Basketball League Rule Book

2026-2027 League Year

League Year begins September 1

Fall • Winter 1 • Winter 2 • Spring

LEAGUE PHILOSOPHY
Victorium is a developmental youth basketball league. These rules are designed to promote skill development, fair competition, sportsmanship, player safety, and a consistent game-day experience.
Where this rule book does not specifically modify a basketball rule, the governing NFHS basketball rule applies.

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VICTORIUM BASKETBALL

Game-Day Quick Reference

Division rules and essential game administration on one page. Detailed rules in the body of this rule book control when clarification is needed.

Division	Ball / Hoop	FT Line	Defense	Full-Court Pressure	Wristbands
6U	27 in / 8 ft	13 ft 6 in	Man only; help allowed; no trap/double	Not permitted	Required
8U Blue	28.5 in / 9 ft	13 ft 6 in	Man only; help allowed; no trap/double	Dead-ball only final 2:00 of Q2/Q4 and all OT/sudden death	Required unless both head coaches agree not to use
8U Red	28.5 in / 9 ft	13 ft 6 in	Man only; help allowed; no trap/double	Dead-ball only final 2:00 of Q2/Q4 and all OT/sudden death	Not used
10U Girls	28.5 in / 10 ft	15 ft	Man only; zone allowed final 2:00 Q2/Q4 + OT/sudden death; no trap/double	Dead-ball only final 2:00 of Q2/Q4 and all OT/sudden death	Not used
10U Boys Blue/Red	28.5 in / 10 ft	15 ft	Man only; zone allowed final 2:00 Q2/Q4 + OT/sudden death; no trap/double	Live-ball allowed; dead-ball only final 2:00 of Q2/Q4 and all OT/sudden death	Not used
12U / 13U	Boys: 29.5 in; Girls: 28.5 in / 10 ft	15 ft	Man only; zone allowed final 2:00 Q2/Q4 + OT/sudden death; no trap/double	Live-ball allowed; dead-ball only final 2:00 of Q2/Q4 and all OT/sudden death	Not used

Essential Game-Day Rules

GAME FORMAT & CLOCK	FOULS & PARTICIPATION
4 x 8-min quarters | 1-min quarter breaks | 3-min halftime | minimum 5-min warm-up	5 team fouls per quarter = 2 free throws; no 1-and-1 | Q4 team fouls carry into OT
Running clock through Q3 + first 6:00 of Q4. Clock stops for every shooting foul.	5 personal fouls = disqualification | No dunking; any dunk is a technical foul
Final 2:00 Q4: stop clock at 14 or fewer; running clock at 15+ (dynamic) | 2 x 30-sec timeouts per half, no carryover	Minimum participation: 12 minutes for eligible players present and ready at the start | Head coach responsible
REGULAR SEASON OT: two 2-min OTs, each starts with a jump ball and 1 fresh timeout; if still tied, sudden death, jump ball, next point wins, no timeout	MINIMUM TO START: 4 players | 5-min grace period | Forfeit = 1-0 | Legal game may finish with 3 players
15-POINT STANDARD	
15+ lead: no full-court pressure where otherwise legal; pressure returns at 14 or fewer. Standings point differential is capped at +/-15; forfeits are excluded. PLAYOFFS: all teams qualify; players must have participated in at least half of scheduled regular-season games (rounded up) unless expressly approved by Victorium; playoff OTs continue until a winner.	

1. League Year, Age Eligibility & Division Placement

1.1 League Year. The Victorium League Year runs from September 1 through August 31 and includes four sessions: Fall, Winter 1, Winter 2, and Spring.

1.2 League Age. A player's league age is the player's age on September 1. That league age remains in effect for all four sessions of the League Year.

1.3 Presumptive 15-Day Age Exception. A player whose birthday falls within 15 days before or after September 1 may request placement one age level above or below the division indicated by league age, as applicable. For example, a September 10 birthday may support a request to play down one age level; an August 20 birthday may support a request to play up one age level. All exceptions require express Victorium approval.

1.4 Other Age Exceptions. Victorium may approve play-up or play-down requests outside the 15-day window based on ability, safety, roster needs, competitive balance, player development, or other circumstances. No player may change age placement without express Victorium approval.

