

The following rules provided by Montana State Intramural Sports are not meant to be all encompassing. For a complete set of rules, please reference NFHS. These rules last updated: Spring 2025

Section 1: League Format

- Overview
 - The league will consist of three regular season games.
 - Participants can choose which day of the week and what time they play their regular season games by selecting a division in their desired league via scheduling on Fusion Play.
- Playoff Format
 - Following league play, a single elimination tournament will be played.
 - Playoff seeding will be based on season performance and sportsmanship ratings.
- Rosters
 - Teams will be allowed to add additional players to their rosters during the season and through the end of quarter-final games in the playoffs. Rosters cannot exceed 20 players.
- Location
 - Teams will have a designated court assignment on Fusion Play. Courts are marked with MSU Letters.
- Supervision
 - Officials will be assigned for all scheduled games. They will be responsible for game procedures.
 - A Sports Supervisor will provide oversight and aid with the operations of the game:
 - All participants must present a valid photo ID to the Supervisors to participate.
 - **Game Time is Forfeit Time.**
 - All participants must be signed in and "ready to play" with the minimum number of players (3) to avoid a forfeit.
 - Please alert the Intramural Supervisor if assistance is needed.

Section 2: The Game

- Brief Overview
 - Games may be started with a minimum of 3 players
 - Teams will receive 3 timeouts PER GAME
 - Violations of Minor Rules result in loss possession
 - *Exception: Defensive Goaltending Violation (See Section 6)*
 - Violations of Major Rules results in a Foul (See Section 13)
 - A regulation game will consist of the best of two 20-minute halves.
 - The clock will stop during the last 30 seconds of the first half and in the last 2 minutes of the second half.
- The Court
 - Fans are required to be on the opposite side of the court from the players' benches.
 - Only players listed on the roster are allowed to sit on the players' benches.
 - It is asked that players and fans allow officials space along the sidelines to reduce potential injuries and allow officials room to complete their assignments.
 - Interfering with an Official or Supervisor can result in a penalty for the team.
- Beginning Play
 - A Sports Supervisor will assist teams with court assignments.
 - Captains' Meeting
 - Before play starts, each team's captain must meet with the Officials.
 - Follow the Officials' instructions and ask for any desired rule clarifications at this meeting.
- Jump Ball
 - 2 players will meet in the center circle of the court in attempt to win first possession
 - These 2 players will line up on the opposite side of the basket they are attacking in the first half
 - The Official initiating the toss shall attempt to toss the ball in a neutral direction upwards.
 - Players jumping for the ball may not touch the ball before it reaches the highest point.
 - Should a ball be touched by both jumpers simultaneously and go out of bounds before another player touches it, the Jump Ball will be replayed.
 - Players not involved in the jump ball shall be anywhere on the court outside of the center circle
 - Teammates may not occupy positions directly next to one another if an opposing player desires that position on the court.
 - The team who does not gain preliminary possession will receive the next possession.

Section 3: Equipment and Attire

- Equipment Provided
 - A regulation men's basketball will be used for men's divisions; a regulation women's ball will be used for Co-Ed and women's divisions
 - Players may use their own ball if both captains agree prior to play.



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- Men's basketballs may be used in Co-Ed and women's divisions if both captains agree prior to play.
- IM game balls cannot be used during the warm-up period.
- **Illegal and Required Equipment**
 - Shoes
 - Players must wear non-marking athletic shoes with a closed heel and toe.
 - Attire
 - It is required that teams wear uniformly colored and uniquely numbered shirts to help distinguish one team from another.
 - The IM Staff will have jerseys available in a limited quantity and cannot guarantee that there is enough for every team on a nightly basis. We highly recommend teams to use their own uniforms.
 - Players must wear athletic shorts or pants and shirts. Jeans are not permitted.
 - No arm/face jewelry, baseball hats, wristbands, watches, rings, headbands or bandanas with exposed knots, or anything that would be considered potentially harmful may be worn.
 - Sports Supervisors have the authority to declare what constitutes legal and/or illegal equipment/attire.

