

NextStep Beach Volleyball Rules Summary

ATHLETE REFEREES Athlete referees should be present and in position 5 minutes prior to the game they are refereeing. (Ref assignments are listed on each court's pool sheet.) Make sure you have a clipboard, score sheet, pencil & score board ready.

Be present at coin toss to mark service order & team captains. At coin toss the winning captain chooses **serve/receive or side**. The opponent chooses among the remaining options.

Both teams declare their teams' player serving order. Warm-ups will total 5 minutes on the court after coin toss. Teams are encouraged to warm up off the court prior to coin toss.

During the match, only the captain is authorized to speak to the referees for an explanation on the application or interpretation of the rules. The referee(s) must offer a brief but clear explanation. The players have the option to protest rule interpretations, **but not judgment**.

Remind teams to switch sides every 7 points if playing 1 game. If playing a match, players switch sides every 7 points for first and second sets and every 5 points in third set.

SERVING Server is permitted one toss or release of the ball per service attempt. Moving the ball in the hands is permitted. Server must be in (or jump from within) the 8m width of the court. The server may not step on or under the baseline prior to contact of serve. **Movement of the line by pressed sand is not a fault**. Make sure players take turns serving. Inform players if wrong person serves. If wrong person serves, stop & replay with correct server (if point is scored, point will stand, make sure the correct person serves next).

SCREENING A player of the serving team must not prevent an opponent, through individual screening, from seeing the server and the flight path of the ball. Receiving team should raise a hand to indicate that a screen exists. Serving team must alter positions if requested to avoid screen.

BALL IN & OUT The ball is IN when it physically touches the line, or the court within the lines. In beach volleyball the lines move, and are affected by the weather and condition of the sand. **Care should be taken to straighten the lines**. The ball is OUT when it: falls on the ground completely outside the lines (without touching them); touches an object outside the court, or a person out of play; touches the antennae, net support structure, or the net itself outside the antennae; crosses completely under the net or crosses the vertical plane of the net either partially or totally outside the antennae during service or after a team's third hit.

PLAYING THE BALL A team gets 3 hits. A BLOCK COUNTS AS A HIT. Simultaneous contact by teammates is counted as TWO team hits. The ball must be hit or rebound from the hit, it may not be caught or thrown. TIPS ARE ILLEGAL. Simultaneous contact by opponents (joust) is legal, even if momentarily held. Both teams retain the right to three hits after a joust. Players may not take support from a person or object in order to play the ball. When competition is scheduled or is occurring on adjacent courts, it is a fault for a player to enter the adjacent court(s) to play a ball or after playing a ball. The free zone, including the service zone on an adjacent court is a playing area.

DIGS During the team's first contact it is legal for the ball to strike two or more parts of a defenders' body during a single action to play the ball. In Beach Volleyball, however, there are exceptions that come into play: (1) Double contact with overhand finger action is NOT allowed unless; (2) the double-contact was in defense of a hard driven attack. **Served balls are not an attack-hit.**

JUDGING DEFENSIVE PLAYS If a player DELIBERATELY uses open-hand finger-action to contact ANY ball, that contact must be judged as a set. (The hard driven ball is considered to move too fast for a deliberate decision to employ setting action... that's why we don't call the defender's double if we declare a ball hard-driven). In judging defensive actions involving finger action, the referee must evaluate: 1) Speed: Was the ball hit very hard? 2) Distance: How far did the ball travel? Thus: How much time was there? and ultimately; 3) Was the defensive play reactive in nature? Or 4) Did the defender decide to employ overhand setting action? In the end the referee must come to a decision based on the guiding criteria to determine if the action will (or will not) be JUDGED AS A SET.

HAND SETTING The hands must act together smoothly, or a double-hit should be called. **Spin is not a fault...**but spin is an indicating factor of a possible fault. Sets that visibly come to rest or are redirected are held ball faults.

ATTACK HITS Any contact that will send the ball to the opponents (except the serve) is an attack. Attacks must take place within a team's playing space... not on the opponent's side. Serves may not be attacked while still higher than the top of the net from anywhere on the court. TIPS Open hand tipping is illegal. To dink legally, all fingers in contact with the ball must be rigid and together. Knuckles are exempted.

SETTING OVER Setting the ball across to the opponent's court with finger action is only legal if the setter's **body position is established** and the set is made directly forward or directly behind that position (square to the attacker's facing direction). Setting the ball across to the opponent's court while off-angle or pivoting and not setting a teammate should be called for an illegal attack.

BLOCKS A block is an action (close to and above the net) that attempts to intercept a ball coming from the opponent's court. The block DOES COUNT as a first team contact. EITHER player of the team may make the 2nd team contact. Multiple contacts at the block are counted as only one hit. Serves may not be blocked.

BALL OVER THE NET Teams may play the ball on their own side only (no reaching beyond the plane to bring back a set above the net). Follow-through across the plane of the net after the contact is legal. Attackers must only touch that part of the ball which is on their side of the net. Blockers may penetrate the plane over the net and block only after an attack hit.

BALL UNDER THE NET Balls passing under the net, but still in the plane, may be played back. Balls completely crossing under the net are out.

PLAYER NET CONTACT Contact with the net by a player between the antennae, during the action of playing the ball, is a fault.

PLAYER UNDER NET There is no center line so players may cross into the opponent's area (generally during pursuit or during an attempt to save a ball in or under the net) as long as they do not interfere with the opponents. If a player interferes with the opponents' play, he/she must be called for the fault. Signal interference by pointing with your index finger under the net (and

verbalizing “interference”). **Note:** Contact between opponents does not always constitute interference (bump knees, step briefly on toes, etc.) and interference can also occur without physical contact. (i.e. a fallen player under the net prevents defender from covering short). Interference is a fault that results in a point, not a replay. Referees must use broad awareness of many factors in judging interference.

TIMEOUTS Each team may call one 60 second timeout per set. **A 5 minute medical time-out may be called if an injury occurs** and tournament staff must be immediately notified. A player may only receive a medical time-out once in a match. Technical time-outs can be called during **MATCHES ONLY** and are conducted when a combined total of 21 point are scored in sets 1 and 2. It is administered just the same as a regular time-out. There is not a technical time-out in the event of a 3rd set.

IMPROPER DELAYS The maximum time between routine rallies should be 12 seconds. Extra time (perhaps an extra 10 seconds) can be allowed after big rallies. Teams who delay the flow of play are verbally asked to return to play. If a team continues to delay the flow of play, they are sanctioned with a (yellow) DELAY WARNING and subsequent delays are sanctioned with a (red) DELAY PENALTY, which results in a point and service to the opponent.

COACHING Coaching, giving a player feedback, or any type of external assistance, is not permitted under any circumstances during play. Players may receive coaching during time-outs off the court. **Parents and coaches are not allowed** to address the referees or attempt to influence their decisions at any time. **Parents and coaches are not allowed** to address the opposing team at any time. **A first violation will result in a warning. A second violation will result in a 5 point penalty, which can result in the loss of a game/set and remaining penalty points carried over to the next game/set. A third violation will result in the team being disqualified from the tournament.**