

Metro Basketball Association
Rules of Play

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Metro Basketball Association Rules of Play

1. Game Schedules

All scheduled games are to be played as scheduled.

2. FIBA Rules

All MBA games are to be played under the current “FIBA Official Basketball Rules”, except for the variations approved by the MBA and recorded in this document.

3. Ball Sizes

The ball sizes to be used for each age class are as follows:

3.1. Under 10 Developmental and Under 12: Size 5

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

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

4. Mercy Rules

4.1. Teams are to show respect for their opponents at all times. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary actions.

4.2. In Under 12 when a team is ahead by 40 points or more the scores shall be set to 0 for the remainder of the game.

4.3. In Under 12 Division 1 or 1A if a team is ahead by 15 points or more the leading team shall no longer be permitted to employ a pressure defence.

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

5. Game Timing

5.1. Under 10 Developmental will play ten 3 minute and 30 second stop time shifts, with equal play required.

5.1.1. Games shall be divided into two halves. Each half will consist of 5 shifts or 17 minutes and 30 seconds of playing time.

5.1.2. Half time will be 2 minutes when and where possible. Half-time may be shortened if the game is running behind schedule.

5.1.3. Games shall not exceed a maximum duration of 1 hour and 10 minutes.

5.2. Under 12 will play eight 4 minute stop time shifts, with equal play required.

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

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

5.2.3. Games shall not exceed a maximum duration of 1 hour and 10 minutes.

5.3. Under 14 will play four quarters of 8 minutes each with a 1 minute break between quarters.

5.3.1. Equal play will be required in the first three quarters of games played in Division 3 or lower with those three quarters being divided into two 4 minute shifts.

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

5.3.3. Games shall not exceed a maximum duration of 1 hour and 15 minutes.

5.4. Under 16 and Under 18 will play four quarters of 10 minutes each with a 1 minute break between quarters.

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

5.4.2. Games shall not exceed a maximum duration of 1 hour and 25 minutes.

5.5. There shall be no overtime played during regular season games.

5.6. The game clock shall be stopped when a field goal is scored with less than 1 minute remaining in the final quarter or overtime when the difference in the score is 10 points or less.

5.7. Should over time be required during a U12 play-off game four (4) minute shifts shall be played until a winner is determined. Rule 11.1 shall not apply to over time shifts.

5.8. Should over time be required during a U14, U16 or U18 play-off game five (5) minute periods shall be played until a winner is determined.

6. Shot Clock

6.1. The shot clock in U10, U12 and U14 games shall be of a 30 second duration. 2017 FIBA rules around resets following fouls shall apply except for the offensive reset rule, this will not apply. E.G. a foul in the back court will be a full 30 second reset, a defensive non-shooting foul in the front court with less than 14 seconds shall be a 14 second reset (if the shot clock shows above 14 seconds it will stay as is).

6.2. The shot clock in U16 and U18 games be of a 24 second duration. 2017 FIBA rules around resets following fouls shall apply except for the offensive reset rule, this will not apply. E.G. a foul in the back court will be a full 24 second reset, a defensive non-shooting foul in the front court with less than 14 seconds shall be a 14 second reset (if the shot clock shows above 14 seconds it will stay as is).

7. Back Court Possession

7.1. A U10, U12 or U14 team will be permitted to have possession of the ball in their back court for 10 seconds prior to crossing midcourt.

7.2. A U16 or U18 team will be permitted to have possession of the ball in their back court for 8 seconds prior to crossing the midcourt.

8. Time Outs

Each team shall be permitted a total of five time outs, two of which may be taken in the first half, 3 of which may be taken in the second half with only two permitted to be taken in the final 2 minutes of play.

9. Number of Players / Call-ups

9.1. In the Under 14, Under 16, and Under 18 age classes each team must have a minimum of 5 players present for the start of the game.

9.2. In the Under 12 age class, each team must have a minimum of 8 players for an official game. A team may start a game with 5 players however the all 8 players must play by the fifth shift or the game shall be ruled as a default.

9.3. In the Under 10 Developmental age class teams are required to register a minimum of 8 players for a team to be accepted into the league.

