

OFFICIAL VOLLEYBALL RULES 2005~2008

I · GAME CHARACTERISTICS

1. Volleyball is a sport played by two teams on a playing court divided by a net. There are different versions available for specific circumstances in order to offer the versatility of the game to everyone.
2. The object of the game is to send the ball over the net in order to ground it on the opponent's court, and to prevent the same effort by the opponent. The team has three hits for returning the ball (in addition to the block contact).
3. The ball is put in play with a service: hit by the server over the net to the opponents. The rally continues until the ball is grounded on the playing court, goes "out" or a team fails to return it properly.
4. In Volleyball, the team winning a rally scores a point (Rally Point System). When the receiving team wins a rally, it gains a point and the right to serve, and its players rotate one position clockwise.

II · PLAYING AREA :

The playing area includes the playing court and the free zone. It shall be rectangular and symmetrical.

1. **DIMENSIONS** : The playing court is a rectangle measuring 18 x 9 m, surrounded by a free zone which is a minimum of 3 m wide on all sides. The free playing space is the space above the playing area which is free from any obstructions. The free playing space shall measure a minimum of 7 m in height from the playing surface.
2. **Service zone** : The service zone is a 9 m wide area behind each end line. It is laterally limited by two short lines, each 15 cm long, drawn 20 cm behind the end line as an extension of the sidelines. Both short lines are included in the width of the service zone. In depth, the service zone extends to the end of the free zone.
3. **Centre line** : The axis of the centre line divides the playing court into two equal courts measuring 9 x 9 m each; however the entire width of the line is considered to belong to both courts equally. This line extends beneath the net from sideline to sideline.
4. **Attack line** : On each court, an attack line, whose rear edge is drawn 3 m back from the axis of the centre line, marks the front zone.
5. **HEIGHT OF THE NET** : Placed vertically over the centre line there is a net whose top is set at the height of 2.43 m for men and 2.24 m for women.
6. **ANTENNAE** : An antenna is a flexible rod, 1.80 m long and 10 mm in diameter, made of fiberglass or similar material.

III · TEAM COMPOSITION :

1. A team may consist of a maximum of 12 players, one coach, one assistant coach, one trainer and one medical doctor.
2. One of the players, other than the Libero, is the team captain, who shall be indicated on the scoresheet.

3. Once the coach and the team captain have signed the scoresheet, the recorded players cannot be changed.

4. **EQUIPMENT** : A player's equipment consists of a jersey, shorts, socks (the uniform) and sport shoes.

5. The colour and the design for the jerseys, shorts and socks must be uniform for the team (except for the Libero). The uniforms must be clean.

6. The team captain must have on his/her jersey a stripe of 8 x 2 cm underlining the number on the chest.

7. Players' jerseys must be numbered from 1 to 18.

8. **CHANGE OF EQUIPMENT** : The first referee may authorize one or more players

(1) to play barefoot,

(2) to change wet or damaged uniforms between sets or after substitution, provided that the colour, design and number of the new uniform(s) are the same,

(3) to play in training suits in cold weather, provided that they are of the same colour and design for the whole team (except for the Libero) and numbered according to Rule 4.3.3.

IV - captain :

1. **PRIOR TO THE MATCH**, the team captain signs the scoresheet and represents his/her team in the toss.

2. **DURING THE MATCH** and while on the court, the team captain is the game captain. When the team captain is not on the court, the coach or the team captain must assign another player on the court, but not the Libero, to assume the role of game captain.

When the ball is out of play, only the game captain is authorized to speak to the referees:

(1) to ask for an explanation on the application or interpretation of the Rules, and also to submit the requests or questions of his/her team-mates. If the game captain does not agree with the explanation of the first referee, he/she may choose to protest against such decision and immediately indicates to the first referee that he/she reserves the right to record an official protest on the scoresheet at the end of the match;

(2) to request time-outs and substitutions.

3. **AT THE END OF THE MATCH**, the team captain:

(1) thanks the referees and signs the scoresheet to ratify the outcome;

(2) when it has been notified in due time to the first referee, may confirm and record on the scoresheet an official protest regarding the referee's application or interpretation of the Rules.

V - COACH :

1. Throughout the match, the coach conducts the play of his/her team from outside the playing court. He/she selects the starting line-ups, their substitutes, and takes time-outs. In these functions his/her contacting official is the second referee.

