

Midwest Dodgeball Rules Submission

(Revision 4, 2/20/06)

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Goals

- To create a standard set of dodgeball rules appropriate for club or tournament play with minimal alterations for each
- Encourage team play and sportsmanship
- Prevent incompatibility resulting from location, equipment, or manpower

Field Standards

- 94' x 50' (NCAA Regulation Preferred)

Reason: Basketball courts are everywhere, allowing any existing basketball facility to be quickly converted to play dodgeball.

- Neutral Zone (10 feet from center court, total of 20 feet width)

Reason: Allows players to get closer to their opponents while allowing more freedom to spread apart from their teammates. Decreases game time. Prevents any problems getting out during the initial sprint for balls.

Example: [Neutral Zone](#)

- 5 seconds are allowed for players to travel outside of the boundary lines to receive balls. No direct hits can be made from throws by players outside these lines, however direct hits can be received by players outside of these lines. Balls caught by players outside the boundaries are

ruled as dead (no direct hit made). Balls that enter areas that are obstructed (i.e. behind nets, off court) are to be recovered by the last player of the nearest team's bench. Failure to do so may result in a penalty.

Reason: Excessive staff will be needed to handle tournaments or matches to recover balls. This helps alleviate manpower restrictions by placing responsibility on the teams to maintain the game. Players outside of the boundaries are given a major disadvantage to deter hiding and tough wall/catch judgments by the referees.

- Each team's jail will start at half court, on the right hand sideline from the team's perspective. Players will line up in a queue towards their team's baseline. One foot of space should be observed by the jailed players and the game boundary.

Reason: Separating the teams will prevent confrontations. Referees won't be as distracted by a 2 team argument.

Game Start Procedure

- Balls will be placed evenly at half court
- Players will line up at their respective baselines. All parts of a player's body must be on or behind the baseline. Referees will check both teams before starting the game. Failure to do this results in a false start, and the infracting player(s) will report to jail. If a player from either team false starts, the clock shall stop. The infracting player is out and will start the match in the jail. Balls will be collected and placed along the half court line like normal. Teams will reset at their base line (with the infracting team 1 player down). On the referees whistle, the clock shall start and the match will continue as normal.
- Referees will be at their starting positions at half court
- On the head referee's whistle, the match clock will begin and teams will sprint towards half court to retrieve balls. Balls must reach a team's baseline in the possession of a player before they are activated. This can be done by relaying the ball to another teammate at the baseline. All balls are activated after 8 seconds. Failure to activate a ball before attempting a direct hit will result in the infracting player being jailed.

Examples: Bob sprints and gets a ball. Bob throws at Steve without activating. Bob is out.

Bob sprints and gets a ball. Bob relays ball to waiting teammate at baseline. Teammate relays back to Bob. Bob directly hits Steve. Steve is out.

- No sliding, or use of feet to retrieve balls. Any player that does slide or use feet is

automatically out

Getting Out

- A player is ruled out when they are directly hit by a ball, unless the ball is caught by the player or a team catch* is made before the ball is ruled dead.

Reason: When a player is directly hit, the player has the opportunity to communicate with teammates to save the player. This increases communication, teamwork and strategy in the game of dodgeball.

*See team catch.

- When a team's jail is empty, the throwers from the opposing team are out when their balls are caught.

Reason: To decrease the game length, and to encourage more throws from the other team. When players from the opposing team are out, they are not punished for throwing.

- A player is not out when they use the ball to deflect other balls. In that situation, the ball is ruled dead. (No catches, and direct hits are possible) When a player's ball is knocked loose by a direct hit and not caught or team caught* again, that player is out. The ball knocked loose is the only one that needs to be caught, not the ball thrown.

Reason: Encourages strong throws, as well as team communication.

*See team catch.

- When a thrower's ball is caught, the thrower is out.

Reason: Popular demand.

