



Beach Volleyball Quick-Guide 10 Mar 2021 (v 21.2)

Find complete beach rules online at <https://www.teamusa.org/usa-volleyball/officials/rulebooks>

For Further information about Rules or Referee Certification, please contact us at beachofficials@usav.org

Rules Changes are flagged as **NEW**. **Points of emphasis are highlighted**. NCAA rule differences are underlined.

NET HEIGHTS: *Note: Heights are measured at center. Height at antennas is allowed to be 3/4" higher.*

- Men 7'11^{5/8"} (2.43m) **Also** Boys' Age Divisions: U19 (18&Under) and U17 (16&Under)
- Women/Mixed 7' 4^{1/8"} (2.24m): **Also** Girl's' Age Divisions: U19 and U17, as well as **both** Girls' and Boys' U15 (14&Under)
- Youth 6'11^{1/2"} (2.12m): **Both** Girls' and Boys' Age Division U13 (12&Under)
- Tens' & Under 6' 6" (1.98m): **Both** Girls' and Boys' Age Division U11 (10&Under)

• **Other Specifications:** Net 26' to 28' (8-8.5m) long. Antennas are required. Posts and referee stands (which are suggested) should be padded.

• **Ball:** light-colored, 9-10 oz. (260-280g) weight, with approx. 26" (66-68cm) circumference, at 2.5 to 3.2 psi (1.75-2.25 kg/cm²)

• **Court:** 26'3" x 52'6" (8.0 x 16.0 m) The short diagonal measures 37'1" (11.31m) The court includes its lines: their outside edges are the court boundary.

• **Lines** should be 2" wide and include **adjustable buckles** in all four sides. When possible, the free zone around the court should be marked with banners, etc.

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, side-changes, and between sets.

TEAMS (Players & Coaches): Two Players - no substitutes. The Captain represents the Team to the referees. (Exception: Coach-TO in Ages 18 & Under)

- 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. During warmup they may advise but not drill, from sideline.
- During play, coaches observe from the player area. Instruction only takes place during timeouts, between sets, and (non-disruptively) during side-changes.
- Coaches may not attempt to influence or question the official's judgment at any time.

UNIFORMS: *ed note: Uniform regulations are sport guidelines. Referees should encourage compliance but not prohibit play for uniform concerns.*

- USAV: Team uniform tops may or may not be required. When tops with numbers are used, matching uniforms are encouraged. Numbers 1-99 allowed.
- USAV: Bikinis /briefs not allowed for Juniors. Player tops must cover midriff. For shorts/spandex, 1" inseam rule is in effect.
- NCAA: Tank tops must cover full length of torso. Minimum 1" inseam required for shorts/spandex. **PARTNERS must dress identically, incl cold weather gear.**
NEW: NCAA : Uniform numbers may use numbers 0-99. Numbers should be visible from coin toss, through match.
- ❖ BOTH USAV and NCAA: Cold weather gear may be allowed both under and over uniform (Guideline: "below 60 degrees").

MATCH FORMAT "Ten Minute" Pre-Match Protocol: NCAA: coin toss at -10, then warm-up. USAV: coin toss at -7. (Juniors may vary)