2. **PRIOR TO THE MATCH**, the coach records or checks the names and numbers of his/her players on the scoresheet, and then signs it.

3. prior to each set, gives the second referee or the scorer the line-up sheet(s) duly filled in and signed;
4. sits on the team bench nearest to the scorer, but may leave it;
5. requests time-outs and substitutions;
6. may, as well as other team members, give instructions to the players on the court. The coach may give these instructions while standing or walking within the free zone in front of his/her team's bench from the extension of the attack line up to the warm-up area, without disturbing or delaying the match.

VI · PLAYING FORMAT

1. **TO SCORE A POINT** : A team commits a fault by making a playing action contrary to the rules (or by violating them in some other way). The referees judge the faults and determine the consequences according to the Rules:
 - (1) If two or more faults are committed successively, only the first one is counted.
 - (2) If two or more faults are committed by opponents simultaneously, a **DOUBLE FAULT** is called and the rally is replayed.

2. Fault :

- (1) if the receiving team wins a rally, it scores a point and it must serve next.
- (2) if the serving team wins a rally, it scores a point and continues to serve;

3. **TO WIN A SET** : A set (except the deciding, 5th set) is won by the team which first scores 25 points with a minimum lead of two points. In the case of a 24-24 tie, play is continued until a two-point lead is achieved (26-24; 27-25; ...).

4. TO WIN THE MATCH :

- (1) The match is won by the team that wins three sets.
- (2) In the case of a 2-2 tie, the deciding set (the 5th) is played to 15 points with a minimum lead of 2 points.

(3) DEFAULT AND INCOMPLETE TEAM

- A. If a team refuses to play after being summoned to do so, it is declared in default and forfeits the match with the result 0-3 for the match and 0-25 for each set.
- B. A team that, without justifiable reason, does not appear on the playing court on time is declared in default with the same result as in Rule 6.4.1.
- C. A team that is declared **INCOMPLETE** for the set or for the match, loses the set or the match. The opponent team is given the points, or the points and the sets, needed to win the set or the match. The incomplete team keeps its points and sets.

VII · STRUCTURE OF PLAY

1. **THE TOSS** : Before the match, the first referee carries out a toss to decide upon the first service and the sides of the court in the first set.

The winner of the toss chooses :

- (1) the right to serve or to receive the service,
- (2) the side of the court.
- (3) Prior to the match, if the teams have previously had a playing court at their

disposal, they are entitled to a 6-minute warm-up period together at the net; if not, they may have 10 minutes. In the case of consecutive warm-ups, the team that has the first service takes the first turn at the net

2. TEAM STARTING LINE-UP

The positions of the players are numbered as follows:

- (1) the three players along the net are front-row players and occupy positions 4 (front-left), 3 (front-centre) and 2 (front-right); the other three are back-row players occupying positions 5 (back-left), 6 (back-centre) and 1 (back-right).
- (2) The team's starting line-up indicates the rotational order of the players on the court. This order must be maintained throughout the set.
- (3) The players who are not in the starting line-up of a set are the substitutes for that set (except for the Libero).

VIII · POSITIONAL FAULT

1. The team commits a positional fault, if any player is not in his/her correct position at the moment the ball is hit by the server.
2. If the server commits a serving fault at the moment of the service hit, the server's fault is counted before a positional fault.
3. If the service becomes faulty after the service hit, it is the positional fault that will be counted.
4. A positional fault leads to the following consequences:
 - (1) the team is sanctioned with loss of rally;
 - (2) players' positions are rectified.

5. ROTATION

- (1) Rotational order is determined by the team's starting line-up, and controlled with the service order, and players' positions, throughout the set.
- (2) When the receiving team has gained the right to serve, its players rotate one position clock-wise: the player in position 2 rotates to position 1 to serve, the player in position 1 rotates to position 6, etc.

6. ROTATIONAL FAULT

(1) A rotational fault is committed when the SERVICE is not made according to the rotational order. It leads to the following consequences:

- A. the team is sanctioned with a loss of rally;
- B. the players' rotational order is rectified.

- (2) Additionally, the scorer should determine the exact moment when the fault was committed and all points scored subsequently by the team at fault must be cancelled. The opponent's points remain valid. If that moment cannot be determined, no point(s) cancellation takes place, and loss of rally is the only sanction.

7. SUBSTITUTION OF PLAYERS : A substitution is the act by which a player, other than the Libero or his/her replacement player, after being recorded by the scorer, enters the game to occupy the position of another player, who must leave the court at that moment. Substitution requires the referee's authorization.

