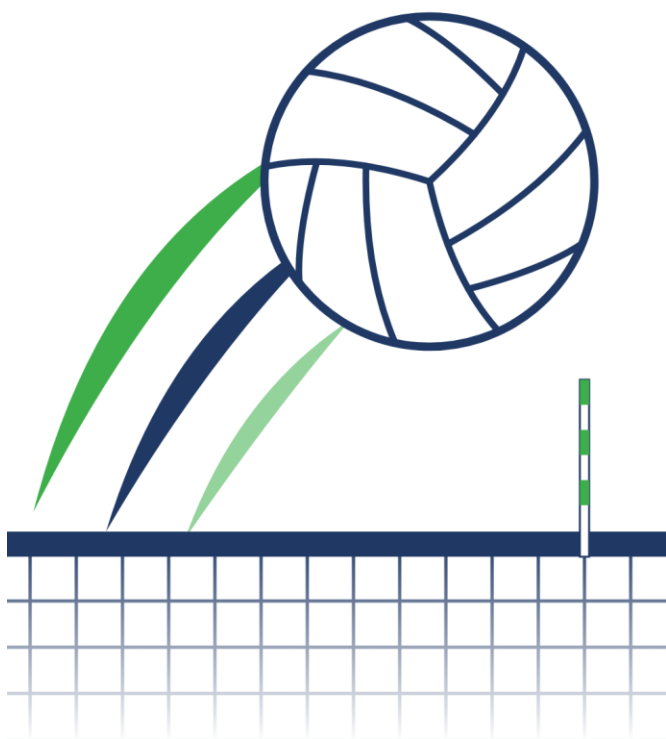




GWAC VOLLEYBALL

**3RD & 4TH GRADE
INSTRUCTIONAL RULES**

2026 SEASON



GWAC PURPOSE

The Girls' Western Athletic Conference (GWAC) is committed to providing a fun, instructional environment in which the third and fourth grade girls of our community may compete and develop skills in volleyball while learning the basic values of teamwork, respect, and sportsmanship.

At all times, we, as their leaders, shall conduct ourselves in word and action in a manner that sets a good example and contributes to the girls' roles as young, Christ-centered women firmly rooted in the Catholic faith, stressing the following:

Discipleship – to empower young women to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in our world today.

Participation – to draw young women to responsible participation in the life, mission, and work of the Catholic faith community.

Growth – to foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each young woman.

Dear Coach,

Thank you for coaching, and welcome to the Girls' Western Athletic Conference (GWAC). Founded in 1970, the conference organizes leagues for girls' volleyball, basketball, and softball. The conference has 18 member parishes and one affiliate member from the west side. We hope you and your team enjoy the upcoming season.

If you would like to share thoughts or opinions that could help us continue improving our league, please contact your league representative, who can then discuss them with the other parish representatives at the next monthly league meeting. You are always welcome to attend these meetings, which are held at Our Lady of Lourdes. Please check our website, www.gwacsports.com, for each month's meeting date and time.

This clinic book contains the updated GWAC volleyball instructional league rules. If you have any questions about the rules, please contact the league through the GWAC member listed in this booklet.

Sincerely,

Girls' Western Athletic Conference

President

Jenny Nie – jenlou@roadrunner.com

Vice President

Eric Fay – erictfay@live.com

Secretary/Treasurer

Bev Rosemeyer – berosemeyer@yahoo.com

3RD & 4TH GRADE RULES

Concentrate on fundamentals. Importance should not be placed on winning. Coaches may instruct players at any time during play.

WHICH FORMAT DOES MY TEAM PLAY?

Team	Sets 1 and 2	Set 3
3rd grade	Triple Ball	Triple Ball, or regular volleyball if both coaches agree
3rd/4th combo	Triple Ball	Triple Ball, or regular volleyball if both coaches agree
4th grade	Regular volleyball	Regular volleyball

All regular volleyball uses the four-serve limit.

TRIPLE BALL – 3RD GRADE AND 3RD/4TH COMBO TEAMS

Note: Sets 1 and 2 are always Triple Ball. If both coaches agree, the 3rd set may be played as regular volleyball instead. See Regular Volleyball.