- **Direct hits:** When a ball is thrown at a player on the opposing team, the opposing player has the option to deflect it with their ball, catch the ball, or have a teammate catch the ball. If the previous events fail to happen and the targeted player is hit, the targeted player is ruled out when the thrown ball is dead (i.e. hits the ground, wall, or another thrown ball, becoming dead)

Examples: Bob throws at Steve. Steve is hit in the chest. Ball drops to floor. Steve is out.

Bob throws at Steve. Steve deflects with another ball. Steve is in.

Bob throws at Steve. Ball hits second ball in mid-air. Both balls are dead, Steve is not out.

Bob throws at Steve. Steve is hit in chest and ball ricochets up in the air. Tom directly hits Steve. Steve catches Bob's ball. Steve is out and first ball is dead from the catch.

Bob and Steve throw at each other. Both balls pass in mid-air without interference. Bob and Steve are both directly hit. Bob and Steve are out.

Bob throws at Steve. Steve fails to deflect, drops the guard ball to the floor. Steve is out.

Bob throws at Steve. Steve fails to deflect, drops the guard ball. Teammate catches the guard ball. Steve is not out.

Bob throws at Steve. Steve is hit in the chest, the ball ricochets and hits another teammate in the leg before hitting the ground. Only Steve is out.

Bob throws at Steve. Steve is hit in the chest. Teammate catches the ball before it dies. Steve is not out.

- **Team catches** are instances when a player is hit, and that player's teammate catches the ball before it becomes dead. The hit player is not out, and 1 player from that team comes in like a normal catch.

Reason: This encourages teamwork and communication in the game of dodgeball. Encourage your teammates to make it obvious to the referee when they save a teammate.

- All direct hits must be forward throws. Reverse throws made in the neutral zone are not allowed.

Getting In

- When a player makes a catch, one player from their jail comes in.

Jail Procedure

Jail location and design are in "Field Standards"

- When a player is ruled out, they will be added to the end of the jail.
- The jail is a queue. When another player is out, they are added to the end of the queue. The oldest player in jail (will be nearest to half court) will be released on a catch or team catch.
- Breaking the queue will result in forfeiture of team balls. Further instances will award the

opposing team with a game point. During a time-out, the jail will remain in queue.

Reason: All time outs will be used by both teams for the sole purpose of arranging their lines, possibly making the game lengthy and boring.

Overtime Procedure

- Overtime occurs when both teams have an equal amount of game wins at the end of a match.
- Overtime is handled as follows:
 1. Count how many players are in play at game end. The team with more players in will win. If the number is even proceed to step 2.
 2. 5 minute game with no change in rules. Winner of the game is the winner of the match. If there is no decision, repeat step 1.

Game Restrictions

- When the total active number of players on a team is less than or equal to 5, a 10 second shot clock is in effect. In this time, the team has 10 seconds to attempt a direct hit or send a ball to the other side unless they have no balls. The penalty is forfeiture of all balls.

Reason: Prevents the end of a match from becoming sluggish.

- Matches are decided by the number of games won in a given time period. (Decided by tournament itinerary)

Reason: Time restrictions would benefit tournament itinerary scheduling, however can be disregarded for team play.

- Matches are played with 10 balls, 15 players on the court and 20 on the roster.
- Unnecessary roughness occurs when a malicious act occurs, or excessive force is used and is punishable by jailing the infracting player, or removal from the game/match at referee's discretion.

Notes: Headshot limitations will be determined by the host.

- Overtime occurs when there is a tie in games won during the match duration.
- Arguing with the referee may be penalized up to and including ejection from the game, at the referee's discretion.
- Stripping opponent's balls in the neutral zone is legal, but is subject to unnecessary roughness

depending on aggressiveness. Excessive physical contact with the opponent is not allowed (basketball style stripping is allowed). **If a player is stripped of their ball, they are ruled out.**

