

**Basketball Nova Scotia (BNS)**  
**Rules of Play**

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## INTRODUCTION

Basketball Nova Scotia (BNS) follows **FIBA Official Basketball Rules EXCEPT** for the variations included in this rule documentation. Amendments to the FIBA rules for BNS-run competitions support long term athlete development and were made in consultation with a group representing BNS membership.

These competition rules will be reviewed annually with insight from Canada Basketball and BNS membership.

**NOTE:** It is the responsibility of all coaches to know the playing rules therefore we strongly encourage all coaches to read and understand these rules. Please connect with BNS Manager of Sport & Technical Programs for any questions on rules - [basketballtd@sportnovascotia.ca](mailto:basketballtd@sportnovascotia.ca)

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## 1. AGE REQUIREMENTS

**1.1 Current Year** – Defined as the normal period of operation for basketball extending from September 1st to August 31st. The current year is also divided into two (2) playing seasons; fall/winter (October 1-May 4) and spring/summer (May 5-September 30)

**1.2 Under 10 Developmental Jamboree Eligibility** – A player must not have reached the age of 10 prior to January 1st of the current year.

**1.3 Under 12 Eligibility** – A player must not have reached the age of 12 prior to January 1st of the current year.

**1.4 Under 14 Eligibility** – A player must not have reached the age of 14 prior to January 1st of the current year.

**1.5 Under 16 Eligibility** – A player must not have reached the age of 16 prior to January 1st of the current year.

**1.6 Under 18 Eligibility** – A player must not have reached the age of 18 prior to January 1st of the current year.

## 2. BALL SIZE

**3.1** Under 10 and Under 12 girls and boys: **Size 5**

**3.2** Under 14, Under 16 and Under 18 Girls: **Size 6**

**3.3** Under 14, 16 and 18 Boys: **Size 7**

## 3. GAME SCHEDULES

### **(As it pertains to BNS Provincial Club Championships)**

All scheduled games are to be played as scheduled unless BNS determines that a schedule must be altered due to extenuating circumstances which include but may not be limited to:

**4.1** Weather

**4.2** Referee issues

**4.3** Team travel issues

**4.4** Facility issues

#### 4. MERCY RULE

**5.1** In **Under 12 Division 3 and below**, when a team is ahead by 40 points or more the scores shall be set to 0 on the score clock for the remainder of the game. The score will be kept on the scoresheet.

**5.2** In **Under 12 Division 1 or 2**, if a team is ahead by 15 points or more the leading team shall no longer be permitted to employ a pressure defense.

**5.3** In **Under 14, Under 16 and Under 18** age groups, if a team is ahead by 25 points or more, the leading team shall no longer be permitted to employ full court pressure defense of any kind.

#### 6. GAME TIMING

**6.1** In all age categories, games are played until there is a winner, according to the overtime procedures outlined below.

**6.2 Under 12** will play eight 4-minute stop time shifts with a 1-minute break between quarters.

**6.2.1** Each quarter will consist of two 4 minute stop time shifts.

**6.2.2** Half time will be 5 minutes when and where possible. Half-time may be shortened if the game is running behind schedule.

**6.3 Under 14:**

D1, D2 & D3: will play 4 - 8 minute stop time quarters with 1 minute break between quarters.

D4 and below: will play 6 - 4 minute stop time shifts (first 3 quarters) followed by 1 - 8 minute 4th quarter, with 1 minute break between quarters.

**6.3.1** Half time will be 5 minutes when and where possible. Half-time may be shortened if the game is running behind schedule.

**6.4 Under 16/Under 18** will play four quarters of 10 minutes each with a 2 minute break between quarters.

**6.4.1** Half time will be 5 minutes when and where possible. Half-time may be shortened if the game is running behind schedule.

**6.5** The game clock shall be stopped when a field goal is scored with less than 2 minutes remaining in the final quarter or overtime.

## 7. OVERTIME

**Under 12/Under 14:** If a winner has not been determined at the end of regulation play, there will be 4 minutes of overtime. If a winner still hasn't been determined, overtime periods of 4-minutes will repeat until a winner has been determined.