- 9.4. In the Under 10 Developmental age class, each team must have a minimum of 6 players for an official game. A team may start a game with 4 players however all 6 players must play by the fifth shift or the game shall be ruled as a default.
- 9.5. Subject to Rules 9.6 to 9.9, players may be called up when a coach knows or suspects that they may be in a forfeiture position for an upcoming game.
- 9.6. A player may be called up from any team with the same club in a lower division or age class. Lateral call-ups are not permitted with exception of: In Under 10 Developmental; In the lower levels (4, 5, etc.) of Under 12. Lateral call-ups will only be permitted if the opposing coach is informed before the game begins and agrees to the lateral move.
- 9.7. Any one player can only be called up twice (2) to a specific team. Upon being called up a third time, the player will be required to stay on the higher level team.
- 9.8. In the Under 14, Under 16, and Under 18 age classes only enough players can be called up to make a total of 8 players for a game.
- 9.9. In the Under 12 and Under 10 Developmental age classes the coach can call up enough players to bring the team total for that game to a maximum of 10.
- 9.10. To add a player as a call-up at game time, the coach must:
- 9.11. Advise the scorekeeper that a player from a lower level within your club will be playing as a "Call-up";
 - 9.11.1. Present name(s) and number(s) to the scorekeeper;
 - 9.11.2. Advise the other coach of the call-up.
 - 9.11.3. A call-up player must be registered with the same club for play in the Metro Basketball Association or in a Basketball Nova Scotia registered Small Ball or Steve Nash program.
- 9.12. If a player is found to be a "Call-down" (Player from a higher division or older age class), the game will be forfeited and coach will face disciplinary action.

10. Under 14 Age Class Variations

- 10.1. Man to Man Defence - Defence must be man to man. Zone defences of any kind are not permitted.
- 10.2. No Double Teaming - Double teaming is not permitted. Help defence 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 man to man.
- 10.3. Penalty for Illegal Defences – If in the view of the Referee there is intent to play a zone defence or double team, the following penalties shall be assessed:
 - 10.3.1. On the first offence, play shall be stopped and a warning shall be issued to the coach utilizing the illegal defence. Play shall resume with the ball being awarded to the offensive team.
 - 10.3.2. On the second and any subsequent offence, the offensive team shall be awarded one free throw and possession at the point of interruption.
- 10.4. Equal Play - In all levels of Under 14 Division 3 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.

- 10.5. 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 if he or she so chooses to not substitute a player and play with only 4 for the remainder of the shift.
- 10.6. Fourth Quarter Exclusion – Rules 10.4, and 10.5 do not apply in the fourth quarter of a game.

11. Under 12 Age Class Variations

- 11.1. Equal Play - In all levels of Under 12 no one player shall play more than a one shift difference than any other team mate and no player shall be permitted to play more than five (5) shifts in a game (excluding overtime). If 8 or more players have not been used in accordance with "Equal Playing Time" by games end, the scorer shall record clearly on the score sheet that the game is a default against the violating team.
- 11.1.1. 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.
- 11.2. 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 if he or she so chooses to not substitute a player and play with only 4 for the remainder of the shift.
- 11.3. Minimum number of players - A team shall consist of not less than eight (8) players five of whom must be present to start a game. In the event of a default due to a shortage of players within the MBA's standards (8 players by the start of playing the fifth shift), the game shall still be officiated and scored (MABO agreement). A team must have used a minimum of eight (8) players to complete an official game. If a player becomes injured or fouls out and you only have 8 players, you must play the remainder of the game with one less player.
- 11.4. 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.
- 11.5. Free Throw Line - The free throw line will be shortened by 3 feet to a 12 foot length.
- 11.6. No Full Court Defence - 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, regardless of the spot of the violation.
- 11.6.1. Full Court Defence Exception - In Under 12 Divisions 1 and 1A, a man to man only, full court press will be permitted.
- 11.6.2. Should the defending team violate the rule and the official stops the game, the ensuing throw-in will take place at the top of the three point line (or key if not three point line) in the offensive teams back court.
- 11.7. Man to Man Defence - Defence must be man to man. Zone defences of any kind are not permitted.
- 11.8. No Double Teaming - Double teaming is not permitted. Help defence 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 man to man.