1.5 Division Offerings. Victorium serves players from 6U through 13U. Specific divisions may vary by session. Victorium may combine adjacent age groups, including a combined 12U/13U division, or create Blue/Red competitive divisions when appropriate.

1.6 High School Ineligibility. A player who has entered high school is not eligible to participate in the Victorium Basketball League, regardless of age.

2. Game Administration & Team Personnel

2.1 Pregame Arrival. Teams are strongly encouraged to arrive at their assigned court at least 10 minutes before the scheduled game time and be ready to begin the pregame process.

2.2 Guaranteed Warm-Up. Each team is guaranteed a minimum five-minute on-court warm-up. A team that arrives late is not entitled to delay the game further in order to receive a full five-minute warm-up.

2.3 Game Ball. Victorium provides or selects the official game ball. An alternate ball of the correct size may be used with approval of the game official or Victorium staff.

2.4 Bench Personnel. A team bench may include a maximum of three rostered coaches: one head coach and up to two assistant coaches. No other individual may occupy the bench unless specifically authorized by Victorium.

2.5 Coach Replacement. If the head coach is removed or otherwise unable to continue, a rostered assistant coach assumes responsibility. If no rostered assistant is available, Victorium may have a staff member coach or may designate a parent/guardian from that team to serve as the temporary coach.

2.6 Scorer's Table. The official scorer and game-clock operator may be the same person. The scorer's table maintains the official score, player and team fouls, timeouts, possession arrow, and game clock. The official score record controls if it differs from the visible scoreboard, subject to correction by the game officials.

2.7 Lineup / Scorebook. Before the game, the head coach must provide or confirm eligible players and jersey numbers with the scorer's table. A late-arriving rostered player must be confirmed with the scorer before entering the game.

3. Rosters, Substitutions & Minimum Participation

3.1 Approved Rosters. Only properly registered and eligible Victorium players may participate in official games. Players are expected to play only for the team to which they are officially rostered.

3.2 Player Movement. Any player addition, transfer, fill-in, substitute, or movement between teams or divisions requires express Victorium approval before participation. Agreement between coaches does not constitute approval.

3.3 Substitutions. Players may substitute at normal dead-ball substitution opportunities under standard basketball procedures. Victorium does not require predetermined rotations or quarter-by-quarter substitution patterns.

3.4 Minimum Participation. Every eligible player who is present and ready to play at the start of the game must play a minimum of 12 minutes. This requirement applies in the regular season and playoffs.

3.5 Responsibility. The head coach is responsible for compliance with the 12-minute minimum. The official scorer is not required to track individual playing time.

3.6 Exceptions. The participation minimum may be reduced or waived because of late arrival, injury or illness, foul-out, ejection, player/parent request related to health or readiness, or another Victorium-approved circumstance. A late-arriving player is not guaranteed the full 12 minutes but should receive reasonable playing time based on the game time remaining.

4. Game Length, Clock & Timeouts

4.1 Regulation. All divisions play four 8-minute quarters.

4.2 Breaks. Quarter breaks are 1 minute. Halftime is 3 minutes.

4.3 Running Clock. The first three quarters and the first six minutes of the fourth quarter use a running clock. The clock stops for every shooting foul/free-throw sequence, team timeout, and official/referee timeout.

4.4 Final Two Minutes. During the final 2:00 of the fourth quarter, normal stop-clock rules apply when the score differential is 14 points or fewer. At a differential of 15 points or more, the clock runs except for shooting fouls, team timeouts, and official/referee timeouts. This 15/14 threshold is dynamic; clock administration changes whenever the margin crosses the threshold.

4.5 Timeouts. Each team receives two 30-second timeouts in the first half and two 30-second timeouts in the second half. Unused first-half timeouts do not carry to the second half. Unused second-half timeouts do not carry into overtime.

Overtime

4.6 Overtime Periods. Each overtime period is 2 minutes and uses normal stop-clock administration. Each team receives one new 30-second timeout for that overtime; unused overtime timeouts do not carry into the next overtime.

4.7 Regular Season. A regular-season game may play a maximum of two overtime periods. If still tied, the game proceeds to sudden death. Sudden death begins with a center-court jump ball, no team timeouts are permitted, and the next legally scored point wins, including a free throw.