(1) LIMITATION OF SUBSTITUTIONS

- A. Six substitutions is the maximum permitted per team per set. One or more

players may be substituted at the same time.

B. A player of the starting line-up, may leave the game, but only once in a set, and re-enter, but only once in a set, and only to his/her previous position in the line-up.

C. A substitute player may enter the game in place of a player of the starting line-up, but only once per set, and he/she can only be substituted by the same starting player.

8. EXCEPTIONAL SUBSTITUTION :

(1) An injured player (except the Libero), who cannot continue playing should be substituted legally. If this is not possible, the team is entitled to make an EXCEPTIONAL substitution, beyond the limits of Rule 15.6.

(2) An exceptional substitution means that any player who is not on the court at the time of the injury, except the Libero or his/her replacement player, may substitute into the game for the injured player. The substituted injured player is not allowed to re-enter the match.

IX ∙ CHARACTERISTICS OF THE HIT

1. The ball may touch any part of the body.

2. The ball must not be caught and/or thrown. It can rebound in any direction.

3. The ball may touch various parts of the body, provided that the contacts take place simultaneously.

X ∙ FAULTS IN PLAYING THE BALL

1. **FOUR HITS:** a team hits the ball four times before returning it.

2. **ASSISTED HIT:** a player takes support from a team-mate or any structure/object in order to reach the ball within the playing area.

3. **CATCH:** the ball is caught and/or thrown; it does not rebound from the hit

4. **DOUBLE CONTACT:** a player hits the ball twice in succession or the ball contacts various parts of his/her body in succession.

XI ∙ CONTACT WITH THE NET

1. Contact with the net by a player is not a fault, unless it is made during the action of playing the ball, or it interferes with the play. Some actions of playing the ball may include actions in which the players do not actually touch the ball.

2. Once the player has hit the ball, he/she may touch the post, rope or any other object outside the total length of the net provided that it does not interfere with play.

3. When the ball is driven into the net and causes it to touch an opponent, no fault is committed.

XII ∙ SERVICE : The service is the act of putting the ball into play, by the back right player, placed in the service zone.

1. SERVICE ORDER

(1) After the first service in a set, the player to serve is determined as follows:

A. when the serving team wins the rally, the player (or his/her substitute) who served before, serves again;

B. when the receiving team wins the rally, it gains the right to serve and rotates before actually serving. The player who moves from the front right position to the back-right position will serve.

2. Serving faults : The following faults lead to a change of service even if the opponent is out of position.

(1) The server:

- A. violates the service order,
- B. does not execute the service properly.

(2) Faults after the service hit : After the ball has been correctly hit, the service becomes a fault (unless a player is out of position)

- A. touches a player of the serving team or fails to cross the vertical plane of the net completely through the crossing space;
- B. goes “out”;
- C. passes over a screen.

3. FAULTS MADE AFTER THE SERVICE AND POSITIONAL FAULTS

(1) If the server makes a fault at the moment of the service hit (improper execution, wrong rotational order, etc.) and the opponent is out of position, it is the serving fault which is sanctioned.

(2) Instead, if the execution of the service has been correct, but the service subsequently becomes faulty (goes out, goes over a screen, etc.), the positional fault has taken place first and is sanctioned.

XIII - ATTACK HIT :

1. All actions which direct the ball towards the opponents, with the exception of service and block, are considered as attack hits.
2. During an attack hit, tipping is permitted only if the ball is cleanly hit, and not caught or thrown.
3. An attack hit is completed at the moment the ball completely crosses the vertical plane of the net or is touched by an opponent.

4. RESTRICTIONS OF THE ATTACK HIT

- (1) A front-row player may complete an attack hit at any height, provided that the contact with the ball has been made within the player’s own playing space (except Rule 13.2.4).
- (2) A back-row player may complete an attack hit at any height from behind the front zone:
- (3) at his/her take-off, the player’s foot (feet) must neither have touched nor crossed over the attack line; after his/her hit, the player may land within the front zone.
- (4) A back-row player may also complete an attack hit from the front zone, if at the moment of the contact the ball is not entirely higher than the top of the net.
- (5) No player is permitted to complete an attack hit on the opponents’ service, when the ball is in the front zone and entirely higher than the top of the net.

