

Beach Volleyball Quick-Guide v 5.0

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**. *Collegiate rule differences by underlined italics.*

Equipment:

- Net 28' long. Height at center: Women 7' 4¹/₈" and Men 7' 11⁵/₈". Antennae required.
- Court 26'3" x 52'6" square to 37' 1" short diagonal. Lines 2" wide are inside the court.
- Ball: light-colored, approx. 26" circumference, 9-10 oz. weight, at 2.5 to 3.2 psi

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.
 - Shorts with tops or bathing suits are typical requirements. *Collegiate uniforms utilizes color schemes on shorts and tank-tops.*
 - Legal uniform numbers are 1 or 2, in traditional beach doubles. *Collegiate beach uniforms use basketball numbering system*
 - When uniforms are required, they should be worn from the coin toss onwards. Numbers should be visible.
 - 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, are encouraged to cheer, only. No external assistance is allowed.
 - Coaches, when present, may cheer the exceptional play, but may only instruct during timeouts, court-switches, and between sets.

Coaches:

- Coaches may participate in drills only prior to the official warm-up. This generally begins ten minutes prior to play
- During the official warm-up, coaches may instruct from the sideline.
- During play, they observe from the player area.
- Instruction may only take place during timeouts, between sets, and (non-disruptively) during side-changes.
- **NEW FOR 2015 USAV: Coaches may call time out for their team.** *Collegiate Sand: Coaches may suggest a time out to their captain.*
- **Coaches** may not influence or question the official's judgment at any time.
- Number of Coaches allowed: USAV: A coach and no more than one assistant coach. *Collegiate: No more than 3 coaches*

Match Format:

- Timed warm-ups (10 min): Only the four players 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. **USAV JBT 3-5 min only.**
 - *Collegiate: coin toss at -10, then 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, ie *pool play one set to 28, or two sets only to 21*, without deciding set
- At coin toss the winning captain chooses serve, receive or side A/B
 - The opponent chooses among the remaining options, and both teams state their serving order.

During the Set:

- All matches should utilize the etiquette of pre-match and post-match hand-shakes at the net.
- **Officials identify the correct server 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 may not impede the receiving teams' view of the server **AND** the flight of the ball.
 - **In the spirit of fair play, players should use hand signal & opponent should adjust position, without delay**
- **Delay:** The routine time between rallies should be 12 to 15 seconds.
 - Extra time (a little) may be allowed after long rallies, in locations without banners, or ball-retrievers.
 - Violations result in *Delay Warning*, with subsequent occurrences leading to *Delay Penalty*.
- Referees should use a full "Signal Sequence:" Whistle, award rally, & show nature of fault. *(as indoor)*
- After 7 points of play, indicate that teams should switch sides. This is not a time out. Teams do not go to their benches.
 - 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 all Timeouts is 60 seconds.
 - 15 sec to move to player areas, 30 sec TO, (whistle at 45 sec), 15 sec to return to play.
- A "Technical Timeout" (TTO) after the 21st point of sets 1 and 2 is suggested in most formats. **USAV JBT does not utilize TTO**
 - There is not a Technical TO in a deciding (3rd) set.
- The interval between sets is 1 minute.
 - During that interval, a referee offers "first choice for set 2" to the team that lost the first coin-toss.
 - Then the other team makes the remaining choice, and both teams declare their service order.
- 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, win by two. Switch sides on 5's. There is not a TTO in the (3rd) set.
- *At the end of the match protocol, all players meet near the ref stand to shake hands with officials and each other.*
- **Disputes:**
 - **The Captain** may occasionally approach the referee to request an explanation of a call (not judgment related).
 - The referee(s) must offer an explanation based upon the Rules.
 - Officials should be approachable, but should maintain steady match flow, without prolonged discussion.
 - **The Captain** has the right to protest rules misinterpretations/misapplications, but not judgment calls or sanctions.
- **Warnings and Sanctions:**
 - Delays are sanctioned by showing a Card On Wrist: Yellow = warning, Red=Penalty and loss of rally
 - Delay sanctions **remain in effect through the MATCH.**
 - Multiple Delay Penalties may be assessed within a match when any player from the same team delays the game.
 - Minor **Misconduct** by any player should be managed through verbal warning(s).
 - The next incident in the **match** by any player of the same team should result in a Formal Warning (Yellow Card).
 - Subsequent minor misconduct during the **match** by **any player on that team must** be sanctioned by Penalty (Red Card).
 - Rude Conduct is sanctioned (1st instance) by Penalty (Red Card). Maximum two Penalties per player per **set**.
 - Expulsion or disqualification of players rarely occurs, but would result in loss of set or match, respectively.
 - **Coaches** are subject to individual sanction as listed below; **those sanctions apply through the match.**