- 11.9. Penalty for Illegal Defences – If in the view of the Referee there is intent to play a zone defence or double team, the following penalties shall be assessed:
- 11.9.1. On the first offence, play shall be stopped and a warning shall be issued to the coach utilizing the illegal defence. Play shall resume with the ball being awarded to the offensive team.
 - 11.9.2. On the second and any subsequent offence, the offensive team shall be awarded one free throw and possession at the point of interruption.
- 11.10. Last 30 Seconds Timing – In order to allow the defence to attempt to gain possession of the ball without the clock expiring, the clock shall not start when:
- 11.10.1. The offensive team has a 3 point lead or less;
 - 11.10.2. There is 30 seconds or less remaining in the game;
 - 11.10.3. And the offensive team has not yet brought the ball over half.
 - 11.10.4. This rule does not apply to Under 12 Division 1 and 1A where full court pressure is permitted.
- 11.11. Penalty Foul Shots – In the Under 12 age level 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.
- 11.12. Should over time be required during a play-off game, any player who has not fouled out during the game shall be permitted to play in the over time shift(s).

12. Under 10 Developmental Variations

- 12.1. 4 on 4 Play - In all levels of Under 10 Developmental play shall be 4 on 4.
- 12.2. No Scores Displayed – While scores may be recorded for league administration purposes, the score shall not be displayed during Under 10 Developmental games.
- 12.3. Equal Play - In all levels of Under 10 Developmental no one player shall play more than a one shift difference than any other team mate and no player shall be permitted to play more than seven (7) shifts in a game. If 6 or more players have not been used in accordance with “Equal Playing Time” by games end in disregard of this rule, the scorekeeper shall record the game as a default.
- 12.3.1. 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.
- 12.4. Substitutions during a shift – In Under 10 Developmental, if a player fouls out, becomes injured or is unable to play their complete shift, a replacement player can be substituted. The replacement player will be charged with a shift if there is one minute or more remaining to play in the shift. If there is less than 1 minute remaining, the replacement player will not be charged with a shift. The coach may if he or she so chooses to not substitute a player and play with only 3 for the remainder of the shift.
- 12.5. Minimum number of players - A team must have used a minimum of six (6) players to complete an official game, four (4) of whom must be present to start the game. Six players must be available by the fifth shift. In the event of a default due to a shortage of players within the MBA's standards (6 players by the start of play in the 5th shift), the game shall still be officiated (MABO agreement).

- 12.6. Basket Height – In Under 10 Developmental the baskets shall be set so that the rim is at a height of 8 feet 6 inches.
- 12.7. 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 Under 10 Developmental.
- 12.8. Free Throw Line - The free throw line will be shortened to a length of 12 feet.
- 12.9. No Full Court Defence - 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 the court has 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, regardless of the spot of the violation.
- 12.9.1. Should the defending team violate the rule and the official stops the game, the ensuing throw-in will take place at the top of the three point line (or key if not three point line) in the offensive teams back court.
- 12.10. Man to Man Defence - Defence must be man to man. Zone defences of any kind are not permitted.
- 12.11. No Double Teaming - Double teaming is not permitted. Help defence 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 man to man.
- 12.12. Penalty for Illegal Defences – If in the view of the Referee there is intent to play a zone defence or double team, the following penalties shall be assessed:
- 12.12.1. On the first offence, play shall be stopped and a warning shall be issued to the coach utilizing the illegal defence. Play shall resume with the ball being awarded to the offensive team.
- 12.12.2. On the second and any subsequent offence, the offensive team shall be awarded one free throw and possession at the point of interruption.
- 12.13. No Penalty Foul Shots – In Under 10 Developmental there are 10 shifts which shall be divided into two halves of 5 shifts each. Quarters shall not be played and there shall be no penalty foul shots.
- 12.14. No Screening – Screening of any kind is NOT permitted (including ball screens, area screens, and double weaves/handoffs). If a screen occurs during a game, it is automatically called by an official as an “illegal screen” resulting in a turn over.

13. Division 1 High School Exclusion

- 13.1. With the exception of those specified in Rule 13.3, a player who plays on a Division 1 High school team is not eligible to play in the MBA in the same season.
- 13.2. A player shall be deemed to be playing on a Division 1 high school team if they have played more than two high school Division 1 games, including exhibition and tournament games.
- 13.3. Acknowledging the fact that a minority of high schools include Grade 9 students, and that any Grade 9 student who made the high school team would most likely see limited playing time, this rule does not include players who are in Grade 9.

