

# Understanding the Officials' Hand Signals

In volleyball, there are generally 2 officials. The first referee directs the game from a stand and a second referee stands opposite near the net.

A whistle is blown to initiate and to end each play. The official will first signal for the serve, then blow the whistle and indicate what happened, and finally, give a point to the side that won the rally.

This is a summary of hand signals that accompany the whistles.



## Point

One finger raised on the side of the court awarded a point.



## Ball in bounds

The official will signal to the spot where the ball hits in bounds.



## Out of bounds

Ball is out of bounds, outside antenna or player illegally in adjacent court.



## Touch

Ball is out of bounds after contacting a player.



## 4 contacts

Four fingers up. You only get 3 contacts. The block does not count.



## Carry

Held, thrown or carried ball. Too much contact time.



## Double hit

Two fingers up. Ball contacted more than once by a player.



## Begin Service

The official indicates that the server may now serve.



## Net violation

The serve or a player touches the net.



## Play over

Two thumbs up. A fault by both teams, a serve over or official's inadvertent whistle or mistake.



## Time out

Each team gets two 60 second time outs per game.



## Over the net

Contacting the ball before it has broken the plane of the net or before the opposition hits it.



## Out of rotation

At the time of service you must not overlap the person directly next to you.



## Back row attack

Attacking the ball above the net and leaving from in front of the 3 meter line.



## Sanction card

A yellow card is a warning. A red card is a point. Red and yellow together is an ejection.



## Change sides

Between games or halfway through a deciding game.



## Game over

Same for the end of the match.

## ABOUT ALL THE SWITCHING PLACES AND RUNNING AROUND

At the time of the serve, a player cannot overlap the player next to them side to side, or in front or back, back to front. After the serve, players are able to move at will and teams generally switch players to maximize their particular talents. In addition, a back row player may not hit a ball over the net that is higher than the net unless they jump from in back of the 3 meter line.

## BITS & PIECES

- You may not spike a ball above the level of the net as a back row player unless you leave from behind the 3m line.
- Each team gets 2, 60 second time outs per game.
- Each team gets a total of 18 substitutions per game.
- The libero does not count as a substitution.
- The floor captain is the only player who may address the officials.
- A player can reach over the net to block but can't initiate contact.
- You have 8 seconds to serve after the official's whistle and you only get one try.
- You can play the ball off the ceiling as long as it comes down on your side.

## VOLLEYBALL TERMS

**Ace:** A serve that directly scores a point.

**Block:** (or 'roof') A spiked ball blocked into the opponents court.

**Free Ball:** A ball that will be returned by a pass rather than a spike.

**Dig:** A spiked ball returned.

**Joust:** A ball contested at the net by 2 players.

**Kill:** An attack that results in an immediate point or side out.

**Pancake:** A hand placed flat on the floor, intercepting the ball.

**Set:** A ball placed close to the net to spike.

**Sixpack:** Being hit in the face with a spike.

**Spike:** A hard hit ball powered over the net while jumping.

**Tip:** (or 'dink') A softly placed shot over the opponent's block.

**Tool:** A ball spiked off the opponent's block.

## A SHORT HISTORY OF VOLLEYBALL

The sport was created in 1895 by William G. Morgan, an instructor at the YMCA in Holyoke, MA. He decided to combine the elements of basketball, baseball, tennis, and handball to create a game he called 'mintonette'.

Since then, the sport has spread throughout the world where is now ranks behind only soccer among participation sports. Today there are more than 46 million Americans who play volleyball. There are 800 million players worldwide who play volleyball at least once a week.

The game is played at the Olympic level as indoor 6's and beach volleyball as doubles.

*This document was created by Al Morel, boys' volleyball coach at St. John's High School in Shrewsbury, MA. This may be reprinted by permission. A copy can be downloaded from [www.volleywithal](http://www.volleywithal) or contacting coach Morel at [al@almorel.com](mailto:al@almorel.com)*

# A Summary of Volleyball Rules



## THE GAME

The indoor game of volleyball is played by two teams of six players on a court divided by a net. The goal is to send the ball over the net and on to the ground of your opponent's court. Teams are allowed to hit the ball three times. The block does not count as one of the contacts. The rally continues until the ball touches the floor, goes out of bounds, or a player commits a fault. A point is scored on each rally and thus is called rally scoring.

The right back player initiates play with a serve. The serve may touch the net. Using rally scoring, whatever team wins the rally is awarded a point.

Games are played to 25 points, with a deciding game to 15, and you must win by a margin of 2. There is no cap on how high the score can go. Varsity high school matches are best 3 of 5 with the junior varsity match the best 2 out of 3.

## THE PLAYING AREA

The court is 9 meters wide by 18 meters in length. (Approximately 30' x 60'). The net height for boys is 2.43 m (7'11<sup>5/8</sup>") and girls is 2.24 m (7'4<sup>1/8</sup>") The ball may not break the plane of the antennas and the lines are considered in play.

## PLAYING THE GAME

A player may not touch the net but they may cross the center line as long as they do not interfere, pose a safety hazard, or go a considerable distance.

The ball may contact any part of the body. During the first contact, some successive contacts (2 hits) are permitted as long as it is a single attempt to play the ball.

The ball must be cleanly handled and not held in a prolonged manner such as carrying or throwing the ball.

## SYSTEMS OF PLAY

Generally, teams try to channel the first contact to a 'setter' who will then try to place (set) the ball near the net for a front row player to hit down or 'spike.' Advanced systems of play include choosing specific players to set and hit. Many offenses have the setter coming out of a back row position so that he can set 3 front row players. Most defenses are based on 2 players blocking in the front row with the other players returning balls hit around the block.

## THE LIBERO (LEE-bah-ro)

The libero is a designated back-row player, intended to be used as a ball-control specialist. The libero is allowed to replace any player in the back row without counting as a substitution. There is no limit to the number of libero replacements a team is allowed. The libero's uniform must contrast from the color of the other teammates' uniforms. The libero may not attempt to block or attack from above the height of the net. In addition a teammate may not attack a ball that is completely above the height of the net IF the libero set the ball from in front of the 3m line using an overhand set. Starting in 2004, the libero can serve for one position.

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