4.8 Playoffs. Playoff games do not use sudden death. Successive 2-minute overtime periods are played until a winner is determined. Each playoff overtime period begins with a center-court jump ball. Each team receives one fresh 30-second timeout for each overtime period.

4.9 Fouls in Overtime. Fourth-quarter team fouls and individual personal fouls carry into all overtime periods and, in regular-season games, sudden death. Team fouls do not reset in overtime.

5. Fouls, Bonus & Free Throws

5.1 Team Fouls by Quarter. Team fouls are counted separately in each quarter and reset at the start of Q2, Q3, and Q4.

5.2 Bonus. Beginning with the 5th team foul in a quarter, an eligible non-shooting defensive foul results in two free throws. Victorium does not use a 1-and-1 bonus. Fourth-quarter team fouls carry into overtime and do not reset.

5.3 Personal Fouls. A player is disqualified from the remainder of the game upon the 5th personal foul, consistent with NFHS standards.

5.4 Shooting Fouls. Shooting fouls are administered normally regardless of team-foul count, and the game clock stops for every shooting foul/free-throw sequence.

5.5 Free-Throw Line Accommodation. In 6U and 8U, the shooter may cross the free-throw line as part of the natural shooting motion after release, provided the player does not intentionally advance to gain a rebounding or defensive advantage before the free throw ends. Beginning at 10U, for both boys and girls, standard free-throw-line restrictions apply.

5.6 Lane Entry. Players occupying marked lane spaces may enter upon release of the free throw. Other free-throw restrictions follow the governing basketball rules unless modified here.

6. Division-Specific Defensive Rules

For all age groups, “help defense” means a temporary defensive rotation to respond to an immediate offensive threat. Help defense must not be used as a pretext for an intentional sustained trap or double-team where trapping/double-teaming is prohibited.

6U

- Man-to-man defense only.
- Colored wristbands are required to establish matchups.
- Zone defense is prohibited.
- Full-court pressure is prohibited at all times.
- Intentional trapping and double-teaming are prohibited.
- Normal help defense is permitted; defenders should recover to their assigned matchup after the immediate threat ends.

8U Blue

- Man-to-man defense only; zone defense is prohibited.

- Colored wristbands are required unless both head coaches agree before the game not to use them.

- Live-ball full-court pressure is not permitted.

- Following a dead ball, full-court pressure is permitted only during the final 2:00 of Q2, the final 2:00 of Q4, all overtime periods, and regular-season sudden death; otherwise the defense must retreat to half court.

- Intentional trapping and double-teaming are prohibited.

- Normal help defense is permitted.

8U Red

- Man-to-man defense only; no wristbands; zone defense is prohibited.
- Live-ball full-court pressure is not permitted.
- Following a dead ball, full-court pressure is permitted only during the final 2:00 of Q2, the final 2:00 of Q4, all overtime periods, and regular-season sudden death; otherwise the defense must retreat to half court.
- Intentional trapping and double-teaming are prohibited; normal help defense is permitted.

10U Girls

- Man-to-man defense is required. Zone defense is also permitted only during the final 2:00 of Q2, the final 2:00 of Q4, all overtime periods, and regular-season sudden death.
- No wristbands are used. Live-ball full-court pressure is not permitted.
- Following a dead ball, full-court pressure is permitted only during those same final-2:00/OT/sudden-death windows; otherwise the defense must retreat to half court.
- Intentional trapping and double-teaming are prohibited; normal help defense is permitted.

10U Boys - Blue & Red

- Man-to-man defense is required. Zone defense is also permitted only during the final 2:00 of Q2, the final 2:00 of Q4, all overtime periods, and regular-season sudden death.
- No wristbands are used. Intentional trapping and double-teaming are prohibited; normal help defense is permitted.
- Live-ball full-court pressure is permitted at any time, subject to the 15-point mercy restriction.
- Following a dead ball, full-court pressure is permitted only during those same final-2:00/OT/sudden-death windows; otherwise the defense must retreat to half court.

