

SOUTHWEST LEAUGE BASKETBALL RULES (Updated 6/1/2024)
Boys (4th - 8th Grades)

"Official Minnesota High School Basketball rules will apply in all cases unless specifically abridged by the following rules specific to each league."

1. **SEASON LENGTH:** Games will be played on 10 Saturdays between early December and later February at various locations in the southwest metro. If there is an odd number of teams, some teams may have an off week and a double header another week. The season ending tournament will be held in Eden Prairie in late February / early March.
2. **UNIFORMS / EQUIPMENT:** Jersey tops must be of similar color, and it is recommended that there are numbers on the front and back. The home team supplies the game basketball. The basketball size and basket height to be used by each grade level is as follows:
 - a. 4th grade: 27.5 basketball; 10 feet hoops
 - b. 5th – 6th grades: 28.5 basketball; 10 feet hoops
 - c. 7th – 8th grades: 29.5 basketball; 10 feet hoops
3. **GAME LENGTH:** 3 minutes for warm-up. Games will be two halves. Each half will be 14 minutes stop clock, with a 65-minute total game time limit. At the losing team's option, if they are behind by 20 or more points with 7 minutes to play in the game, the clock will convert to running time until the lead is 10 points or less. Halftime will be 3 minutes.
4. **GAME START TIMES:** 3 minutes for warm-up. Games may start up to 5 minutes prior to the scheduled start time if BOTH coaches agree to start the game early.
5. **TIMEKEEPER / SCOREKEEPER:** The home team will be responsible for furnishing the official timekeeper or scoreboard operator. The visiting team will be responsible for furnishing the official scorekeeper who will keep the official score, fouls, time out statistics and the alternating possession teams. The timekeeper and scorekeeper must sit together at the provided table.
6. **COACHES / OFFICIALS MEETING:** It is recommended that the coaches and officials meet at half court prior to the start of the game for introductions and to review the rules. Coaches must exchange line-ups / substitution rotations at the beginning of the game, to avoid conflicts about player rotation.
7. **REFEREES:** All communities must provide two qualified adult or college age referees for Grades 6th – 8th. High school student referees are allowed for the 4th and 5th grade games only. The game must not be played if two qualified referees are not present at game time unless the coaches agree to play. The community director will be responsible for rescheduling the game if necessary. Adult or college age referees will be used for the season ending tournament for all grade levels.
8. **FORFEIT:** If any team fails to have four players and a coach or a designated adult substitute coach available at the scheduled game start time, the referee will declare the game forfeited. If a team only has four players, the coach of the four-player team can elect to play 4 vs 5 and the outcome will be recorded as an official game, otherwise the game will be forfeited. The teams can still choose to scrimmage, play 4 on 4, or exchange players to play 5 on 5, for the remaining allocated game time. A forfeit results in a score of 15 – 0.
9. **TIME OUTS:**
 - a. Two timeouts per half, per team, will be allowed (no carry over).
 - b. One time out per team will be allowed in each overtime.
10. **3 POINT SHOT:** The 3-point shot will only be used when the gym is so marked for this shot.
11. **THREE THROWS:** 15 feet for grades 5th – 8th. 4th graders may take one step in front of the free throw line (~14 feet). Players can enter the lane upon release.
12. **JUMP BALLS:** After the initial jump ball at the start of the game, all jump ball situations will be resolved using the alternate possession rule. A jump ball will start overtime.