- Winner of the coin toss chooses serve, receive or side. The other captain chooses from remaining options. Both captains state service order for the set.
- After the coin toss, the four players (only) share unlimited access to the entire court (Coaches may be on sideline, but not be involved in drills)
- 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").
 - All matches should utilize the etiquette of pre-match and post-match handshakes at the net between opponents. (and with officials, at end of match)
 - Unless a referee is present to whistle the start and end of each rally, the players are encouraged to "call the score" before serving.
- **Service Order:** Players alternate terms of service. **Officials actively prevent wrong-server faults and may "call out" the correct server when necessary.**
- **Positional Faults:** Players (other than server) must be on court at moment of service (any position on court). Server must initiate from playable area.
- **Court Switch:** After 7 points of play in sets 1 and 2, the teams should switch sides. This is not a time out or water break; players switch, then resume play.
 - Coaches may offer brief instruction during the court switch, but must not delay the match.
- **Screening:** Serving team must take positions so that the receiving team is able to see EITHER the server OR the flight of the ball.
 - **Fair play:** receiving team should use the "raised hand" signal to indicate a potential screen. **Serving** team should adjust position, without delay.
- **Delay:** The time between rallies should not exceed 12 seconds. In locations without banners or ball-retrievers, this guideline may be extended.
 - Violations result in Verbal Warning, followed by Delay Warning (yellow), with subsequent occurrences leading to Delay Penalty (red).
- **Time Outs:** Each team may call one per set. Timeouts last 30 seconds (**NEW NCAA: 60 sec**) Teams are granted an extra 30 seconds to move from/to court.
 - Thus USAV timeouts are max 60 sec total, while NCAA timeouts may take 90 sec total. **Early resumption allowed.** (Ref whistles when 15 sec. remain)
 - Teams are reminded that timeouts should be taken near court. (No running off to tents) Shade and water should be provided at team bench areas.
 - Coaches in age groups U-19 (18 & Under) may call time out for their team. NCAA: Coaches may suggest a time out to their captain.
 - **Technical Timeout" (TTO)** after the 21st point of sets 1 and 2. (No TTO in 3rd set) (*Events may opt to add or reduce number of TTOs.*)
- ❖ **Set Intervals:** USAV and NCAA: **The interval between sets is 2 minutes.**
 - Referee offers "first choice for set 2" to the captain of the team that lost the first coin-toss, and confirms "who will serve first for the team in this set"
 - Then offers the other captain the remaining choice and confirms "who will serve first for the team in this set"
 - **Deciding 3rd Set:** New coin toss; by R1 same choices. Play to 15, win by 2, switch sides every 5 points. *No TTO in 3rd set*

DISPUTES: A Captain may occasionally approach the referees to request an explanation of rule. (exception: judgment calls).

- The referee(s) should be approachable and must offer an explanation based upon the rules, without prolonged discussion.
- The Captain may lodge a Protest if referees misapply or fail to apply Rules. Coaches may suggest "protest" to Captain. (Coach may Protest in U-19)
- **COACHES are not allowed to dispute calls, or to interact with match officials at all. Concerns should be addressed to the event Head Referee if necessary.**

WARNINGS AND SANCTIONS: *All Misconduct and all Delay warnings or Sanctions remain in effect through the entire MATCH*

- **Delay** by a player or coach should result in a verbal warning. Subsequent Delay results in Team Delay Warning (*Yellow card on wrist*).
 - Any further delay by any member of that team, throughout the match, results in Delay Penalty. *Multiple Delay Penalties may be assessed within a match.*
- **Misconduct** by any player or coach should be managed when possible through **verbal warning(s)**.
 - Referees may offer one Formal Warning (Yellow Card) per MATCH to a TEAM (player or coach) guilty of misconduct.
 - Subsequent misconduct by ANY player or coach on that team in that MATCH must be sanctioned by **PENALTY** (Red Card: point and serve to opponent)
- **Rude Conduct** is immediately sanctioned by Penalty (Red Card). *It is not necessary that a Misconduct Warning (Yellow Card) have been issued previously.*
 - Players may receive a maximum of TWO Penalties per player per SET. Further misconduct results in **EXPULSION** for the SET. (Set is **DEFAULTED**)
 - Coaches may receive a maximum of ONE Penalty per SET. Further misconduct results in the coach being **EXPULSED** for the SET. (no further action)
- **Physical aggression** at any time, or **repeated misconduct beyond the limits above**, results in **DISQUALIFICATION** (Red and Yellow Cards held apart)
 - Disqualification of a Player results in that team defaulting the match. Disqualification of a Coach does not involve a penalty point or further consequence.

- **Blocks and play above the net:**
 - Players must contact the ball within their own playing space (follow-through into the opponents playing space after contact is legal).
 - It is always illegal to attack a ball that is completely in the opponents' space.
 - Blockers may contact a ball in the opponents' space after the attack hit, or if in the referee's judgment the attackers are not attempting to play the ball.
 - "Joust" (simultaneous contact above the net) between opponents is legal. Any player may make the next play, as their team's 1st contact.
 - The block contact counts as first team contact; either player may make the 2nd team contact.
 - A player may block a ball in any direction.
 - "Directional" or "snap" blocks are legal unless the ball is caught or thrown. If the blocker clearly catches or throws the ball, the fault must be whistled.
 - As a guideline: the ball may be blocked quickly in one direction, with one motion.