**Equal play rules do not apply to overtime.**

**Under 16/Under 18:** If a winner has not been determined at the end of regulation play, there will be 5 minutes of overtime. If a winner still hasn't been determined after that, overtime periods of 5-minutes will repeat until a winner has been determined.

## 8. NUMBER OF PLAYERS

**8.1** In the **Under 10 age group**, the game will be played 4 vs. 4. All teams must have a minimum of eight (8) players for a game.

**8.2** In the **Under 12 age group**, each team must have a minimum of eight (8) players for an official game. A team may start a game with five (5) players however all eight (8) players must play by the fifth shift or the game shall be ruled as a default. In the event of a default, the game shall still be officiated and scored. A team must have used a minimum of eight (8) players to complete an official game. If a team only has eight (8) players and a player becomes injured or fouls out, the team must play the remainder of the game with four (4) players on the court.

**8.3** In the **Under 14, Under 16, and Under 18 age groups**, each team must have a minimum of five (5) players present for the start of the game.

**8.4** Teams can have a maximum of 15 athletes on a roster.

## 9. ROSTERS (BNS Provincial Club Championships)

**9.1 Playing for Another Club** – A player can only play with one club for Provincial Club Championships. If an athlete plays for a different club than they played with through the season, the team on which they play must submit at least three (3) seeding games (prior to the seeding deadline) with that athlete on their roster.

**9.2 Playing in a Higher or Lower Division** – Any teams registered as BNS members can register for the BNS Provincial Club Championships in their eligible age group.

Any player or team may play in an older age division, but no player or team shall play in a lower age division than their eligibility.

For example:

- A U14 team may play up in a U16 division but not down in a U12 division as part of the BNS Provincial Club Championships.
- If a U14 team plays up in a U16 age division as part of season league play, that U14 team could still register in the U14 Provincial Club Championships provided they meet the necessary seeding requirements.

- A team may play exhibition games against a younger or older team than their division if the two teams agree that the competition is appropriate. Please note however that these games would not account for eligible seeding games.

**9.3 Number of Rosters Athlete can Play On** – No player can be listed on more than one roster for Provincial Club Championships (includes U10 Jamboree). For example: an athlete cannot be listed on a roster for a team in the U12 Provincial Club Championships AND a roster for a team in the U14 Provincial Club Championships.

**9.4 Official Team Roster for Coaches Subject to Rule 9.5** - All team officials present on the bench during a game must be listed on the team's official roster (the roster that was submitted to BNS at the time of registration). This includes coaches, assistant coaches, managers and other team or club officials.

**9.5 Coaching Approval Request** – During Provincial Club Championships, should a coach be unavailable for a team's game, and a person not listed on the team's roster be required to fill in, approval in writing must be granted by the BNS Executive Director at least 3 hours prior to the game start time.

**9.6 Ineligible Athlete** - If a team plays any part of a game with an athlete who is deemed ineligible according to any of the above noted rules, the team automatically forfeits the game.

## 10. UNDER 12 AGE CLASSIFICATION VARIATIONS

**10.1 Equal Play – In all levels of Under 12**, no one player shall play more than a one shift difference than any other team mate (by the end of the game) and no player shall be permitted to play more than five (5) shifts in a game (excluding overtime).

If eight (8) or more players have not been used in accordance with "Equal Playing Time" by games end, the head coach shall receive a one (1) game suspension and the scorer shall record clearly on the score sheet that the game is a default against the violating team.

**10.1.1** Should a player arrive to a game late or leave a game early they are required

to play equal time for the portion of the game which they are at the game.

**10.2 Substitutions during a shift** – If a player fouls out, becomes injured or is unable to play their shift, they must be replaced by a player who has not played for more than 20 minutes (5 shifts X 4 minutes). The player replacing this player will be charged with the full shift and the injured or unable to play player will also be charged for the full shift. The coach may choose to not substitute a player and play with only four (4) for the remainder of the shift.

**10.3 No 3 Point Baskets** – All successful attempts at a basket with the exception of free throws, shall be awarded 2 points. There shall be no 3 point shots in the Under 12 age class.

