

MARIN MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETIC LEAGUE

Basketball Rules & Expectations

What Middle School Basketball Is All About

The purpose of middle school athletics is to provide a fun, safe, positive, and educational experience that promotes skill development, personal growth, and healthy competition. Through participation, student-athletes develop confidence, character, discipline, teamwork, and respect for others while learning the values of sportsmanship, responsibility, and perseverance. Middle school athletics are designed to foster a lifelong appreciation for physical activity and encourage every participant to reach their full potential in a supportive and inclusive environment.

AT A GLANCE

Format	5 vs. 5 — boys and girls play separately
Quarter Length	8-minute quarters (running clock)
Halftime	5 or 10 minutes depending on schedule and time constraints
Overtime	3 minutes 30 seconds
Timeouts	4 per team per game (60 seconds each)
Start Time	4:00 PM for first games unless arranged otherwise
Ball Size — Girls	28.5-inch basketball (all grades 6-8)
Ball Size — Boys	29.5-inch basketball (all grades 6-8)

How Basketball Works

- NFHS Rules: Games are played under current NFHS Basketball Rules unless modified by league rules.

The Clock

The clock runs continuously most of the game. Here's when it does stop:

- During timeouts
- When a player is injured
- At the referee's discretion
- In the final 2 minutes of each half (standard stop-clock rules apply)

Scoring

- Shots inside the 3-point line = 2 points
- Shots beyond the 3-point line = 3 points
- Note: Some gyms don't have a 3-point line — in those cases, all field goals count as 2 points
- Free throws = 1 point each

Free throw notes:

- Players have 10 seconds to shoot each free throw
 - Teams enter the bonus on the 5th team foul of each quarter — that means 2 free throw shots
 - A player only shoots 1 free throw when fouled on a made basket
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Fouls

There are two types of fouls:

- Personal Fouls — physical contact violations (holding, pushing, blocking)
- Technical Fouls — unsportsmanlike behavior, delay of game, illegal substitution

Key foul rules:

- A player is disqualified (removed from the game) after 5 fouls
 - Technical fouls count toward a player's personal foul total
 - On offensive fouls, the defense gets the ball — no free throws
 - If both teams foul each other at the same time, the ball goes to center court and possession is decided by the arrow
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Defense & Pressing

Teams may play man-to-man or zone defense. Full-court pressure (pressing) is allowed EXCEPT when the mercy rule is in effect (see below).

Press rule:

- If a team leads by 15 or more points, they may NOT press (apply pressure past half court)
 - First violation: warning
 - Second and each additional violation: 2-shot technical foul
 - If the losing team closes the gap below 15 points, pressing is allowed again
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Mercy Rule

If a team leads by 25 or more points in the second half, the clock runs continuously (no stoppages). If the deficit drops below 25 points, normal clock rules resume.

Coaches are expected to prioritize sportsmanship and player development — intentionally running up the score is not in the spirit of the league.

Ball Movement Rules

- Boys: The ball must be advanced past half court within 10 seconds
- Girls: No 10-second requirement, but once the ball crosses half court, it cannot be passed back
- Players cannot walk or run while holding the ball — they must dribble
- Double dribble (stopping and restarting a dribble) = turnover
- Traveling (too many steps without dribbling) = turnover
- Once inbound, a player has 5 seconds to pass the ball in — otherwise possession switches

Note about backcourt line:

- Due to varying sizes of the gyms the back court line will be determined by the home team. This line will be brought to the attention of the referees and visiting team prior to the start of each game.

Officials & Scorekeeping

- NFHS Rules: Games are played under current NFHS Basketball Rules unless modified by league rules.
- The goal is to have 2 referees at every game (These officials must be at least a high school student or older and must have some officiating experience)
- Referee decisions are final
- Coaches may politely ask for rule clarification — they may not argue judgment calls
- The home school must provide an official scorekeeper and timekeeper at all games and must sit at the scorer's table.

Ejections & Conduct

If a player, coach, or spectator is ejected from a game:

- The home team reports the incident including the name and role of the person to the league commissioner within 24 hours
- The ejected person may not attend or participate in the next league contest

Safety Rules for Everyone

- Players must wear proper basketball attire and athletic shoes
 - Jewelry is not permitted during games.
 - Due to safety reasons and delay of game situations there is to be no shooting at baskets by spectators during time outs, end of periods and/or between games.
 - Officials have discretion in warnings, technical fouls, and/or ejections of spectators/coaches
 - Spectators may not enter the court unless a player is injured and they are a parent or trained medical professional
 - Any athlete showing signs of injury, illness, heat-related concerns, or concussion symptoms will be removed from competition and evaluated according to school and league protocols.
 - Referees may warn, issue technical fouls, or eject spectators who create unsafe situations
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Uniforms & Equipment

- Uniform: The home team and visiting team shall wear jerseys.
 - Jersey numbers shall meet rulebook requirements. If the school has no approved jerseys they may, by consent of the league prior to the season, use their current jerseys.
 - No two players on the same team in any one game shall have the same number.
 - If both teams have similarly colored jerseys, it shall be the responsibility of the home team to change jerseys.
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Sportsmanship

Coaches, players, and spectators are all expected to demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times. This includes:

- Respect for officials, opponents, teammates, and facility staff
 - Unsportsmanlike behavior may result in technical fouls, ejection, or additional disciplinary action.
 - Coaches are responsible for the behavior of their players and their team's spectators
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League Champions

- League Champions will be determined by the winner of the Championship Match held at the conclusion of the season.
 - Championship banners will be awarded to League Champions in each division.
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Fun • Safety • Skill Development • Confidence • Character • Teamwork • Sportsmanship