- **Attacks and Tips:**
 - "Open hand tipping" is prohibited. Referees use "illegal attack" (Diagram 9, Signal 21).
 - Knuckles may be used to "poke" the ball, provided that the ball rebounds (is not caught or thrown).
 - Fingertips (including thumb) may be used to "poke" the ball only if those fingertips in contact with the ball are "rigid and together."
 - Attacks with finger action (setting over the net) must be made perpendicular to the shoulders - either directly forward or backward.

- **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.
 - The action of playing the ball includes (but is not limited to) takeoff, hit (or attempt), and landing safely, ready for a new action.

- **Play Under the Net, and Interference:**
 - Players may contact any part of the ball until it has passed completely through the plane below the net.
 - There is no centerline. Players may contact any part of the opponents' court as long as they do not interfere with the opponents' next play.
 - A player who interferes with an opponents' ability to make their next play must be called for the fault.
 - 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, briefly step on toes, etc.).
 - Interference can occur without physical contact (ex: fallen player under net prevents defender covering short).
 - *Point under the net with your index finger, and say "interference." (This call will generally require explanation.)*

- **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 on 2nd team contact "over or outside" the same antenna.
 - Third team contact must send the ball legally through the crossing space (between the antennas).

- **Ball Marks:** The ball is "IN" if it lands inside the court, or touches a boundary line. Corner "tie-downs" are not considered boundary lines.
 - If the referee is in doubt of a line call, they should immediately initiate a "ball mark protocol". Players may not insist that a ball mark be reviewed.
 - Players cannot: alter the ball mark (or court boundaries), cross under the net to review a mark, or attempt to influence the decision of the officials.
 - The line-judge(s) may assist as the FIRST referee inspects the ball mark.
 - The referee must be careful to inspect the correct ball mark, considering ball trajectory, the effect of raised lines, and possible "splash" of soft sand.
 - ❖ If the referee determines that the line was moved significantly during the rally in question, they should fix the line before judging the result.

- **Ball Handling / Hand Setting:** There are two types of ball handling faults: "Catch Balls" and "Double Contact".
 - The ball must be played with one quick motion.
 - Balls that significantly move downwards while in the hands, 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.

- **Simultaneous Contact by Teammates:** If teammates touch the ball simultaneously it counts as 2 team contacts. Either player may make the 3rd contact.

- **Defense:**
 - It is LEGAL for ANY first-team contact WITHOUT finger action to strike two or more parts of a player during a single attempt to play the ball. Including:
 - Any style of contact: hands or fists together or apart, heels of hands together or apart, tomahawk, etc. (see finger-action below).
 - All plays without finger action, even if the ball is observed to have been clearly double-contacted.
 - First-team-contact WITH finger action should be judged just as any setting contact:
 - The referee should call a double-hit if the player uses finger action and the ball contact is a clear double.
 - **EXCEPTION:** If the double contact was in defense of a "hard-driven attack" then the referee should allow play to continue.
 - ❖ In judging an attack as "hard-driven," the referee must consider the following:
 - ✓ Speed and trajectory of the ball, as well as the distance between the attacker and defender.
 - ✓ The referee must judge the player's action: "reactive" (double allowed) or "intentional" handset (double-contact called).

- **Serve Receive:** In serve receive, a double contact is allowed. If finger action is used, the referee will judge the contact as a set.
 - It is legal to use techniques such as: hands or fists together or apart, heels of hands together or apart, tomahawk, etc.
 - **REMINDER:** It is legal to receive serve "open handed with finger action", but strict hand-setting judgment must be applied to the contact.

- **Outdoor Safety: Players**
 - 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.

- **Outdoor Safety: Tournament directors**
 - Be familiar with "best practices" regarding lightning safety. NCAA: Host Trainer is Lightning Safety Officer
 - In the event of high heat index, consider extending timeouts to 2 minutes, and/or adding Technical Time-Outs