- "Basketball style" physical contact is allowed. Players are allowed to make a physical effort to retrieve balls, with limitations. Any act of physically restraining another player from movement is not allowed (grabbing, holding) and punishable by jailing the infracting player. Setting picks similar to basketball play are allowed. Any act determined to be excessive by the referee will fall under unnecessary roughness.
- Kicking a ball towards the opposing team at all times will be punished by jailing the infracting player.
- When a player is out, they must make an effort to both signal that they are out, and report to jail immediately.
- Loitering on the court or intentionally delaying or obstructing the game will result in a penalty (SEE PENALTY STRUCTURE).
- Jailed players are prohibited from hoarding balls, throwing balls at the opposing team, or influencing the match in any physical way. They may help place stray balls back into the field of play.
- Intentionally removing any part of the uniform in an act of frustration, throwing or kicking a ball from the court of play in an unnecessary fashion, spitting, arguing, unnecessary physical contact, and issues of sportsmanship or language all fall under the referees jurisdiction and are subject to penalty as a ref sees fit.

Reason: Allows the referee to be in control of penalties and rulings. Also prevents players from acting in poor acts of sportsmanship which may be seen as negative by fans, sponsors, players, or the general public

Time Management

- Match length will be determined by the host (running clock)
- Halftime length will be determined by the host
- Matches will include 2 halves. When a half ends, no team is awarded a game point (except in the case of a tie at the end of a match)
- Both teams will be given 2 thirty second time outs for each half.
- In the first half, if a game should end and there is less than 4 minutes on the clock the match shall go to halftime. Any time that is on the clock will be put onto the clock for the second half.

Reason: Prevents ultra-quick matches in a timeframe in which no team can effectively win a

point. Maximizes the amount of game time that can be used efficiently.

Example:

2 teams are playing and the game finishes with 2:57 showing on the clock. The ref stops the game, goes to halftime, and then puts 2:57 + whatever the determined match time was at the beginning of the clock. (In the case of a 30 minute half, the second half would be 32:57)

Game Reset Procedure

- In the event of a penalty or timeout, the teams will both reset to their baselines
- Balls that are in players hands may remain in the player's possession.
- Balls in a team's zone (non neutral) will remain in their current location.
- Any balls in the neutral zone will be lined up evenly along the central line.
- On whistle, play resumes as normal, and balls do not need to be activated (taken to the back line) in order to be thrown.

Officiating

- Only captains and alternate captains are allowed to communicate with the referee or opposite team members and must do so in a professional manner.
- If another player (non captain) makes contact (verbal or physical) with a referee, it will be at the referee's discretion as to what penalty or explanation to give.
- Arguing with the referee or the opposite team may be penalized up to and including ejection from the game, at the referee's discretion.
- Referees are used to help facilitate the game as well as make sure that the game rules are followed.
- At the beginning of the match any captains (no more than 3 per team) will report to the middle of the court for a meeting with the referees and other captains. Any issues or questions that need to be discussed will be brought up at that point. This will also allow the referees to know which 3 players are designated captains by the team (if not signified on the uniform).
- All communication should be strictly limited to team captains to minimize the work on the referee. The team captains are responsible for ALL activity from their team, and are to be instructed to control all actions and opinions of their team members. In doing so, it will help promote the team, the sport, and the MDC in a professional and respectful manner. All refs should refer to the MDC Referee Handbook for exact rulings and positioning and any questions.

Penalty Structure

Everything is left up to the discretion of the referee, and they may award any penalty as they see fit. All penalties are to be recorded on the score sheet. All penalties are final. The Referee

may choose how to approach the situation by awarding a penalty or warning from the list below.

- Verbal Warning
- Automatic Jailing
- Misconduct Penalty (Automatic Jailing) Given when a player is already out, or commits an intentional or dangerous play that demands a severe warning. Two (2) misconduct penalties will result in ejection from match.
- Ejection from match (team plays 1 player down for remainder of match)
- Ejection from tournament.
- End of Match (given in instance of unacceptable and hostile sportsmanship from one or both teams)

All Penalties are to be recording (especially for tournaments) so that hosts or sponsoring clubs can be alerted to sportsmanship issues

Credits

Rules developed by the DePaul Dodgeball Society. Coordinated by Ryan McGeehan, with contributions from:

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