Section 4: Players

- Team Composition
 - Each team will be made up of 5 players on the court.
- Minimum Team Requirements
 - Games may start with a minimum of 3 players.
 - **Co-Ed Modification:** A minimum of 1 of each gender, and no more than 3 of each gender for a single team.
 - When playing with fewer than 5 players, there shall not be a gender difference of more than 2.
 - Once the game has started, it may not continue with fewer than the min. number of eligible players on either team.
 - The game shall be terminated, and a default (results in a loss) shall be declared if a team has fewer than the minimum number of eligible players due to any reason, including, but not limited to:
 - A player being required to complete documentation due to misconduct.
 - An injured player being attended to or no longer able to continue.
- Substitutions
 - Teams may substitute an unlimited number of players during any stoppage of play
 - Players must wait to enter/leave the court until an Officials beckons them on. Players waiting to enter the court shall be seated at the score table near the center court line.
 - If multiple free throws are being taken, subs will enter play before the last free throw is shot.
 - Players may not re-enter the game until time has come off the clock.
 - Players arriving late must first sign in with the Sports Supervisor before entering play.

Section 5: Timing

- Periods
 - A regulation game will consist of two 20-minute halves
 - The clock will stop during the last 30 seconds of the first half and within the last 2 minutes of the second half.
 - Halftime will be a maximum of 5 minutes long and teams will switch sides at the start of the second half.
- Stoppage Inside 30 second and 2 minutes
 - The following will cause the game clock to stop and resume once the ball legally touches a player in bounds:
 - A foul or violation.
 - A held ball.
 - A Team or Officials' timeout
 - During (a) free throw attempt(s), the clock will remain stopped
 - The clock will resume once the ball legally touches another player in bounds.
- Timed Violations
 - 3-Second Lane Violation
 - Offensive players may not remain in the lane for more than 3 seconds
 - To negate the 3-second count, both of the player's feet must leave the lane of the player must attack the basket with the ball
 - 5-Second Violation – Closely Guarded
 - A player in control of the ball is closely guarded when an opponent is in guarding stance within 6 feet.
 - The player has 5 seconds to break the count by shooting, passing, advancing towards the basket, or establishing a dribbling position that is greater than 6 feet from the defender.



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- 5-Second Violation – Throw-Ins
 - The player throwing in the ball has 5 seconds to release the ball.
- 10-Second Backcourt Violation ▪ The offensive team has 10 seconds to advance the ball into the offensive half of the court
- Timeouts
 - Teams will receive 3 time-outs PER GAME.
 - Only 2 timeouts may be used in the second half. Thus, if a team does not use at least 1 in the first half, it will be lost.
 - Injury timeouts may be determined only by the Officials and Sports Supervisor.
 - Teams are granted one timeout per overtime period in the playoffs
 - No time-outs may be carried over from regulation time into an overtime period.
- Overtime
 - During league play, there are no overtime periods, and games will result in a tie.
 - During the playoffs, a 2-minute overtime period will be played.
 - A jump ball starts the overtime period.
 - The clock will run continuously for the first minute but stop during the last minute of play.
 - Should an overtime period result in a tie, another overtime period will be played until a winner is declared.
- Official Game
 - If a game has reached halftime and inclement weather stops play, the game will be over, and its score will be considered official.
 - If a game has not yet reached halftime and inclement weather stops play, the game will be considered cancelled.
 - Cancelled games will not count towards playoff qualification.
 - Cancelled games will only be made up if time and space permits.

Section 6: Scoring

- Scoring Points
 - Teams are given 1 point on made free throw attempts
 - Teams are given 2 points on made shot attempts inside the 3-point arch.
 - Teams are given 3 points on mad shot attempts outside the 3-point arch.
- Goaltending & Basket Interference
 - Offensive and defensive players may not interfere with a shot attempt once the ball:
 - Is above the rim and starts its downward flight.
 - Has contacted the backboard.
 - Is in or above the basket's rim.
 - *Offensive Violation – results in negated shot attempt and loss of possession.*
 - *Defensive Violation – results in 2 or 3 points to the offense depending on shot location. Defense gains possession.*
- Mercy Rule
 - When a team is leading/losing by any of the following points at or after the given times, a game shall be ended:
 - 20 points with 2 minutes or less
 - 30 points with 3 minutes or less
 - 40 points with 4 minutes or less
 - 50 points with 5 minutes or less
- Forfeit Score
 - In the event of a Forfeit, a score of 1-0 will be given.
 - Double Forfeits will result in a score of 0-0.
 - Any team the Forfeits their game will receive a 3 for Sportsmanship.