5. FAULTS OF THE ATTACK HIT

- (1) A player hits the ball within the playing space of the opposing team.
- (2) A player hits the ball “out”.
- (3) A back-row player completes an attack hit from the front zone, if at the

moment of the hit the ball is entirely higher than the top of the net.

- (4) A player completes an attack hit on the opponent's service, when the ball is in the front zone and entirely higher than the top of the net.
- (5) A Libero completes an attack hit if at the moment of the hit the ball is entirely higher than the top of the net.
- (6) A player completes an attack hit from higher than the top of the net when the ball is coming from an overhand finger pass by a Libero in his/her front zone.

XIV · REGULAR GAME INTERRUPTIONS

- 1. All time-outs that are requested last for 30 seconds. For FIVB World and Official Competitions, in sets 1-4, two additional 60-second "Technical Time-Outs" are applied automatically when the leading team reaches the 8th and 16th points. In the deciding (5th) set, there are no "Technical Time-Outs"; only two time-outs of 30 seconds duration may be requested by each team.
- 2. During all time-outs, the players in play must go to the free zone near their bench.

3. SUBSTITUTION OF PLAYERS

- (1) Substitution must be carried out within the substitution zone.
- (2) A substitution shall only last the time needed for recording the substitution on the scoresheet, and allowing entry and exit of the players.
- (3) At the moment of the substitution request, the substitute player(s) must be ready to enter the court, standing close to the substitution zone.
- (4) If that is not the case, the substitution is not granted and the team is sanctioned for a delay. For FIVB World and Official Competitions, numbered paddles are used to facilitate the substitution.
- (5) If a team intends to make simultaneously more than one substitution, the number of substitutions must be indicated at the time of the request. In this case, substitutions must be made in succession, one pair of players after another.

XV · GAME DELAYS

- 1. **TYPES OF DELAYS** : An improper action of a team that defers resumption of the game is a delay and includes, among others:

- (1) delaying a substitution,
- (2) prolonging other interruptions, after having been instructed to resume the game
- (3) requesting an illegal substitution,
- (4) repeating an improper request,
- (5) delaying the game by a team member.

2. DELAY SANCTIONS

- (1) "Delay warning" and "delay penalty" are team sanctions.
- (2) Delay sanctions remain in force for the entire match.
- (3) All delay sanctions are recorded on the scoresheet.
- (4) The first delay in the match by a team member is sanctioned with a "DELAY WARNING".

- (5) The second and subsequent delays of any type by any member of the same team in the same match constitute a fault and are sanctioned with a “DELAY PENALTY”: loss of rally.
- (6) Delay sanctions imposed before or between sets are applied in the following set.

XVI · CHANGE OF COURTS

- 1. After each set, the teams change courts, with the exception of the deciding set
- 2. In the deciding set, once the leading team reaches 8 points, the teams change courts without delay and the player positions remain the same. If the change is not made once the leading team reaches 8 points, it will take place as soon as the error is noticed. The score at the time that the change is made remains the same.

XVII · THE LIBERO PLAYER

1. The Libero must be recorded on the scoresheet before the match in the special line reserved for this.

2. DESIGNATION OF THE LIBERO

- (1) **EQUIPMENT** : The Libero player must wear a uniform (or jacket/bib for the re-designated Libero) whose jersey at least must contrast in colour with that of the other members of the team. The Libero uniform may have a different design, but it must be numbered like the rest of the team members.

(2) The playing actions

- A. The Libero is allowed to replace any player in a back row position.
- B. The Libero is allowed to replace any player in a back row position.
- C. He/she may not serve, block or attempt to block.
- D. A player may not complete an attack hit from higher than the top of the net, if the ball is coming from an overhand finger pass by a Libero in his/her front zone or its extension.
- E. The ball may be freely attacked if the Libero makes the same action from outside his/her front zone or its extension.

(3) Replacements of players

- A. Replacements involving the Libero are not counted as regular substitutions. They are unlimited, but there must be a rally between two Libero replacements. The Libero can only be replaced by the player whom he/she replaced.
- B. Replacements must only take place while the ball is out of play and before the whistle for service.

(4) Re-designation of a new Libero:

- A. In case of injury of the designated Libero, and with the previous approval of the first referee, the coach or game captain can re-designate as new Libero one of the players not on the court at the moment of the re-designation. The injured Libero may not re-enter to play for the remainder of the match.
- B. The player thus re-designated as Libero must remain as Libero for the remainder of the match.