**10.4 Free Throw Line** – The free throw line will be 14 feet long.

**10.5 Full Court Defense** – After a made basket, or dead ball in the front court, the team now going on defense must retreat back to the 3 point line area in their own back court until the opposing team crosses half court. In the case where there is no 3 point line, the top of the key area should be used. After a defensive team violation, the offensive team will be permitted to inbound the ball in their own backcourt in alignment with their 3-point line/top of the key, regardless of the spot of the violation.

**10.5.1 Full court defense exception** – In Under 12 Divisions 1 and 2, a player to player only, full court press will be permitted in **all four quarters as well as extra time**.

**10.6 Player to player defense** – Defense must be Player to player. Zone defenses of any kind are not permitted.

**10.7 No Double Teaming** – Double teaming is not permitted (with the exception of rule 10.7.1). Help defense is permitted but not in a sustained manner such as a trap. When an offensive player has beaten their defender another defender may step in to help momentarily (maximum of 2 seconds) but then must immediately return to guard their own offensive player or switch players to return to player to player.

**10.7.1** Once the ball has entered the key, double teaming the ball is permitted.

**10.8 Penalty for Illegal Defenses** – If in the view of the Referee there is intent to play a zone defense or double team, the following penalties shall be assessed:

**10.8.1** On the first offense, play shall be stopped, and a warning shall be issued to the coach utilizing the illegal defense. Play shall resume with the ball being awarded to the offensive team.

**10.8.2** On the second and any subsequent offense, the defensive team shall be penalized and the offensive team will be granted 1 free throw and will inbound the

ball at the point of interruption. If a team is in violation of one rule more than 3 times during one game, the referee will write a report (including teams involved, nature of the violations, any possible intentional violations) and send it to the BNS Executive Director at [bnsexecutivedirector@sportnovascotia.ca](mailto:bnsexecutivedirector@sportnovascotia.ca) for review.

**10.9.1** This rule does not apply to Under 12 Division 1 and 2 where full court

pressure is permitted.

**10.10 Penalty Foul Shots** – In the Under 12 age group, 2 shifts will count as 1 quarter. (Shifts 1 and 2 = 1st quarter; shifts 3 and 4 = 2nd quarter; etc.) A team accumulating a total of 5 team fouls in a quarter, would allow the opposing team to reach a penalty situation where they would shoot 2 free throws for the fifth and every foul thereafter in the quarter. The foul count is reset to 0 at the start of each subsequent quarter.

**10.11** Should overtime be required, any player who has not fouled out during the game shall be permitted to play in the overtime shift(s).

**10.12** The last two minutes of play will follow FIBA rules (on a scored basket, the clock will stop).

## 11. UNDER 14 AGE CLASSIFICATION VARIATIONS

**11.1** Division 3 and below, defense must be player to player. Zone defenses of any kind are not permitted. For divisions 1 and 2 there are no defensive restrictions.

**11.2 No Double Teaming** – Double teaming is not permitted (with the exception of rule 11.2.1). Help defense is permitted but not in a sustained manner such as a trap. When an offensive player has beaten their defender another defender may step in to help momentarily but then must immediately return to guard their own offensive player or switch players to return to player to player.

**11.2.1** Once the ball has entered the key, double teaming the ball is permitted.

**11.3 Penalty for Illegal Defenses** – If in the view of the Referee there is intent to play a zone defense or double team, the following penalties shall be assessed:

**11.3.1** On the first offense, play shall be stopped, and a warning shall be issued to the coach utilizing the illegal defense. Play shall resume with the ball being awarded to the offensive team.

**11.3.2** On the second and any subsequent offense, the defensive team shall be penalized and the offensive team will be granted 1 free throw and will inbound the

ball at the point of interruption. If a team is in violation of one rule more than 3 times during one game, the referee will write a report (including teams involved, nature of the violations, any possible intentional violations) and send it to the BNS Executive Director at [bnsexecutivedirector@sportnovascotia.ca](mailto:bnsexecutivedirector@sportnovascotia.ca) for review.