Section 7: Free Throws

- Free Throw Administration
 - In each half, free throws are awarded during shot attempts for each personal foul (except player control) committed.
 - If fouled inside of the 3 point arch, 2 free throws are awarded.
 - If fouled outside of the 3 point arch, 3 free throws are awarded.
 - If the basket is made during the foul, 1 additional free throw is awarded.
 - After the 7th team foul in the half, a one-and-one free throw situation will occur.
 - If the first free throw is made, a second free throw may be taken.
 - If the player misses the first free throw, the ball is live once it hits the rim.
 - After the 10th team foul in the half, 2 free throws will be awarded.
- Free Throw Positioning
 - The player shooting the free throw(s) may not cross the free throw line until their shot contacts the rim.



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- Players who are not shooting may fill in the 2 free throw lane spaces on each side of the free throw lane or remain outside of the 3 point arch.
 - Players on marked lane spaces are permitted to leave the free throw lane after the release of the shot.
 - No players shall stand on or below the 1 foot block preceding the lane spaces.
 - Defensive players are entitled the first and third lane spaces on each side of the lane.
 - Offensive players are entitled the second lane space on each side of the lane.
 - Should a lane space be unoccupied by the correct player, the opposing team may NOT occupy that spot.
 - The players outside of the 3 point arch must remain outside the arch until the shot contacts the rim
- Fouls NOT Resulting in Free Throws
 - Free Throws will not be shot for the following fouls:
 - Intentional Fouls – automatic 2 points
 - Flagrant Fouls – automatic 2 points
 - Technical Fouls – automatic 2 points
 - Player Control Fouls

Section 8: Out of Bounds and Throw-Ins

- Out of Bounds
 - The boundary lines are considered out of bounds
 - Should the ball contact or cross over any part of the court's boundary lines, a person who is out of bounds, the ceiling, or any of the backboard supports, a throw-in will be awarded to the team who did not touch the ball last.
 - If a ball has gone out of bounds, the throw-in is taken as near to that spot as possible.
- Throw-In Location
 - Throw-Ins occur after:
 - A ball goes out of bounds.
 - A violation is committed.
 - A foul that does not award free throws occurs.
 - The Official(s) will designate the throw-in location before handing the player the ball.
 - The player throwing in the ball is restricted by a 3-foot wide area but may be as deep or shallow to the court as they desire without crossing the boundary line.
- Legal and Illegal Throw-Ins
 - Legal Throw-Ins
 - A player may dribble during a throw-in.
 - A player cannot be called for a travel during a throw-in.
 - Illegal Throw-Ins
 - A player may not step over the court boundary line at any time during a throw-in.
 - A player may not make a basket directly from a throw-in.
 - The ball may not touch the outside boundary on the floor
- Defensive Positioning
 - Defenders must give the offensive player a minimum of 3 feet of space from the court boundary line and cannot cross over the imaginary line.

Section 9: Legal and Illegal Dribbles

- Travelling
 - Once established, a pivot foot must remain on the floor, but the non-pivot foot may move freely.
 - Upon receiving the ball, a pivot foot may be established as follows:
 - If both feet are off the floor and the player lands:
 - Simultaneously on both feet then either foot may be used to pivot.
 - On 1 foot, followed by the other, the first foot is the pivot foot.
 - One 1 foot and jumps off of that foot to land on 2 feet, either may be used to pivot.
 - If 1 foot is on the floor:
 - It becomes the pivot foot when the other foot touches in step.
 - The player may jump off of that foot and land on both feet, and either foot may be used.
 - If the player is attempting to dribble, the dribble must be released to the ground before the pivot foot is lifted.
 - Should the player leave the ground to shoot or pass, the ball must be released before the pivot foot returns to the ground.
 - A player may not fall to the ground while in possession of the ball.
- Double Dribble
 - Once a player's dribble ends, that may not dribble a second time, unless control is lost:
 - During a shot attempt.

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- After a touch by an opponent.
- After a pass or fumble contacts another player – accidental loss of player control from unintentional drop/slip from the hands.
- Carrying/Palming the Basketball
 - A player dribbling the ball may not place the dribbling hand underneath the ball thus momentarily holding or carrying the ball while dribbling.
- Backcourt Violation
 - Once the offense establishes team control in the front court (both feet must cross with possession of the ball), the offense may not contact the ball in the backcourt unless the last touch came from a defensive player.

