

SOUTH MILWAUKEE RECREATION DEPARTMENT

2026 VOLLEYBALL RULES

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

This is an instructional program designed for children who participate to have fun while learning and developing skills. It is not to be viewed as a highly competitive program that emphasizes winning.

TEAMS / PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

A player may officially play on only one team. New players may be added to the roster after the deadline, provided there is room. Non-residents will be eligible to play.

COACHES

- A coach of record must be 18 years of age or older and out of high school.
- Assistant coaches may be 16 years or older but must always be accompanied by the primary coach.
- At the start of the game, the head coach shall identify him/herself to the game official.
- All coaches must cooperate in ensuring that spectators do not interfere with the match.
- Coaches are reminded that their place is with their team on the sidelines and must always remain on the sideline side with their team.
- An adult supervisor must be present with each team throughout the entire match. Failure to be present and remain throughout the game is cause for forfeit.

OFFICIALS

- The game official will always have complete jurisdiction of the game.

MATCH PLAY

- Jewelry may not be worn during practice or games.
- All matches must start at the scheduled time. A 5-minute grace period will be given for the 1st match.
- A match will consist of 3 games. Teams will not change sides between games. The losing team from games one and two will begin the next match serving.
- Choice of playing area - Official tosses coin between the two captains. The winning captain has the choice of court or service.
- A team must win by two (2) points. Rally scoring will be used, and games will be played to 25 points. The 3rd game may be shortened to a 15-point game if there are fewer than 15 minutes remaining in the scheduled match, or if the official does not believe there is enough time for the full 3rd game. This will be coordinated by the official with the two coaches. There is a cap of 27 for games played to 25, and 17 for games played to 15.
- Teams will be expected to play all scheduled games with however many players are available from their team. If a coach becomes aware that their team will be short for the upcoming game, they should follow the process below to ensure they have at least 6 players for the upcoming match:
 - Confirm with the opposing team's coach if they will have more than 6 players at the game. If so, the team with more than 6 will loan players to the opposing team for the game. This player should be switched every game the substitution is needed. (The same player should not be loaned for all three games).
 - If the opposing team has 6 or fewer players, the coach may attempt to find a substitute player from another team.
 - If a team becomes aware they cannot field a team for a specific game, the coach needs to communicate with the Recreation department and the program coordinator immediately.

SUBSTITUTIONS

- All teams will use a continuous rotation during all 3 games. This means you will substitute players when your team rotates to serve. Once you start your first game, you will continue with the same players on the court for your second game that were on the court at the end of the first game, and the same for your third game (players stay in their line-up from the beginning of the first game to the end of the third game).
- All substitutions will occur inside the 10' line.
- There is no libero position allowed.

SERVING

- The referee has final discretion on service location and expectations during the game.
- All players must be on the court within the boundary lines at the time of the serve.
- The serve can be completed overhand or underhand. If the ball hits the net on the serve, it will remain in play if it falls within the boundary lines.

- The official has the authority to move a player forward or back when serving.
- Defensive players cannot block a serve.
- After a player has served 3 consecutive serves, the serving team will rotate. After two consecutive servers get 3 points, a side out and a point will be awarded to the other team.
- **3rd/4th/5th Grade serving rules**
 - Players may start as close as the 10' line (3rd graders), but should be moved back as close as possible to the primary service line while still being able to get their serve in. The official may direct players to move farther back during the game.
 - Players in this division will have 3 attempts to get their first serve in
- **6th/7th/8th Grade serving rules**
 - Players must start their serve behind the service line for all servers. They may enter the court by a step or two on the serve, at the referee's discretion.

RALLY PLAY

- No player may touch the net during gameplay while actively making a play on the ball. Accidental touches may be called in the judgment of the official.
- Players are not allowed to cross the center court line into the opposing team's court. Crossing the center court line or making contact with an opposing team's player on their side of the net will result in a side out.
- Each team may play the ball no more than three times before it is returned over the net, and no player may play the ball twice in succession.
 - Exception: In the 3rd, 4th & 5th grade division, a team may play the ball as many times as necessary on one side to get the ball over the net, but a single player cannot contact the ball twice in succession.
- A point is awarded when either team fails to return the ball legally.
- Referees are encouraged to be extremely flexible when it comes to setting in all divisions.
- Never hang on or pull the net

EQUIPMENT

- The South Milwaukee Recreation Department will furnish all equipment.
- First-aid equipment and supplies are maintained in the gym and available if needed.
- **Net will be set at 7'0"**

CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

- Participation in this league is a privilege that may be denied or suspended for just cause. By participating, teams, players, managers, and coaches acknowledge that they are familiar with and will abide by league rules as a condition of this privilege.
- Coaches and players are responsible for their conduct before, during, and after the match.
- Only the coaches and the court captain will be allowed to question the decision of the officials.
- All warnings to players, coaches, and spectators for unsportsmanlike conduct will be considered team warnings. A second offense will result in an ejection.
- Parents, friends, and relatives, etc., who enter the area to view the match as spectators must also adhere to the rules of conduct. These rules are:
 - Spectators should remain in the spectator area during the contest
 - Spectators should not yell instructions or criticisms to the children
 - Spectators should not interfere or make derogatory remarks to players, coaches, other spectators, or match officials or supervisors. Violation of this rule will result in the spectator's removal from the area.
- An adult must remain with the team during all practice sessions and league matches.
- Any player, coach, or spectator ejected from a match will be suspended from the next match.
- Following an ejection, that player, coach, or spectator will be required to meet with the Recreation department prior to being allowed back onto the premises for activities.

PICTURES & INTERNET

Coaches and staff are not permitted to take pictures of their players, other players, any recreation dept program participant, or spectator and post them to social media.

THE SOUTH MILWAUKEE RECREATION DEPARTMENT IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY INJURY INCURRED BY PLAYERS DURING OFFICIAL GAMES AND PRACTICES.