**11.4 Equal Play** – In all Division 4 and lower, no one player shall play more than a one shift difference than any other team-mate over the duration of the first three quarters of the game. If players have not been used in accordance with “Equal Playing Time” by the end of the third quarter, the scorer shall record clearly on the score sheet that the game is a default against the violating team. Equal play does not have to be followed in the fourth quarter.

**11.5 Substitutions during a shift** – If a player fouls out, becomes injured or is unable to play their shift, the player replacing this player will be charged with the full shift and the injured or unable to play player will also be charged for the full shift. The coach may choose to not substitute a player and play with only four (4) for the remainder of the shift.

**11.6 Fourth Quarter Exclusion** – Rules 11.4, and 11.5 do not apply in the fourth quarter or in overtime.

## 12. UNDER 16 AND 18 AGE CLASSIFICATION VARIATIONS

**12.1** Under 16 and 18 age classification will follow FIBA Rules.

**12.2** The U16 and U18 girls age groups may be combined to form a U16/18 division as needed due to low registration numbers.

**12.3** All under 16 and 18 age athletes are eligible to compete in the Provincial Club Championships.

## 13. GAME LOST BY FORFEIT

**13.1** Teams will forfeit a game if:

**13.1.1** The team is not present or is unable to field five (5) players ready to play 15 minutes after the game is scheduled to begin.

**13.1.2** A team’s actions prevent the game from being played (as determined by BNS).

**13.1.3** A team refuses to play after being instructed to do so by the officials.

**13.1.4** A team does not follow equal play rules after more than 1 warning OR if an athlete plays or does not play the proper number of shifts, according to the equal play rule.

**13.1.5** If an athlete who is ineligible based on any of the rules above (roster section, eligibility section) plays in any part of a game.

**13.2** Penalty for a forfeit:

**13.2.1** The game is awarded to the opponents and the score shall be 20 to 0. Furthermore, the forfeiting team shall receive 0 classification points.

**13.2.2** If in a tournament the team forfeits for the second time, the team shall be disqualified from the tournament and the results of all games played by this team shall be nullified.

## 14. FIBA TIE BREAKING PROCEDURE

**14.1 Procedure** – Teams shall be classified according to their win-loss records, namely two (2) points for each game won, one (1) point for each game lost and zero (0) points for a game lost by forfeit.

**14.2** If there are two or more teams in the classification with equal points, the result(s) of the game(s) between the two or more teams will be used to determine the placings.

**14.3** If the two or more teams have the same win-loss record of the games between them, further criteria will be applied in the following order:

**14.3.1** Higher goal difference (difference between the number of points scored vs. the number of points scored against) of the games between them.

### 14.3.2 Higher number of goals scored in the games between them.

### 14.3.3 Higher goal difference of all games in the group

#### 14.3.4 Higher number of goals scored in all games in the group

If these criteria still cannot decide, a draw shall decide on the placings.

**14.4** If two or more teams have equal points and HAVE NOT played each other, the following criteria will be followed:

**14.4.1** Higher goal difference (difference between the number of points scored vs. the number of points scored against) of the games between them

#### 14.4.2 Higher number of goals scored in the games between them

#### 14.4.3 Higher goal difference of all games in the group

#### 14.4.4 Higher number of goals scored in all games in the group

If these criteria still cannot decide, a draw shall decide on the placings.

at any stage, using the above criteria, a multiple team tie is reduced to

involving only two teams, the procedure in 17.3 and 17.4 will be applied.

**14.6** More than two teams – equal points:

### Example 1

Team	Games	Wins	Losses	Points
A vs. B	100-55		B vs. C	100-55
A vs. C	90-85		B vs. D	80-75
A vs. D	75-80		C vs. D	60-55

Team	Games Played	Wins	Losses	Points	Goals	Goal Difference
A	3	2	1	5	265:220	+45
B	3	2	1	5	235:270	-35
C	3	1	2	4	240:245	-5
D	3	1	2	4	210:215	-5

Therefore: 1<sup>st</sup> A – winner against B 3<sup>rd</sup> C – winner against D  
2<sup>nd</sup> B 4<sup>th</sup> D