Section 10: Possession Arrow

- Initial Possession
 - Once a successful jump ball establishes initial possession, the opposing team will receive the possession arrow
 - Should an unsuccessful jump ball occur, the jump ball will be retried until initial possession is established.
- Alternating the Possession Arrow
 - Prior to any change in the direction of the Possession Arrow, the team in favor of the current possession arrow will receive possession in the following situations:
 - A simultaneous held ball by 1 player from both the offense and defense.
 - At the start of the second half.
 - The ball becomes lodged between the backboard and rim.
 - Officials are unable to determine possession on a ball simultaneously contacted by each team as it goes out.
 - After the team receives possession, the possession arrow then changes in favor of the opposition.

Section 11: Sportsmanship

- Minimum Rating
 - Teams must receive an average of 2.75 sportsmanship rating during league play to be eligible for the playoffs.
 - Sportsmanship ratings will range between 0-4 with detailed explanations available in the Participant Handbook.
- Sportsmanship Rating
 - The game's Sport Supervisor and Officials will determine sportsmanship ratings for each of the game's teams.

Section 12: Protests

- Eligibility Protests
 - If a player is believed to be ineligible, the game may be played under protest.
 - Please contact the Intramural Supervisor prior to the game's start to file a protest form.
- Rule Interpretation Protests
 - Rule interpretation questions must be declared immediately after the play in question.
 - Rulings involving judgment MAY NOT be protested.
 - Team captains must announce this protest to the Intramural Supervisor, and both captains will be required to fill out information on the protest form.

Section 13: Fouls

- Foul Enforcement
 - An Official's whistle signals the stop of play during a foul. Play will resume after Officials report to the score table.
- Personal Foul
 - Illegal contact with an opponent while the ball is live which hinders an opponent from performing normal movements.
 - Personal Fouls also apply during any contact by or on an airborne shooter when the ball is dead.
 - The follow acts will constitute a foul when committed against a ball handler/dribbler:
 - Placing two hands on the player.
 - Placing an extended arm bar on the player.
 - Placing and keeping a hand on a player.
 - Contacting the player more than once with the same or alternating hands.
- Player-Control Fouls
 - A player in possession of the ball committing a foul result in loss of possession but never results in foul shots.
 - Players with the ball may not charge into a defender who has established legal guarding position.
- Team-Control Fouls
 - A player without the ball from the team in possession committing a foul result in a loss of possession, but never foul shots.
 - Players who set an improper screen receive team-control fouls.
- Double Fouls
 - When 2 players on opposing teams commit personal fouls against each other simultaneously. In any situation, possession will remain with the team who had control prior to the point of interruption.
 - Double technical fouls may also be given



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- Intentional Fouls
 - Using contact to neutralize an opponent's advantageous position without making a play on the ball
 - Intentional fouls award the opposing team 2 points and possession; count as 1 personal and 1 team foul
 - Intentional fouls may or may not be premeditated.
 - Any player receiving an Intentional foul during a game will be ejected.
 - Ejected players must leave the facility for the remainder of the game and could be temporarily suspended
- Flagrant Fouls
 - A personal or technical foul that is violent or savage in nature.
 - Actions warranting a flagrant foul include but are not limited to striking, kicking, and kneeling.
 - Flagrant fouls automatically award the opposing team 2 points and possession
 - Flagrant fouls may occur during live or dead ball situations
 - Any player receiving a Flagrant foul during a game will be ejected.
 - Ejected players must leave the facility for the remainder of the game and will be temporarily suspended from further participation in Intramural Sports
- Technical Fouls
 - Technical Fouls award the opposing team 2 points and possession; count for 1 personal and 1 team foul
 - Technical fouls will be given for the following reasons:
 - Any disrespectful, inappropriate, or abusive comments/actions towards another player or Intramural Staff
 - A foul by a non-player.
 - An intentional or flagrant foul during a dead ball period.
 - An administrative violation.
 - This includes illegal equipment or failure to sign in prior to entering the court.
 - Dunking or grasping the rim during the pre-game warm-up period or halftime.
 - Players that receive 2 technical fouls over the course of a game, that player will be ejected.
 - Excessive player or team technical fouls will result in temporary suspension until a meeting with the Senior Coordinator of Competitive Sports occurs
 - Should a player receive 3 technical fouls, they will be temporarily suspended.
 - Should a team receive 4 total technical fouls, they will be temporarily suspended.
 - Any technical foul involving disrespectful or abusive comments/actions will result in a player/team being temporarily suspended
 - Depending on the severity, players can be reported to the Office of Student Conduct