14. Age Requirements

- 14.1. The term “current season” shall be defined as the normal period of operation for the MBA extending from September of one year until May of the following year.
- 14.2. To be eligible to play in Under 10 Developmental, a player must not have reached the age of 10 prior to January 1st of the current season.
- 14.3. To be eligible to play in Under 12, a player must not have reached the age of 12 prior to January 1st of the current season.
- 14.4. To be eligible to play in Under 14, a player must not have reached the age of 14 prior to January 1st of the current season.
- 14.5. To be eligible to play in Under 16, a player must not have reached the age of 16 prior to January 1st of the current season.
- 14.6. To be eligible to play in Under 18, a player must not have reached the age of 18 prior to October 1st of the current season.
- 14.7. Subject to Rule 14.8, players may play up in older age classes but shall not be permitted to play down in younger age classes.
- 14.8. In extenuating circumstances, the MBA Executive, by majority vote, may permit a player to play in a lower class.

NOTE: The cut-off dates for age classes follow the dates for school registrations which were originally October 1st. This changed to January 1st and the cut-off will roll forward with the school registration date. The eligibility date for the age classes will change from October 1st to January 1st of the current season in the years indicated:

- Under 14 - 2017/18 season
- Under 16 - 2019/20 season
- Under 18 - 2021/22 season

15. Rosters

- 15.1. Team rosters must be finalized prior to a team playing in the third week of play. Changes will only be permitted to team rosters after the third week of play with the approval of the MBA Executive.
- 15.2. Any player may play in an older age class but no player shall play down in an age class younger than their eligibility. Players playing in age group higher than their eligibility, by choice or league placement, cannot be called down to their rightful age group to play for a team.
- 15.3. Subject to Rule 15.4 and 15.5, all persons present on the bench during a game must be listed on the team’s official roster. This includes coaches, assistant coaches, managers and other team or club officials.
- 15.4. During the regular season, 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, the referees, scorekeeper and opposing coaches must be notified prior to the start of the game.
- 15.5. During playoffs, 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 League Manager.

16. Play-off Eligibility

- 16.1. In order to be eligible to participate in playoffs, all players must be on the team roster as submitted prior to the third week of the season.
- 16.2. In order to be eligible to participate in playoffs, all players must have played in a minimum of 3 games during the regular season.
- 16.3. No player may be called up from any team during playoffs.

17. Game Schedules and Defaults

All requests for changes to scheduled games must be submitted in writing to the person designated by the MBA a minimum of 1 month in advance of the date of the game. Failure to do so and being unavailable to play the game will result in a purposeful default.

18. Violations and Disciplinary Measures

- 18.1. The MBA shall have the power to investigate and apply consequences, up to and including permanent suspension from the league, to any club, team, coach, player or associate, who in the opinion of the MBA are deemed to have acted in detriment to the league.
- 18.2. In relation to suspensions, correspondence shall be conducted between the MBA and the respective club representatives with the exception of investigations by a Discipline Committee.
- 18.3. The term “game official” as it applies to Rule 18 shall include the referees, the scorekeeper, the timer and spotters who may be assigned to the game to monitor compliance with the rules as set out by the MBA.
- 18.4. The term “automatic suspension” shall be defined as one where an MBA Board member, a Club President, or a game official submits a report to the MBA on an infraction listed in Rule 18.9 by a player, team official, or team associate or spectator.
- 18.5. Automatic suspensions are not subject to appeal.
- 18.6. The term “remainder of the season” in relation to suspensions shall include all officially sanctioned games including playoffs and tournaments.
- 18.7. A Discipline Committee shall review any matter which has been deemed by the MBA to be of a sufficiently serious nature to possibly warrant disciplinary measures beyond those specified in Rule 18.9.
 - 18.7.1. Any person issued a suspension above and beyond the automatic suspensions listed in Rule 18.9 must receive clearance from Basketball Nova Scotia prior to being permitted to resume any activities in the MBA.
- 18.8. Decisions of a Discipline Committee may only be appealed to Basketball Nova Scotia provided the appeal is brought forward by the club representative and that a notice of intent to appeal is submitted to the MBA League Manager.
- 18.9. The following infractions will result in automatic suspensions of the duration indicated:
 - 18.9.1. Mercy Rules - Failure to show due respect for an opponent as required by Rule 4 shall result in the suspension of the Head Coach for 1 game.
 - 18.9.1.1. A second infraction will result in the Head Coach being suspended for 3 games.
 - 18.9.2. Rosters - Failure to abide by the conditions set out in Rule 15 will result in the suspension of the Head Coach for 1 game.
 - 18.9.2.1. A second offence during the regular season will result in the Head Coach being suspended for the remainder of the season.

