

MIDDLE SCHOOL SPORTS LEAGUE VOLLEYBALL RULES 2017-18

A) GUIDELINES

1. Schools may field up to 2 teams, a 7th grade and an 8th grade.
2. Players may play upward in grade levels to field a team. If a player plays downward a grade, that player's team will forfeit, but the match can still be played.
3. Court size will be regulation 30'x 60' or as near to these dimensions as possible.
4. The home team shall supply the game ball which must meet the National Federation of High School (NFHS.org) sports rules. If the home team is unable to supply a sanctioned ball, the visiting team's sanctioned ball may be used.
5. The home site shall provide a referee to officiate the match; likewise, if the home team is unable to provide a referee, a visiting team volunteer may fill the role. This is also true of two line judges.
6. A legal match can be played with just 5 players. Any number less than 5 will become a forfeit, unless due to injury. The affected team will decide whether or not to continue the match.
7. Matches that need to be rescheduled must be agreed upon by both teams. It is the responsibility of the team that canceled the game to contact the opponent to secure a rescheduled date, a forfeit can be declared by the end of the season. The change will be logged with the MSSL President. The President will make the change on the master schedule for record keeping.
8. Two pennants will be given out at the end of the season; one for each Division with the best record. A tie will be resolved by the record of head to head play.

B) PARTICIPATION and ROTATION

1. All eligible players designated to play at that grade level must play in the match.
2. If a player does not start in the first game of a match, he/she must start in the second game of the match.
3. A Coach must notify the opponents' Coach if a uniformed player is not playing for any reason.
4. Coaches will alternate boys and girls throughout their rotation as evenly as possible. For example, if I have 3 boys on a team of 12, the rotation could look like GBGGGBGGGBGG or BGGGBGGGBGGG. If I have 5 boys on a team of 10, the rotation alternates boy-girl.
5. At every sideout, players must be rotated in the same order in which they came out of the game. This includes the beginning of the game (whether the rotating team has served or not.) If a violation occurs with sub rotation, the first time is a warning; thereafter a point and sideout is awarded to the opposing team. There is no backward rotation.
6. Direct substitutions are only allowed for injured players, and from the pool of designated players at the beginning of the match.

C) SERVING, SCORING, and TIMEOUTS

1. Serves may be returned with an underhand pass or overhand set. The serve may not be attacked or blocked. On a serve, a player must wait until some part of the ball is below the height of the net to attack legally. A player may not jump to return a serve.
2. Serves or balls that hit the net and go over are good.
3. Servers may have only one re-serve in their rotation as a server, but they must let it fall to the ground, not catch it (as this may be mistaken for a serve attempt).
4. Points are scored in a rally-scoring format, where a point is awarded at the conclusion of every play, regardless of which team is serving.
5. Games are played to 25 points. The winner of the match is declared when a team wins two out of three games.
6. If there is a need for a third game will be to 15 points to determine the winner of the match.
7. A coin toss will be conducted by the referee to determine the service and side of play for the 3rd game.

8. In a third game, after either team gets to 8 points, both teams will change sides taking care that each player remains in the same position on the floor and substitution entry.
9. If a team wins the match in the first two games, a third game may be played as a, "friendship" game as long as both coaches agree to play. Friendship games will be played to 15 points, unless otherwise in agreement between coaches.
10. Players may serve from anywhere along the base line of the court, but must not step on or over the line at the moment of the serve. If that occurs, a foot-fault violation will be called by the referee, and a point and sideout will be awarded to the opposing team. Courts may vary slightly, but all players will begin with the same knowledge of each unique court situation, as instructed by the home referee.
11. Players must wait until the referee signals for the serve to put the ball into play. The first time the server serves before the whistle, a warning will be issued and another serve attempted. After a second warning to a player, a fault results in a point and sideout given to the opposing team.
12. After the serve is made, players are permitted to change positions from side to side but not front/back or back/front.
13. All team members currently in the game must be on the court at the beginning of the serve.
14. Players must serve in order in which they started or entered the game.
15. Each team is awarded three time-outs during the match, one time may be used in each game.

D) BALL HANDLING and LEGAL CONTACT

1. Each team is permitted only three contacts to return the ball to the opposing court. Teams do not have to use all three contacts to be considered legal play.
2. A legal hit is considered legal when contact is made with arms either above or below the waist; if it is below the waist the hands cannot be in an open position with the palms up. Players may contact the ball one-handed as long as the ball is not, "lifted or thrown" from the hand involved in the contact of the ball.
3. An illegal hit shall be called when in the referees judgment, the ball was thrown, carried, or lifted to gain an advantage to get the ball over the net, or into the air for another player.
4. A player may not contact the ball twice in a row unless it is immediately following a block of the ball at the net. In this case, teams shall then have the block, and three contacts following the block.
5. Overhand sets are considered legal when the both hands contact the ball at the same time and the ball is not lifted or carried by the palms.

E) NET PLAY

1. Players may play the ball off of the net as long as they do not come in contact with the net.
2. Players may not contact the net at any time.
3. Players may not step over the center line.

TOURNAMENTS

1. Tournaments will be conducted for the 7th and 8th grades on separate Saturdays.
2. Participants will be the top 3 teams with the best record in each Division and 2 teams from the remaining teams with the next best record.
3. These teams will be seeded from 1-8 by match play/head to head.
4. The format will be pool play with the following seeding format: Pool A seeds numbers 1-3-6-8; Pool B 2-4-5-7.
5. Scoring format will be the same as during the regular season as stated above; except there will be no friendship game.
6. At the conclusion of pool play, the winner of a pool will play the 2nd place team of the other pool. The winner of both games will play for the championship.
7. Awards will be given for both 1st and 2nd place.
8. If a team chooses not or is unable to participate in the tournament they must declare one week prior to the tournament date so that the opportunity is passed on to the next qualifying school.