12U / 13U (including combined 12/13U)

- Man-to-man defense is required. Zone defense is also permitted only during the final 2:00 of Q2, the final 2:00 of Q4, all overtime periods, and regular-season sudden death.
- No wristbands are used. Intentional trapping and double-teaming are prohibited; normal help defense is permitted.
- Live-ball full-court pressure is permitted at any time, subject to the 15-point mercy restriction.
- Following a dead ball, full-court pressure is permitted only during those same final-2:00/OT/sudden-death windows; otherwise the defense must retreat to half court.

FULL-COURT MERCY RULE
Where full-court pressure is otherwise legal, a team leading by 15 or more points may not apply full-court pressure.
If the lead falls to 14 or fewer, otherwise-legal full-court pressure becomes available again. The threshold is dynamic.

7. Court, Equipment & Developmental Modifications

Division	Ball	Hoop	Free Throw	3-Second / Backcourt
6U	27 in	8 ft	13 ft 6 in	No 3-second violation; no 10-second backcourt count; no over-and-back.
8U Blue/Red	28.5 in	9 ft	13 ft 6 in	No 3-second violation; 10-second backcourt count and over-and-back enforced.
10U	28.5 in	10 ft	15 ft	3-second, 10-second backcourt, and over-and-back enforced.
12U / 13U	Boys 29.5 in; Girls 28.5 in	10 ft	15 ft	3-second, 10-second backcourt, and over-and-back enforced.

7.1 Three-Point Field Goals. 6U does not use three-point scoring; all made field goals are worth 2 points. Beginning at 8U, a made shot from behind a clearly designated three-point line is worth 3 points.

7.2 No Dunking. Dunking is prohibited at all times, including during pregame warm-ups and games. Any dunk will result in a technical foul.

7.3 Jewelry / Safety Equipment. Jewelry or equipment that presents a safety concern must be removed or safely addressed before participation. The game official and Victorium retain final authority on player-equipment safety.

7.4 Uniforms. Players should wear the official Victorium reversible team jersey. Victorium may approve reasonable alternatives for delayed, lost, or otherwise unavailable uniforms. Duplicate numbers or temporary number changes are permitted when the scorer is informed.

8. Jump Balls & Alternating Possession

8.1 Opening Tip. The game begins with a center-court jump ball.

8.2 Alternating Possession. After the opening tip, held-ball situations use the alternating-possession procedure. Q2, Q3, and Q4 begin with an alternating-possession throw-in under standard procedures.

8.3 Overtime. Each overtime period begins with a fresh center-court jump ball. Regular-season sudden death also begins with a center-court jump ball. Alternating possession is then used normally within the period.

9. Minimum Players, Forfeits & Replacement Scrimmages

9.1 Minimum to Start. A team must have at least four eligible players to begin an official game.

9.2 Five-Minute Grace Period. A team has five minutes after the scheduled game time to produce at least four eligible players. If the fourth eligible player arrives within the grace period, the official game begins and the grace-period minutes are not deducted from regulation game time.

9.3 Final Forfeit. If a team does not have four eligible players after five minutes, the game is forfeited. Once the forfeit is declared, the official game cannot later be reinstated even if additional players arrive.

9.4 Official Result. A forfeit is recorded as a 1-0 win for the non-forfeiting team and a loss for the forfeiting team. Forfeited games are excluded from point-differential calculations.

9.5 Finish with Three. A team that legally starts an official game may finish with three players if its available roster is reduced during the game by injury, illness, foul-out, ejection, or another legitimate in-game circumstance.

9.6 Replacement Scrimmage. If a team cannot participate or forfeits, Victorium may arrange for another team to play the non-forfeiting team during the scheduled game slot. The original forfeit remains a 1-0 win/loss. The replacement game is a scrimmage only and does not affect either team's record, point differential, standings, or playoff seeding. Victorium alone approves or arranges the replacement opponent.

9.7 Post-Forfeit Scrimmage. After a forfeit, teams are encouraged to use the remaining court time for a scrimmage. Victorium may move registered Victorium players between the teams solely to create a balanced scrimmage. The scrimmage does not change the official forfeit result.

10. Cancellations, Delays & Rescheduling

10.1 Published Schedule. Once published, the schedule is official. Coaches may request changes, but no change is guaranteed and no game may be independently rescheduled by coaches without express Victorium approval.

