



**CANADA**  
BASKETBALL

# U11-U17

# Youth 3x3 Playing Guidelines

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*Adapted to align with Canada Basketball's LTBD model and FIBA 3x3 rules*

## **PURPOSE**

These guidelines provide age-appropriate standards for introducing and developing 3x3 basketball for youth ages **U11-U17**. They mirror the structure of Canada Basketball's existing youth guidelines (Game Format, Rules, Tactics, Equipment & Court) while adapting to the unique requirements of 3x3. This ensures a smooth progression from **Jr NBA (5-12) to U23**.

# U11 - U12 (INTRO 3X3)

## LEARN-TO-TRAIN STAGE



At this stage, the goal is to make 3x3 **fun, fast, and simple**, reinforcing Jr NBA small-sided principles while introducing players to the unique identity of the game.

### GAME FORMAT

- **Duration/Score Limit:** 10 minutes running clock OR first 11 points
- **Court & Players:** Half-court; 3 players on court + 1-3 substitutes
- **Clock Management:** The running clock stops only for free throws
- **Shot Clock:** No official shot clock; optional 24-sec recommended to maintain pace
- **Pace Guideline:** If a team is not attacking the basket, officials may warn them by counting the last 5 seconds
- **Fouls:** No penalty situations; all fouls result in a check-ball except shooting, technical, or unsportsmanlike fouls
- **Overtime:** The first team to score wins

### TACTICS

- Focusing on **spacing, cutting, and passing**
- Encourage **1v1 moves and decision-making in moderation**; limit isolation play and prioritize team play, spacing, and ball movement
- Introduce **basic defensive stance** and **on-ball coverage**

#### GAME SPECIFIC RULES

<b>Check-ball</b>	Simplified, from the top of the arc
<b>Clear Arc</b>	Ball must be cleared after rebounds or steals
<b>Substitutions</b>	At dead balls only
<b>Time-outs</b>	No time-outs are granted

#### EQUIPMENT & COURT

<b>Ball</b>	Size 6
<b>Hoop Height</b>	9-10 ft (2.60-3.05 m)
<b>Half-court with arc markings</b> if available; if no 3-point line exists, it is recommended to define the arc using court tape or cones, as a guideline for proper spacing	

# U13-14 (EMERGING 3X3)

## TRAIN-TO-TRAIN STAGE



Athletes at this stage can handle **structured rules and simple tactics**. The introduction of the 12-second shot clock encourages quick reads and prepares them for competitive formats.

### GAME FORMAT

- **Duration/Score Limit:** 10-minute games OR first to 21 points
- **Court & Players:** Half-court; 3 players on court + 1 substitute
- **Shot Clock:** 12-second (manual if tech unavailable)
- **Penalty Situations:** In effect
- **Overtime:** First team to score 2 points

### TACTICS

- Introduce **screens, dribble handoffs, and re-screens**
- Introduce **simple help principles and basic rotations**
- **Switching is limited/conceptual only**, mostly awareness-based
- Emphasize **transition play**; moving quickly from offence to defence and vice versa
  - Teach players to react immediately after a made or missed shot
- Encourage **2-player combinations** (pass & cut, give & go)

### GAME SPECIFIC RULES

<b>Check-ball</b>	Full check-ball and clear arc enforced
<b>Substitutions</b>	At dead balls only
<b>Time-outs</b>	One time per team
Continuous play on made baskets	

### EQUIPMENT & COURT

<b>Ball</b>	Official FIBA 3x3 ball (size 6, weight of 7)
<b>Hoop Height</b>	10 ft
Half-court with arc 3x3 markings	

# U15-17 (COMPETITIVE 3X3)

## TRAIN-TO-TRAIN STAGE



By U15-17, athletes are ready for **full FIBA compliance**. This prepares them for U23 Nationals and international FIBA competitions.

### GAME FORMAT

- **Duration/Score Limit:** 10-minute games OR first to 21 points
- **Court & Players:** Half-court; 3 players on court + 1 substitute
- **Shot Clock:** 12-second mandatory

### TACTICS

- Advanced offensive actions: **slip screens, misdirection, isolations**
- Implement defensive **switching fully in on-ball and off-ball situations**
- Defensive schemes include **aggressive switching** and **help-and-recover**
- **Teach foul management / foul strategy** – staying out of bonus, using fouls wisely
- **Teach clock and score management** in high-pressure situations
- **Situational games** are recommended to reinforce strategy, pressure decisions, and score/clock management

#### GAME SPECIFIC RULES

All **official FIBA 3x3 rules** applied

**Continuous play** on made baskets

**Standard substitution rules**

#### EQUIPMENT & COURT

**Ball**

Official FIBA 3x3 ball (size 6, weight of 7)

**Hoop Height**

10 ft

Full half-court with official FIBA dimensions and markings

## IMPLEMENTATION NOTES

- **Progression:** Rules increase in complexity by age, allowing gradual learning
- **Coach Education:** Coaches should complete the Intro 3x3 Module before leading sessions or events
- **Officials Training:** From U13 upward, referees must understand basic 3x3 mechanics
- **Integration:** Jr NBA (ages 5-12) can now reference these guidelines at U11-12, creating a seamless developmental bridge

## VISUAL PROGRESSION TABLE

Category	U11-12 (Intro)	U13-14 (Emerging)	U15-17 (Competitive)
<b>Game Format</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 mins / first to 11 pts</li> <li>• No shot clock or optional 24-sec shot clock</li> <li>• 1-3 subs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 mins / first to 15 pts</li> <li>• 12-sec shot clock</li> <li>• 1 sub</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 min / first to 21 pts</li> <li>• 12-sec shot clock</li> <li>• 1 sub</li> </ul>
<b>Rules</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simplified check-ball, Clear arc</li> <li>• No penalty situation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full check-ball</li> <li>• Clear arc</li> <li>• Continuous play</li> </ul>	Full FIBA 3x3 rules
<b>Tactics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spacing</li> <li>• Cutting</li> <li>• Basic defense</li> <li>• 1v1 but emphasize team play</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Handoffs</li> <li>• Screens</li> <li>• 2-player combinations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defensive switching</li> <li>• Foul management</li> <li>• Advanced offensive action</li> </ul>
<b>Equipment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Size 6</li> <li>• 9-10 ft</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FIBA 3x3 ball</li> <li>• 10' hoop</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FIBA 3x3 ball</li> <li>• 10' hoop</li> </ul>
<b>Goal</b>	Fun, fast, intro to format	Transition to structure, faster play	Prep for Nationals & FIBA pathway

## KEY OUTCOMES

- Introduces authentic 3x3 earlier (starting U11)
- Provides a consistent national standard for coaches, officials, and players
- Builds a clear bridge from Jr NBA → Youth → U23 → Masters/Open