Sequence

Play runs in repeating three-ball sequences. Each sequence has three rallies:

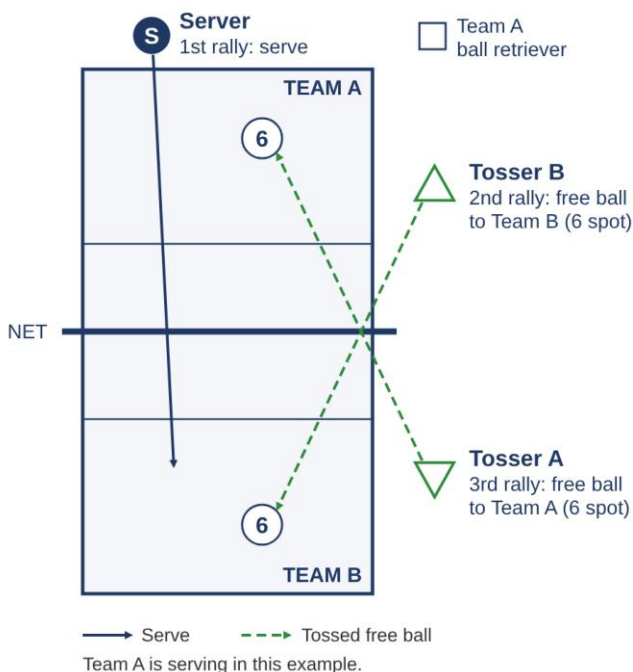
- **1st rally** – started by a serve.
- **2nd rally** – started by a free ball tossed to the receiving team (position 6).
- **3rd rally** – started by a free ball tossed to the serving team (position 6).

After each three-ball sequence, the serve passes to the other team.

Scoring

- Every ball put into play (the serve and each free ball) is worth one point. A set can end in the middle of a three-ball sequence.
- Each match is three sets. Sets are played to 25 points using rally scoring, and a team must win by at least two points.

Triple Ball Diagram



Toss

The tosser's job is to make pass-set-spike rallies easier to achieve.

- **Who tosses:** a coach, assistant coach, or capable volunteer tosses the free ball to their own team.
- **When:** after the referee's whistle signals that the ball is being put into play, and once the front-row players are at the net, ready to transition.
- **How:** underhand, with two hands and little to no spin, higher than the antennae so players have time to play the ball.
- **Where:** directly to the player in position 6. A toss to anyone else is replayed.

- **First contact:** a player may not send a free ball back over the net on the first hit, intentionally or not. The first time this happens, the referee calls a replay. If it happens again on the replay, the other team gets the point.

Time-Outs

Time-outs may be requested only before a serve. A request made during a three-ball sequence is not allowed.

REGULAR VOLLEYBALL

Who Plays Regular Volleyball

- **4th grade teams** play regular volleyball in all three sets.
- **3rd grade and 3rd/4th combo teams** may play regular volleyball in the 3rd set only, and only if both coaches agree. Sets 1 and 2 are always Triple Ball.

Four-Serve Limit

This applies to every set played as regular volleyball. A player may serve no more than four times in a row. After her fourth serve, her team keeps the serve but rotates, and the next player serves.

GENERAL RULES – ALL 3RD & 4TH GRADE TEAMS

Playing Time

Every player should play at least half of the match.

Substitutions

Substitutions are unlimited but may be made only before a serve. Coaches should teach players the proper way to substitute.

Uniforms

Players must wear same-color shirts, each with a number.

Net Height

Set the net at 7' 0".

Serving Line

Whenever possible, players should serve from the 5th/6th grade serving line (5 feet inside the back line). To avoid frustration, coaches may let a player move up as close as the 10-foot line, but should

challenge her to move back as she improves. Overhand servers must serve from behind the 5th/6th grade line.

Ball

Use Ultralite volleyballs for all matches.

Let Serves

Let serves are legal. A let serve is a serve that hits the net (but not the antenna) and continues over into the opponent's court.

Officials and Line Judges

The league supplies one referee per match for \$12 per team. Each team provides one line judge.

Rescheduling

Only the league can reschedule matches with paid officials. If you cannot play a scheduled match, contact the league secretary.

Scoresheet

Scores are not tracked in this division. If you would like to keep score, scoresheets are available at www.gwacsports.com.

Lineup Sheets

Lineup sheets are available at www.gwacsports.com. List every eligible player's number, show each player's starting position, and circle the first server's number. Give the sheet to the scorekeeper before the match starts.

Weather

Check the league website for game status and weather updates.

QUESTIONS?

Your league contact is Jenny Nie – jenlou@roadrunner.com.

Please visit the GWAC website at www.gwacsports.com for schedules, coaching tips, and drills.

Have fun!

GWAC MEMBERS

FOUNDING MEMBERS – 1970

Our Lady of Victory	St. Catharine
Our Lady of Visitation	St. Jude
St. Antoninus	St. Martin

CURRENT MEMBERS – 2026

Our Lady of Grace	St. Ignatius Loyola
Our Lady of Lourdes	St. James – White Oak
Our Lady of Victory	St. John – Dry Ridge
Our Lady of Visitation	St. John the Baptist – Harrison
St. Aloysius – Bridgetown	St. John Paul II (formerly St. Bart)
St. Antoninus	St. Jude
St. Bernard – Taylor Creek	St. Lawrence
St. Catharine of Siena	St. Teresa of Avila
St. Clements	St. Williams
St. Dominic	

AFFILIATE MEMBER

Oak Hills Youth Association

Three Rivers Association

GWAC WEBSITE

www.gwacsports.com