10.2 Victorium / Facility Cancellation. If Victorium cancels a game because of weather, facility availability, safety, staffing, or another circumstance outside the teams' control, Victorium will make reasonable efforts to reschedule. A makeup game is not guaranteed when court or calendar availability does not permit it.

10.3 Delays. If the prior game runs late, the next teams still receive the guaranteed five-minute warm-up and the full regulation game time.

10.4 Interrupted Games. If a game cannot continue because of a medical emergency, power outage, facility issue, or other extraordinary circumstance, Victorium determines whether the game will resume from the point of interruption, be replayed, be rescheduled, or be declared final based on the circumstances and the stage of the game.

10.5 Missing Officials. Victorium may appoint a qualified replacement official. If an appropriate official cannot be secured, Victorium determines whether the game is delayed, rescheduled, or otherwise handled.

11. Coach, Player & Spectator Conduct

11.1 Standard. Victorium expects respectful conduct from coaches, players, and spectators. Verbal abuse, profanity directed at others, threats, intimidation, taunting, fighting, or physical confrontation are prohibited.

11.2 Coach Communication. Assistant coaches may have normal, respectful communication with officials. The head coach is the only bench representative permitted to question, dispute, or request clarification of a ruling. Once the official has explained the ruling or directed play to continue, the discussion is over.

11.3 Spectator Communication. Spectators may engage in ordinary courteous communication with officials, including saying "thank you" or "good game," but may not question, dispute, argue, or criticize officiating decisions.

11.4 Video. Filming games is permitted. Video may not be used during a game to challenge or attempt to overturn an official's judgment call. Victorium may review video after a game for serious conduct, player

safety, eligibility, administrative, or rules-related matters. Ordinary judgment calls are not retroactively overturned based on video.

11.5 Technical Fouls / Ejections. Technical fouls are administered under the governing basketball rules except where modified by Victorium. Two technical fouls assessed to the same player or coach in one game result in ejection from that game. An ejection does not automatically carry a future-game suspension; every ejection is subject to Victorium review and may result in no additional action or additional discipline, including one-game or multi-game suspension.

11.6 Ejected Coach. An ejected adult coach must leave the playing area and may not continue coaching or communicate instructions to the team for the remainder of the game. A minor player who is ejected may remain on the bench under appropriate adult supervision unless Victorium staff or the player's parent/guardian determines otherwise.

11.7 Spectator Removal. Officials and Victorium staff may warn or remove a disruptive spectator. Serious conduct may result in immediate removal without warning. A game will not resume until a removed spectator complies. Refusal to leave may result in a forfeit against the associated team at Victorium's discretion. Any removal may be reviewed for additional attendance restrictions or discipline.

11.8 No Spectator-Side Coaching. Spectators may encourage players but may not function as additional coaches from the stands or spectator area.

12. Competitive Balance & Sportsmanship

12.1 No Hard Score Cap. The actual final score remains the official game score. Victorium does not impose a maximum final-score margin.

12.2 Standings Differential Cap. For standings and tiebreaker purposes, point differential is capped at +15 / -15 per game.

12.3 Lopsided Games. When a game becomes significantly one-sided, coaches are expected to take reasonable measures to preserve a respectful developmental environment, such as broadening rotations, emphasizing team play, and avoiding unnecessary aggressive tactics. Players are not required to stop shooting or intentionally allow the opponent to score.

12.4 League Review. Victorium may address conduct that clearly or intentionally runs up a score or otherwise undermines the league's sportsmanship standards.

13. Injuries, Blood & Player Safety

13.1 Safety First. Player safety overrides playing-time requirements, competitive considerations, and game results.

13.2 Injury / Illness. Officials may stop play when they believe a player may be injured or continuing play creates a safety concern. The 12-minute participation requirement is waived or adjusted as necessary for injury or illness.

13.3 Return to Play. Victorium and the game officials may prevent a player from returning when there is a reasonable safety concern. They are not required to make a medical diagnosis in order to keep a player out of play for safety reasons.

13.4 Blood. A player who is actively bleeding or has blood on the body or uniform that creates a safety or sanitary concern must leave until the bleeding is stopped and covered and the affected area or uniform is appropriately addressed.

