playing boundaries for each court should be established by banners, nets, curtains, etc.

Teams and Uniforms:

- Two Players with no substitutes. **Only the team Captain** may interact with the referees, to request Time Out or explanation of rule.
- Uniforms may or may not be required, as per event requirements. Bathing suits or "shorts & tops" are typical requirements.
 - When uniforms are required, they should be worn so that player numbers are visible at the coin toss and thereafter.
 - *NCAA: Shorts and tank tops. Partners wear identical uniforms. Full squad to display matched color scheme.*
 - Legal uniform numbers are 1 or 2, in traditional beach doubles. *NCAA: beach uniforms use basketball numbering system*
 - Cold weather gear (sweats suits, Lycra undergarments etc.) may be allowed. (Guideline temperature: "below 60 degrees")

Spirit of the Game:

- **Teams play without outside intervention or assistance of any type.**
 - Spectators, including parents and club-mates, are encouraged to cheer, but may not assist at any time. (ex: "calling shots" is prohibited)
 - Coaches, when present, may cheer the exceptional play, but may only instruct during timeouts, court-switches, and between sets.

Coaches:

- Number of Coaches allowed: USAV: A coach and no more than one assistant coach. *NCAA: No more than 3 coaches*
- Coaches may only participate in on-court drills prior to the coin toss and official warm-up: USAV-Adult and *Collegiate: -10 min.*
- During the official timed warm-up, coaches may instruct from the sideline, but may not engage in drills.
- During play, coaches observe from the player area.
- Instruction may only take place during timeouts, between sets, and (non-disruptively) during side-changes.
- **NEW; Coaches in age groups 18 & under may call time out for their team.** *NCAA: Coaches may suggest a time out to their captain.*
- **Coaches may not influence or question the official's judgment at any time.**

Match Format:

- Official timed warm-ups: The four players (only) share unlimited access to the entire court (Use good sportsmanship)
 - USAV: 3 min on court, coin toss at -7, then "5 minutes" formal warm-up. **Event may reduce warm-up to -5 or -3.**
 - *NCAA: coin toss at -10, then official warm-up. (Coin Toss is included in the 10 minutes)*
- Beach volleyball is played as Match Play, best-of-three sets played to 21, 21, (15). Rally scoring; win by two.
 - Scoring may be modified by Tournament Directors for specific events, (ex: "one set to 28," or "two sets only to 21, without deciding set")
- Winner of the toss chooses serve, receive or side. Other captain chooses from remaining options. Both captains state service order for the set.
- All matches should utilize the etiquette of pre-match and post-match handshakes at the net.
- **Officials identify the correct server for each rally, and actively prevent wrong-server faults.**
- Service Order: Players alternate terms of service.
- Position Faults: Players (other than server) must be on court at moment of service (no other requirement).
- Screening: Serving team must take positions so that the receiving team is able to see **EITHER** the server **OR** the flight of the ball.
 - **In the spirit of fair play, impeded receivers should use the "raised hand" signal & the serving players should adjust position, without delay**
- Delay: The routine time between rallies should be 12 seconds.
 - In locations without banners or ball-retrievers, this guideline may be extended.
 - Violations result in *Delay Warning*, with subsequent occurrences leading to *Delay Penalty*.
- Hand Signals: Both Referees should use a "full Signal Sequence:" Whistle, award rally, & show nature of fault. (R2 with clip-board is exempt)
- After 7 points of play, indicate that teams should **switch sides**. This is not a time out. Teams do not go to their player areas.
 - Coaches may offer brief instruction during the court switch, but must not delay the match.
- **Each team may call one Timeout per set.** Total duration of a Regular Timeout is 60 seconds, as follows:
 - 15 seconds to move to player areas, 30 seconds at player area, (whistle at 45 sec), 15 seconds to return to play.
- A "Technical Timeout" (TTO) after the 21st point of sets 1 and 2 is suggested in most formats. **Event may opt to add or reduce number of TTOS**
- The interval between sets is 1 minute.
 - During that interval, a referee offers "first choice for set 2" to the captain of the team that lost the first coin-toss.
 - Then the other captain makes the remaining choice, and both captains declare their service order for the set.
- If there is a deciding (3rd) set, the 1st referee should conduct another coin toss, and offer these same choices.
 - Deciding sets: Play to 15 points, win by two. Switch sides on multiples of 5. There is not a TTO in the (3rd) set.
- **At the end of the match, all players meet at the net near the referee stand to shake hands with each other, then with the officials.**

Disputes:

- A Captain may occasionally approach the referee to request an explanation of a call (not judgment related).
- The referee(s) should be approachable, and must offer an explanation based upon the Rules, but without prolonged discussion.
- A Captain has the right to protest rules misinterpretations/misapplications, but not judgment calls or sanctions.

