



Youth Basketball Game Rules 2021

Grade Levels

- Kinder
- 1st-2nd
- 3rd-5th
- 6th-8th

Note: While all leagues will have the same core rules there are different variations to each grade level due to skill, competition, and safety.

Quarter Length & Hoop Height

- Kinder- 6-minute quarters (8-foot hoop)
- 1st-2nd 8-minute quarters (8-foot hoop)
- 3rd-5th 8-minute quarters (9-foot hoop)
- 6th-8th two 20-minute halves (10-foot hoop)

Note: The only clock stoppage for **Kinder through 5th** will be at the half way mark of each quarter in which each team will use their players to sub in and out when applicable (Everyone must play). For **6th-8th** the clock will run continuously and only stop for coach's timeouts and within the last two minutes dead balls will stop the clock **only if the score is close**.

Ball Size

- Kinder-5th 27.5 in. Ball
- 6th-8th 28.5 in. Ball

Game Start

- Kinder & 1st-2nd
 - These games will start by the referee pulling a captain from both each team for them to play rock paper scissors to decide who gets the ball first.
- 3rd-5th & 6th-8th
 - These will begin with a traditional jump ball

Please note that whoever did not get the ball at the beginning of the game will get it for the next change of possession. Be that the begin the 3rd quarter or second half, or a new jump ball. Also, for Kinder- 5th the referee will line the kids up at the half court after each stoppage of play and substitution so that the kids will know who they are covering.

Stealing In Games

- Kinder & 1st-2nd
 - **Stealing will not be tolerated at this level.** We want to encourage good sportsmanship and teach them the basics before allowing them to steal. This being said, if a ball is passed and a player intercepts the ball in the air prior to it reaching the person it was intended for this is legal. If a player illegally steals the ball the referee will blow the whistle and give the ball back.
- 3rd-5th
 - **Stealing is permitted but will be watched.** While stealing will be permitted during this level the referees will watch it carefully to monitor excessive swatting. If a steal or swipe is deemed excessive (I.e., contact with the opposing players body, hands or arms) the penalty will be the ball to be given back to the person it was stolen from. If a player continues to excessively swipe through the game, they will be asked to sit for at least a half quarter.
- 6th-8th
 - This will act as regular basketball and reach in fouls will be called if it is not a clean steal. (We use high school basketball rules)

Free Throws

- Kinder & 1st-2nd
 - There will be no free throws at this level and if a shooting foul is committed the ball will be given back to the team that possessed the ball at the time of the foul
- 3rd-5th
 - If a shooting foul is committed there will be free throws (2 if missed and 1 if the shot was made). The clock will continue to run and while it may slow the game down the kids will begin to understand better how to defend if they are penalized. Should the clock run out while a free throw is being shot the teams will finish the free throws then end the quarter or half quarter.
- 6th-8th
 - Regular shooting fouls will be in place (high school basketball rules)

One on One Defense Must be Played at All Times

- Kinder-5th
 - All grade levels must stay on a man-to-man defense. There will be no zones at any grade level. The referee will stop the game should players double or triple team a player. Once the players have gone back to their correct coverage play will restart.

- 6th-8th may play help defense. This means a player may slide over to help defend a player. Examples of cases that this is allowed are, a pick and roll or a drive in the lane that gets past the original defender etc.

Note: Kinder-5th the players can only cover at half court **THERE IS NO FULL COURT PRESS AT THIS LEVEL.** 6th-8th Will be the same way except for the last **two minutes** where full court press will be allowed. If the game is close.

Shot Blocking

- Kinder through 5th
 - There will be no shot blocking in these age groups. The defenders can raise their arms up in the air but cannot lean over or swat at the shot. **Under no circumstances will the defender leave their feet to block a shot this is a safety issue for our younger players**
- 6th-8th
 - Regular basketball shot blocking rules will be in place (high school basketball rules)

Double Dribbling

- Kinder & 1st-2nd
 - Double dribbling and traveling will be watched and called when appropriate. At this level it may be hard for kids to keep a handle on the ball so referees will be lenient with these calls. During game the referees will be sure to talk with the kids and let them know to either pass or shoot if they have picked up the ball. (we encourage coaches to do the same)
- 3rd-5th
 - Double dribbles and travels will be called at this grade level. The kids will need to learn to move the ball while dribbling with one hand and the importance of passing.
- 6th-8th
 - Regular basketball rules will apply here double dribbles, travels and carries will result in a turnover

Sportsmanship

- We here at the YMCA love our sports programs and how they bring friends, family, and teamwork together. This being said we try and create a safe environment for learning and healthy competition. Thus, we reserve the right to act upon unsportsmanlike conduct or offensive conduct how we see fit. If the referee witnesses any acts of elbowing, cheap shots, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. **UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!** Officials have the right to determine if there is use of offensive language by players, coaches or spectators. Offensive language is speech that is distasteful, hateful, or

repugnant remarks directed towards officials, opposing players, teams, or spectators. If the language occurs, the referee will give a verbal warning. If the language continues, the party involved will be ejected from the game and must leave the facility immediately.

Grace Period for Fouls

- The first two games will be a hard learning experience for many kids especially those who have never played before. So, to help the players out referees will be lenient on some calls such as travels where the player may take 3 steps then shoot. Egregious fouls will still be called (ie. Running across the court without dribbling). After the first games referees will be increasingly hard on fouls especially as grade levels go up.