13.5 Head Injury Concern. A player showing signs consistent with a possible concussion or significant head injury must be removed and may not return that day unless cleared in accordance with applicable requirements and Victorium policy.

13.6 Emergencies. Officials and Victorium staff may stop or terminate a game, clear the court or playing area, contact emergency services, or delay subsequent games when necessary for safety.

14. Standings, Tiebreakers & Forfeit Accounting

14.1 Standings. Teams are ranked by winning percentage rather than total wins, allowing fair comparison when teams have played different numbers of games.

14.2 Tiebreakers. When teams have identical winning percentages, the following tiebreakers apply in order:

1. Head-to-head result / head-to-head winning percentage among tied teams.
2. Capped point differential, using a maximum of +15 / -15 per game. Forfeited games are excluded from point-differential calculations.
3. Victorium-administered random draw if the tie remains unresolved.

14.3 Multi-Team Ties. For multi-team ties, head-to-head winning percentage among the tied teams is used when applicable. Once one team is separated from a multi-team tie, the tiebreaker process restarts from the beginning for the remaining tied teams.

15. Playoffs & Seeding

15.1 Qualification. Every team qualifies for the playoffs.

15.2 Player Playoff Eligibility. A player must participate in at least 50% of the team's scheduled regular-season games to be eligible for the playoffs, unless expressly approved by Victorium. When the number of scheduled games is odd, the requirement is rounded up to the next whole game.

15.3 Seeding. Final regular-season standings and the tiebreakers in Section 14 determine playoff seeding.

15.4 Bracket Format. Victorium determines and publishes the playoff bracket for each division based on the number of teams. When byes are required, they are awarded to the highest seeds. Brackets are fixed once established; there is no reseeding after each round.

15.5 Playing Time. The 12-minute minimum participation requirement remains in effect during playoff games, subject to the same exceptions that apply in the regular season.

15.6 Overtime. Playoff games continue with successive 2-minute overtime periods until a winner is determined. Sudden death is not used in the playoffs.

16. Rule Questions, Protests & Administrative Review

16.1 Judgment Calls. Officials' basketball judgment calls are final and are not subject to protest, including ordinary foul, violation, boundary, timing, and similar judgment decisions.

16.2 Rule Misapplication. If a head coach believes a Victorium rule is being misapplied, the issue should be raised respectfully with the officials at the earliest reasonable dead-ball opportunity. Victorium staff may be consulted when necessary to clarify the rule during the game.

16.3 Post-Game Review. A team-initiated request for review must be submitted to Victorium within 24 hours of the game. Review may be appropriate for player eligibility, material rule misapplication, significant scorekeeping or administrative error, serious misconduct, or other extraordinary circumstances.

16.4 Remedies. A request for review does not automatically change a result or require a replay. Victorium determines the appropriate remedy, which may include no action, correction of an administrative record, discipline, or in exceptional circumstances a change to the game result or replay.

16.5 Serious Matters. Victorium may investigate serious safety, conduct, eligibility, or integrity matters at any time, even outside the 24-hour team-request window.

17. Governing Rules, League Authority & Session-Specific Administration

17.1 Governing Rules. NFHS basketball rules govern Victorium Basketball League play except where specifically modified by this rule book. When a Victorium rule conflicts with an NFHS rule, the Victorium rule controls.

17.2 League Interpretation. Victorium retains final authority over eligibility, division placement, rule interpretation, discipline, scheduling, standings, playoff administration, and circumstances not specifically addressed by these rules.

17.3 Division Structure. Victorium may combine or separate adjacent age groups, create Blue/Red competitive divisions, move teams between competitive levels, and approve player-placement exceptions when appropriate for roster needs, competitive balance, development, safety, or league operations.

17.4 Session-Specific Information. Victorium may publish session-specific schedules, playoff brackets, division structures, and administrative procedures that supplement this rule book.

17.5 Rule Clarifications / Changes. Victorium may issue interpretations, clarifications, or administrative updates at any time. Material playing-rule changes will ordinarily take effect at the beginning of the next session unless Victorium determines an immediate change is necessary for safety, fairness, league operations, or another compelling reason. Material changes or session-specific exceptions will be communicated to affected head coaches.