

Open Beach Volleyball Rules

Intramural Sport Policies and Procedures

This sport specific document refers to rules specific to the sport of Open Beach Volleyball and does not include our general policies. All players and captains are expected to read through the general Intramural Sport Handbook for an overview of all of our policies and procedures.

Please review the Rowan's law concussion awareness resources e-booklet found [here](#).

Eligibility and Players

1. All players must meet general eligibility guidelines as outlined in the [Intramural Sport Handbook](#)
2. All players must have their validated student card, Lakehead University identification or alternate piece of photo identification at EACH game.
3. Additions to the roster form will be allowed up until a sport specific date. Please check our website for exact dates for each sport/semester.
4. Teams will consist of four (4) players on the court at any time. Teams can consist of any combination of gender identities as there are no gender requirements.
 - a. A game can begin with a minimum of three (3) players to avoid a forfeit.

Rules of the Game

Please note that beach volleyball is a self-officiated sport. Should there still be a dispute, players may ask the Sport Supervisor for clarification.

Game Start

1. Games will begin with a coin toss or rock paper scissors. The winners of the coin toss/rock paper scissors will decide between the following:
 - a. Which side of the court they would like to play on
 - b. If they would like to serve or receive first
2. The loser of the coin toss/rock paper scissors will choose the opposite of the winner.

Scoring

1. Matches are best 2 of 3 sets
2. Games are played to 21 rally-points for sets 1 and 2. The third set will be to 15 points. A team must win by two points.
3. A set is won by either team when;
 - a. One team scores 21 points first with a 2-point advantage. A tie at 21-20 calls for additional play until one team succeeds in gaining a 2-point advantage
4. The team that wins 2 sets of 3 wins the match
5. If a team is reduced to less than 4 players after the games have begun, play shall continue

Equipment

1. Players are expected to dress in an appropriate manner as per our Intramural Sport Handbook (i.e., shirts required, no jewelry, etc).
2. Players are allowed to play barefoot should they desire.

Timing

1. The following time factors are in effect:

Last updated in June 2026. Revisions highlighted in yellow.

- a. Time-outs shall not exceed 1 minute
 - b. 1 time-out is allowed per team in each set
 - c. Time-out for injury is at the discretion of the referee
2. Teams have the full time limit allowed to play (50 minutes). If the game is not completed within 50 minutes, the team leading wins the set

Server and Positions

1. The server is the right-back player of the serving team.
 - a. Teams must rotate through servers
2. His/her position must be in rotation order before the ball is contacted for service.
3. Other players must be in rotation order before the ball is contacted for service.
4. After the ball is contacted for serve, players may interchange positions anywhere on the court.

Serving

1. The service results in a side-out when the server;
 - a. Does not take the proper position before serving, or is the wrong server
 - b. Commits a foot fault
 - c. Hits the ball into the net
 - d. Hits the ball so it crosses outside of the net antennas as it passes over the net
 - e. Hits the ball into any post or overhead structure
 - f. Does not serve within 5 seconds
 - g. Serves before the official whistles play to begin

During Play

1. A player may not touch the net while the ball is in play
2. A player may not play the ball twice in succession, unless there is simultaneous contact by two players (a player may hit the ball on the first and third hits)
3. The ball may be played a maximum of 3 times by each team (including a block), before it is returned over the net
4. A ball contacting the boundary line is considered in the court of play
5. A player may run outside of his/her own court to play a ball
6. The ball must pass inside the net antennas as it crosses the net to be legal
7. Players may step on, but not completely over the centre line during play

Contacting the Ball

1. The following rules apply when playing the ball;
2. The ball must be contacted cleanly (not caught or held)
3. Simultaneous contact by team-mates is considered one contact
4. A player cannot make successive contact of the ball
5. A player may go outside of the court to play the ball if he/she does not cross the centre line or contact any obstructions
6. If two opposing players contact the ball simultaneously directly above the net, either player may play the ball again on the next hit
7. The ball is dead if it crosses the net outside the net antennas, hits the posts holding the net or lands out of bounds
8. A return may be played in any direction and the player may use any part of his/her body

Lines

1. Players should ensure that lines remain straight and the court size is maintained.
2. A dispute regarding whether a ball was in or not will be addressed by the official, who will judge whether

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the ball was in or not based on the ball mark's position and where the line should be.

Sportsmanship, Fair Play Code, and Conduct Policies

The Intramural Fair Play Code is in effect at all sanctioned Intramural Events. Participants are expected to review the Fair Play Code and Suspension Guidelines in the [Intramural Sport Handbook](#) prior to participation.

Forfeits and Defaults

Please see the [Intramural Sport Handbook](#) for the full Forfeit/Default Policy.

The Default Deadline for Beach Volleyball is: Tuesdays at 12:00 pm.

Playoffs

Please see the [Intramural Sport Handbook](#) for general policies on playoffs. Standings will be based on Win-Loss-Tie Records, Forfeit-Records, and Default-Records. Teams that do not meet the minimum required average of 3.0 for sportsmanship will also be disqualified from playoffs. Please note that participants must participate in at least two (2) regular season games in order to participate in any playoff games. Attendance will be monitored by Campus Recreation Staff.