Playing Actions and Faults:

- Blocks:
 - The block contact counts as first team contact; either player of the blocking team may make the 2nd team contact.
 - Block contact can lead to "four hits" calls against the blockers' team.
 - **Blocked balls may rebound in any direction**, but "catch and throw" action should be judged as a "Caught ball."
 - "Joust" between opponents is legal. Any player may make next play as their 1st contact.
- Tips:
 - **"Open hand tipping" is illegal.** (use "illegal attack" signal)
 - Knuckles may be used to "poke" the ball, provided that it *rebounds* (is not caught or thrown).
 - Finger tips may be used to "poke" the ball *only* if the fingers are "rigid and together."
- 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 after the attack hit or if opponents are unable to play the ball.
- 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: **NEW FOR 2015**
 - **It is a fault to contact any part of the net between (and including) the antennas, during the action of playing the ball.**
- Centerline encroachment:
 - There is no centerline. Players may contact any part of the opponents' court as long as they do not interfere.
- Interference
 - A player who interferes with the opponents' ability to make a fair 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.**
 - First ball must pass over or outside an antenna.
 - *A player may pursue under the net... even through your opponents' court!*
 - 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).
 - Opponents may not interfere with legal pursuit (the key to this call is whether the ball passes "outside" the antennas).
- Ball Marks:
 - The ball is "in" if it physically touches the line.
 - **The first referee (not the players)** may occasionally opt to review a ball mark, if they feel it is necessary.
 - A ball that *contacts the line* or inside the line is "in" (**lines moved during the play should be replaced to judge result**).
 - Smooth sand and well-tended lines are critical to accurate lines-calls!
- Hand setting:
 - There are two ball-contact faults to consider: "Catch Balls" (Held) and "Double Contacts."
 - Sets that visibly move down then up, or visibly pause, are "held-ball" faults.
 - Similarly, contacts that visibly re-direct the ball are also judged as "catch ball" contacts.
 - 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 fault has occurred.
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- Defense:
 - It is legal to *momentarily* catch (hold) or double contact a "hard driven" ball.
 - *Underhand defense utilizing finger action, both palms facing upward, is prohibited.*
 - It is legal for any *first contact* to strike two or more parts of a defenders' body during a single action to play the ball.
 - Double-contact during first team contact **without finger action** is NOT a fault. (includes serve-serve)
 - First-team-contact **with** finger action MAY be called for double-contact ...
 - **Exception: ...unless the double-contact was in defense of a "hard-driven attack".**
 - ✓ In judging an attack as "hard-driven," the referee must consider the following:
 - 1) Was the player's action "reactive" (double allowed) or as an "intentional handset" (not allowed)
 - 2) Speed and trajectory of the ball
 - 3) Distance between attacker and defender
- Serve Receive:
 - Served balls are (by rule) "**not an attack hit**".
 - It is **legal** to receive serve "open-handed with finger action," but **strict hand-setting judgment must be applied to the contact.**
 - It is also legal to use techniques such as clenched fist(s), or the heels of the hands.
 - This is legal whether the hands/fists **are together or apart**.
 - **Remember that If finger-action is used, then the contact must be judged as you would judge a set.**
- 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!