Warnings and Sanctions: **ALL WARNINGS AND DELAY SANCTIONS REMAIN IN FORCE THROUGHOUT THE MATCH**

- **Delays** are sanctioned by showing "Card on Wrist": Yellow = warning Red = Penalty (point and loss of rally)
 - 1st Delay by a player should result in a Team Delay Warning. Any further delay by that team, in the **match**, results in delay penalty.
 - Multiple Delay Penalties may be assessed within a match.
- **Misconduct** by any player should be managed when possible through verbal warning(s).
 - Referee may offer one Formal Warning (Yellow Card) to a player guilty of misconduct.
 - Subsequent minor misconduct by *either player on that team in that match* must be sanctioned by Penalty (Red Card).
- **Rude Conduct** is sanctioned by Penalty (Red Card). **Maximum two Penalties per player per set.**
 - If a player reaches the level of a third Penalty in a set, they are instead Expelled for the set (Red & Yellow together)
 - **AGGRESSIVE** action by any player at any time results in Disqualification (Red and Yellow apart)
- **Coaches** are subject to individual sanctions as listed below; those sanctions apply through the **match**.
 - 1st **per match**: Yellow (Warning) 2nd **per match**: Red Card (Penalty) 3rd **per match**: R+Y cards (EXPULSION)

Playing Actions and Faults:

- Plane of Net:
 - Players must initiate contact with the ball within their own playing space (follow-through after contact is legal).
 - Blockers may contact the ball in the opponent's space only after the attack hit or if opponents are unable to play the ball.
 - It is always illegal to attack a ball in the opponents' space.
- Blocks:
 - The block contact counts as first team contact; either player may make the 2nd team contact.
 - **Blocked balls may rebound in any direction.** If the blocker clearly catches or throws the ball, they may be whistled for a fault.
 - "Joust" between opponents is legal. Any player may make the next play, as their team's 1st contact.
- Tips:
 - **"Open hand tipping" is illegal.** (use "illegal attack" signal)
 - Knuckles may be used to "poke" the ball, provided that the ball rebounds (is not caught or thrown).
 - Finger tips (including thumb) may be used to "poke" the ball only if those in contact with the ball are "rigid and together."
- Ball Under the Net:
 - Players may contact any part of the ball until it has passed completely through the plane below the net.
- Simultaneous Contact by Teammates:
 - If teammates touch the ball simultaneously it counts as **2** team contacts. Either player may make the 3rd contact.
- Net Contact:
 - **It is a fault to contact any part of the net between (and including) the antennas, during the action of playing the ball.**
- Play Under the Net, and Interference:
 - There is no centerline. Players may contact any part of the opponents' court as long as they do not interfere with the opponents.
 - A player who interferes with an opponents' ability to make their next play must be called for the fault.
 - > Point to the court under the net with your index finger, and say "interference." (this will generally require explanation)
 - Interference is a fault that results in a point, **not a replay**.
 - Note that this is sometimes a delayed call (the referee must wait to see if the opponents are truly hampered in their next action)
 - Incidental contact between opponents does not constitute interference, (bump knees, step briefly on toes, etc).
 - Interference can occur without physical contact. (ex: fallen player under net prevents defender covering short).
- Pursuit: Is legal in beach volleyball.
 - Only balls which pass "over or outside" an antenna are eligible to be pursued.
 - *A player may pursue the ball by any route, including under the net and/or through the opponents' court.*
 - Opponents may not interfere with legal pursuit.
 - The ball must be played back "over or outside" the same antenna.
 - Third contact must send the ball legally through the crossing space (between the antennas).
- Ball Marks:
 - The ball is "in" if it lands in bounds, or touches a boundary line
 - **If the first referee is in doubt of a line call, s/he should immediately initiate a "ball mark protocol"**
 - > *Players may not insist on a ball-mark review.* They should step away from the mark, and not influence the decision in any way.
 - > Relevant line-judge(s) may assist as the referee views the mark from the sand.
 - > The referee must be careful to inspect the correct ball mark, to consider ball trajectory, and to understand "splash" of soft sand.
 - Lines moved during the play should be replaced by the referee before judging the result.
- Hand setting:
 - There are two types of ball handling faults: "Catch Balls" and "Double Contacts."
 - > The ball must be played with one quick motion.
 - > Balls which significantly move downwards, or visibly come to rest, are "Catch Ball" faults. (aka "deep dish," "held-ball," or "lift")
 - > Clearly distinct and separate contacts of the ball constitute a "Double-Hit."
 - Spin is not a fault... but spin may be an indication that a "double-contact" fault has occurred.
- Serve Receive:
 - Double hits are allowed in serve receive attempts, unless finger action is employed. In that case, judge the contact as you would any set.
 - It is legal to use techniques such as clenched fist(s), or the heels of the hands, in serve receive attempts
 - > This is legal whether the hands/fists **are together or apart**.
 - It is also legal to receive serve "open-handed with finger action," but **strict hand-setting judgment must** be applied to the contact.
- Defense:
 - It is legal for any *first-team-contact* to strike two or more parts of a defenders' body during a **single** attempt to play the ball.
 - > Includes serve-receive (**hands do not have to be together**)
 - > Includes a double contact **without finger action**
 - First-team-contact **with** finger action should be judged just as any setting contact. (*The referee can call double-hit.*)
 - > **Exception: ...unless the double contact was in defense of a "hard-driven attack".**
 - It is legal to *momentarily* catch or double-contact a "hard driven" ball.
 - In judging an attack as "hard-driven," the referee must consider the following:
 - 1) Player's action: "reactive" (double allowed) or "intentional handset" (not allowed)
 - 2) Speed and trajectory of the ball
 - 3) Distance between attacker and defender.
 - A serve is not an attack; therefore, the "hard-driven" exception does not apply.
- Outdoor Safety:
 - Stay hydrated. Use sunscreen, as well as clothing and headgear that protects from sun exposure.
 - Be prepared for cold or wet weather as well as for heat and sun! *Play usually continues through wind or rain.*
 - **Tournament directors should be familiar with local regulations regarding lightning safety.**