- 18.9.2.2. A subsequent infraction by the same team after the suspension of the Head Coach will result in the team being suspended for the remainder of the season.
- 18.9.2.3. An offence occurring during the playoffs will result in the Head Coach being suspended for the remainder of the playoffs plus 5 games.
- 18.9.3. Use of an ineligible player - Failure to abide by Rule 9.11 will result in the suspension of the Head Coach for the remainder of the season.
- 18.9.4. Use of an overage player - Failure to abide by Rule 9.12 will result in the suspension of the Head Coach for 1 game.
- 18.9.5. Equal Play - Failure to abide by the applicable Rules 10.4, 11.1 or 12.3, will result in the suspension of the Head Coach for 1 game.
 - 18.9.5.1. A second infraction will result in the Head Coach being suspended for 3 games.
- 18.9.6. Fighting / Physical Contact - Any person who is reported as fighting or any action involving inappropriate physical contact shall be suspended for 3 games.
 - 18.9.6.1. If the person is clearly identified as the instigator of the incident the suspension shall be for an additional term of 2 games.
 - 18.9.6.2. A second infraction will result in a suspension for the remainder of the season and the matter shall be forwarded to a Disciplinary Committee for further review.
- 18.9.7. Physical Abuse of a Game or League Official - Any person who physically abuses a game or league official shall be suspended for the remainder of the season and the matter shall be forwarded to a Disciplinary Committee for further review.
- 18.9.8. Verbal Abuse of a Game or League Official - Any person who verbally abuses a game or league official shall be suspended for 1 game.
 - 18.9.8.1. A second infraction will result in a suspension of 3 games.
- 18.9.9. Flagrant Foul (Attempt to Injure) – A player who receives a flagrant foul for attempting to injure another player shall be suspended for 3 games.
 - 18.9.9.1. A second infraction will result in an indefinite suspension pending a review by a Disciplinary Committee.
- 18.9.10. Profanity - Any person who directs profanity towards another player, coach or game official shall be suspended for 1 game.
 - 18.9.10.1. A second infraction will result in a suspension of 3 games.
- 18.9.11. Objectionable Behavior – Any person who behaves in a manner deemed to be objectionable based upon another’s race, religion, country of origin, disability or some other factor shall be suspended for 1 game.
 - 18.9.11.1. A second infraction will result in an indefinite suspension pending a review by a Disciplinary Committee.
- 18.9.12. Game Ejection – A player or coach who is ejected from a game shall be suspended for 1 game. The one game suspension will begin immediately following the end of the game in which the ejection took place.
 - 18.9.12.1. A second infraction will result in a 3 game suspension with the matter being forwarded to a Disciplinary Committee for review.
- 18.9.13. Repeated Illegal Tactics - Failure to show due respect for an opponent by repeatedly employing tactics such as illegal defensive strategies as prohibited by Rules 10.1-10.3, 11.6-11.9 or 12.9-12.12 shall result in the suspension of the Head Coach for 1 game as well as default of the game of the infraction.

- 18.9.13.1. A second infraction will result in the Head Coach being suspended for 3 games as well as default of the game.
- 18.9.13.2. An infraction in the playoffs will result in the game being defaulted and the team being suspended from the remainder of the playoffs with the matter being forwarded to a Disciplinary Committee for review.
- 18.9.14. Purposeful Defaults - Failure to abide by the conditions set out in Rule 17 will result in the following penalties:
 - 18.9.14.1. The team shall be fined \$200.00.
 - 18.9.14.2. The Head Coach and/or other team personnel will be suspended for a minimum of 2 games.
 - 18.9.14.3. Coaches and/or team personnel who are repeat offenders shall be suspended for a minimum of 5 games with the matter being referred to a Disciplinary Committee.
- 18.10. Any spectator, coach or non-player person serving a suspension issued by the MBA and/or Basketball Nova Scotia shall not be permitted within a gym or building in which any MBA game is being played until such time as their suspension has been served in full. Failure to abide by this rule will result in a further two game suspension. Unless otherwise mentioned by a league official, any player serving a suspension shall be permitted to remain on the bench for the duration of the suspension. Should that player create problems during a game in which they are suspended for they will be suspended for an additional three (3) games.

19. Personnel Committed to Provincial Programs

Any person who is associated as a coach, assistant coach, trainer, manager or other such position with a Basketball Nova Scotia Provincial team or program shall be limited to participating within the MBA at Division 2 or lower unless they have received approval from the League Manager.