## Example 2

A vs. B	100-55	B vs. C	100-85
A vs. C	90-85	B vs. D	75-80
A vs. D	120-75	C vs. D	65-55

A vs. D	120-75	C vs. D	65-55	E vs. F	90-60	
Team	Games Played	Wins	Losses	Points	Goals	Goal Difference
A	3	3	0	6	310:215	+95

B	3	1	2	4	230:265	-35
C	3	1	2	4	235:245	-10
D	3	1	2	4	210:260	-50

Therefore: 1<sup>st</sup> A

Classification of the games between B, C, D:

Team	Games Played	Wins	Losses	Points	Goals	Goal Difference
B	2	1	1	3	175:165	+10
C	2	1	1	3	150:155	-5
D	2	1	1	3	135:140	-5

Therefore: 2<sup>nd</sup> B, 3<sup>rd</sup> C – winner against D, 4<sup>th</sup> D

### Example 3

A vs. B	85-90	B vs. C	100-95
A vs. C	55-100	B vs. D	75-85
A vs. D	75-120	C vs. D	65-55

Team	Games Played	Wins	Losses	Points	Goals	Goal Difference
A	3	0	3	3	215:310	-95
B	3	2	1	5	265:265	0
C	3	2	1	5	260:210	+50
D	3	2	1	5	260:215	+45

Therefore: 4<sup>th</sup> A

Classification of the games between B, C, D:

Team	Games Played	Wins	Losses	Points	Goals	Goal Difference
B	2	1	1	3	175:180	-5
C	2	1	1	3	160:155	+5
D	2	1	1	3	140:140	0

Therefore: 1<sup>st</sup> C, 2<sup>nd</sup> D, 3<sup>rd</sup> B

### Example 4

A vs. B	85-90	B vs. C	100-90
A vs. C	55-100	B vs. D	75-85
A vs. D	75-120	C vs. D	65-55

Team	Games Played	Wins	Losses	Points	Goals	Goal Difference
A	3	0	3	3	215:310	-95
B	3	2	1	5	265:260	+5
C	3	2	1	5	255:210	+45
D	3	2	1	5	260:215	+45

Therefore: 4<sup>th</sup> A

Classification of the games between B, C, D:

Team	Games Played	Wins	Losses	Points	Goals	Goal Difference
B	2	1	1	3	175:175	0
C	2	1	1	3	155:155	0
D	2	1	1	3	140:140	0

Therefore: 1<sup>st</sup> B, 2<sup>nd</sup> C, 3<sup>rd</sup> D

## 15. PROTESTS

**15.1** A team may file a protest if the team's interests have been adversely affected by:

**15.1.1** A violation of coach or player eligibility, OR equal play rules.

**15.2** Protests must be communicated **within 20 minutes** of the end of the game, to the host of the division facility who will contact BNS directly.

**15.3** In case of a team's protest, the scoresheet, the host or an official may be used to help provide insight on the situation being assessed.

**15.4** Protest outcomes from BNS Provincial Club Championships will be decided by a Protest Review Committee composed of the BNS Executive Director, BNS MSTP, and 1-2 others.

**15.5** In order to be admissible, a protest shall comply with the following procedures:

**15.5.1** The head coach of the protesting team shall notify the division host per the timelines indicated, and provide a written explanation of the protest reasons, on the reverse side of the scoresheet.

**15.5.2** The Protest Review Committee will review the protest details and decide on the protest as soon as possible, in any case no later than before the next game is played by the protesting team and the opposing team.

**15.5.3** The decision by the Protest Review Committee is final and not subject to further review or appeal.

**15.5.4** The Protest Review Committee may decide not to change the result of the game unless there is clear and conclusive evidence that a rule has been broken.

In

the event that the protest is successful, the team that is being protested against will forfeit the game and take a loss on their record, and the protesting team will be credited a win.

**15.6** After the protest resolution, a written decision via email will be shared with the parties involved.

## 16. DISCIPLINE

Please refer to the **BNS Discipline Policy & Standard Misconduct Penalties Chart** for specific disciplinary items.