13. **TYPES OF DEFENSES:** The following defensive restrictions apply:
- a. 4th – 5th grade:
 - i. Zone defenses are not allowed. Man-to-man defense must be played at all times.
 - ii. No trapping / No double teaming.
 - iii. Switching is allowed.
 - iv. Teams will be given two warnings for defensive violations. The third and subsequent violations will result in a team foul.
 - b. 6th grade:
 - i. Zone defenses are not allowed until the 3rd Saturday in January.
 - c. 7th – 8th grades:
 - i. None. All defenses are allowed.
14. **FULL COURT PRESS:** A full court press is not allowed for 4th and 5th grades. A full court press for grades 6th – 8th is allowed except if a team is leading by 20 points or more. Only blatant disregard of this rule will result in a technical foul after a first warning. Unintentional violation will result in a stoppage of play and the ball will be awarded to the offended team.
15. **PERSONAL FOULS:** MN State High School League rules will apply, with the following exceptions:
- a. Teams will begin shooting one and one free throws when the opposing team has committed its 7th team foul. Two free throws starting with the 10th team foul.
 - b. Players foul out of the game when they commit their fifth foul. If a team is short of players, the last person fouling out will remain in the game. Every foul he commits from that point on will result in two points plus the ball out of bounds at mid court. Players on the bench who fouled out earlier in the game may not re-enter the game.
16. **TECHNICAL FOULS:** Technical fouls will count as both a personal foul against the player and a team foul. While all technical fouls will be non-shooting fouls, two points will be automatically awarded the opposing team and that team will get the ball out of bounds.
17. **FLAGRANT AND MULTIPLE TECHNICAL FOULS:** Flagrant fouls will follow the technical fouls rule above. In addition, the player committing the flagrant foul will be ejection from the game. A player or coach who receives two technical fouls in a single game will also be ejected from the game. If there is not an assistant coach or parent to assume the coaching responsibilities, that team will forfeit the game. All ejection will be reported to their community director. The community director will report this information to the Southwest League Director. Players or coaches who accumulate multiple technical fouls during the season may receive additional disciplinary action.
18. **NEW PLAYERS:** Players who have quit or have otherwise been removed from a traveling team, may join a team prior to December 31. No new players can be added after this date without the approval of the Southwest League Director.
19. **OVERTIME:** If any regulation game ends in a tie, there will be a 2-minute rest period after which a 2-minute stop clock overtime will be played. If the game is still tied when the first overtime ends, sudden death overtime will be played and the first team that scores will be declared the winner. Jump ball will start the overtime.

20. **SUBSTITUTIONS:** Teams are not allowed to use same grade substitutes, non-registered players, or travel players during the regular season or the season ending tournament.
- All coaches must have the player rotation form filled out for each game. Substitutions will be made at approximately the 10:30 minute mark, 7:00 minute mark, and 3:30 minute mark (neither team should have an advantage when the clock is stopped for substitutions). The stopped clock is used for substitutions only – no coaching or player huddle.
 - Once a player has entered the game, he may not be replaced until he has participated in the full 5 minutes unless injury, illness, or the player has fouled out.
 - Substitution rules do not apply in overtime or sudden death overtime.
21. **PLAYING TIME REQUIREMENTS:**
- It is expected of the coaches to play their players equally during the game and not try to "manipulate" the rule to create an advantage for his / her team by playing the "star" players the entire game. If an opposing coach notices that a "star" player has played more rotations than other players, the coaches from both teams should meet to review the player rotation form and discuss the situation.
 - The scorekeeper is responsible for monitoring the substitutions on the official scoresheet for both teams. Teams WILL provide proper support to the scorekeeper as necessary. The scorekeeper must notify the referees and coaches of any potential substitution issues. Any player found to be in violation of the equal playing time rule (No player will play more than one rotation than any other player) must be removed from that rotation. The referees will issue a warning to the offending coach. A second violation from that coach will result in a technical foul.
 - Players who show up late for a game will NOT have their rotations made up during the game. The equal playing time rule will start with the next rotation (No player will play more than one rotation than any other player). When a player shows up late, the Coach is required to complete a new rotation sheet that should be shared with the opposing team's coach.
 - Player substitutions due to injuries and fouls will NOT count against the equal playing time rule if occurring during a rotation. However, any player subbing for a player due to injury or fouls must follow the equal playing time rule (No player will play more than one rotation than any other player). Only the player with the injury or foul issues will NOT have equal playing time.
 - The only exceptions to the equal playing time rule (No player will play more than one rotation than any other player) are as follows:
 - Pre-game injury. Coaches and scorekeeper will need to meet to understand the situation and accommodate a request to limit a player's playing time due to injuries.
 - Disciplinary action due to sportsmanship. This requires prior approval from the Southwest League Director and / or community directors.
22. **REPORTING SCORES:** Each community director is responsible for ensuring the scores of all games played by their teams are entered into the scoring system. The head coach of the winning team is expected to enter the game score into the scoring system immediately following each game, but no later than noon the following day. Not entering scores in a timely manner can result in a forfeit for the winning team.
23. **SEASON ENDING TOURNAMENT:** The season ending tournament brackets will be created by the Southwest League Director and will take place in Eden Prairie. Teams will be ranked by wins / losses, then by point differential (capped at 15 points per game). There may be an A, B, and C bracket for each grade level depending on the number of teams.