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2026 ADULT VOLLEYBALL RULES

Rosters/Spectators- Each team may have up to 8 players on their roster. Only the players listed on the roster may play in the league. Rosters are frozen after the first game of the season. Only 24 teams will be permitted in the each season (192 individuals maximum). Spectators must be of middle school age and above. Any children under the age of 11 must be accompanied by a non-playing adult age 18 or older. Any spectator that is not a member must remain near the bleachers in the gym. Spectators may be asked to leave if they do not follow YMCA rules.

Teams- Each team may have a maximum of 6 players and must have a minimum of 2 females on the court at all times during play. If a team is playing a match with 4 players, then only 1 female must be on the court at all times. If a team starts with 5 players, they must have 2 females. Teams will rotate side out when they have more than 6 players present.

Start of Game- Please arrive no more than fifteen minutes prior to the first match of the night. Any player arriving after the YMCA closes will not be permitted to enter the facility. Three teams each will be assigned to a court and will play one match against each other. Teams will decide the order of games with the referee having final authority if teams cannot come to an agreement. All teams will be present the entire time to rotate refereeing and line judges. Captains will play rock, paper, scissors to determine which team will serve first (except during the end of season tournament when the higher seed will serve first). Teams can start playing with 4 of its players and if the 5th and/or 6th person arrives within the game, they may join the team on the next play. If a team does not have enough to start within 10 minutes, they will forfeit the first game. If a team still does not have enough to start within 20 minutes, they will forfeit the match.

Scoring- All games are rally scoring. Matches will be won best out of three. Each team will play two matches a Tuesday. Games will be played to 25; the third game in a match will be played to 15 to determine the winner. (Games are NOT win by two.) Players will rotate on side out. Players can opt to sub themselves out for a player of the same gender. Players do not have to substitute themselves in for every rotation; however, they must rotate in the following rotation. For example, Player A may skip substituting for Player B for the first rotation, but they must rotate in for Player C on the second rotation on the serve. Regardless of which formation a team utilizes during a match, each player must rotate when it is time to do so; one player may not be in the same position as they were in the previous rotation.

Time Out- Each team is allotted 1 (30 second) time out per set for no more than 3 total timeouts in a match. Timeouts do not carry over from the previous set.

Eligibility- Only players on the team rosters are eligible to play in the league and they must play with their team only (no subbing for other teams will be allowed). If a team plays with ineligible players, it will forfeit the match. For a player to play in the playoffs, they must have played 2 regular season games with their team.



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Referee- When enough YMCA referees are not available, each team will be responsible for learning the rules and providing one referee while others assist as line judges when their team is not playing. Players on the sidelines not currently in the match should pay attention to lines and help line judge. The YMCA will provide a Site Supervisor to make a final decision when there is a dispute. Teams that do not help referee will not be eligible for the post-season tournament. If a YMCA referee is available, then teams sitting out should assist with line judging. Spectators may help as well.

Game Calls- Only the TEAM CAPTAIN will be permitted to discuss rule interpretations and ask about a particular call (not judgment calls however). Let the referee know who the CAPTAIN is prior to the match.

Serving- Both feet must be behind the service line at the point of contact, which is the white line on all courts at the Stokes Family YMCA. A player may serve from anywhere behind the end line as long as they are within the court sideline boundaries. Only two tosses will be permitted for a serve after the whistle is blown.

Obstructions- All overhead obstructions (ceiling, heat ducts, pipes, lights, basketball hoops, backboards, and connecting pipes, the divider curtain and walking track railing and wall) are continuous play if the ball stays on the side of the team in play and if the ball has not been hit more than three times. If the ball hits the bleacher or walking track floor it is considered dead.

Centerline/10 Foot Line- If a player crosses the line below the net completely with their foot they will be at fault and the ball will go to the opposing team and they will get a point. If a player touches the line and any part of their foot remains on the line during the play, it is good and the game will continue. When hitting on the front line, at no point can any body part touch the net. A player can break the plane above the net as long as they are blocking the ball on an overhead hit- they cannot break the plane to set, bump or spike the ball, only to block. Any back row players may only attack the ball when jumping behind the 10 foot line when the ball is fully above the height of the net. If any part of the ball is below the height of the net, it is not an illegal hit. Back row players may not block at all.

Ball Handling- There is no attacking or blocking of a serve. Attacking the serve is considered hitting the ball off a serve while it is above the net. No one is allowed to come into contact with the ball before it clears the height of the net. If a front-row player makes contact with the serve, they must be off the net and both of their feet must be planted on the ground.

If there is triple contact, there must be a female handler involved with the play, not just males players involved. A female player must be involved in the play if more than 2 hits; the best way to ensure this rule is kept is to have a female hit the ball on the first or second hit in case the ball is not near a female on the third/last hit.

Double contact is only allowed if the first contact was a block at the net.



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Carrying- Carrying of the ball is illegal. The ball is considered to be “carried” when the player cups their hands or creates an uneven surface with their palms; open-handed passes are allowed as long as the player’s hands are completely flat and there is no double contact.

Final Rule- This league was created for coed adults to come out and enjoy playing volleyball and make new friends. Unsportsmanlike conduct will be grounds for suspension from the league. Conduct calls are of the discretion of the referee and YMCA staff monitoring the gym. Be mindful that you are playing in a YMCA league and profanity is not permitted. We want this league to be clean and fun for all players and observers. HAVE FUN!!!

Last Updated: December 1, 2025