



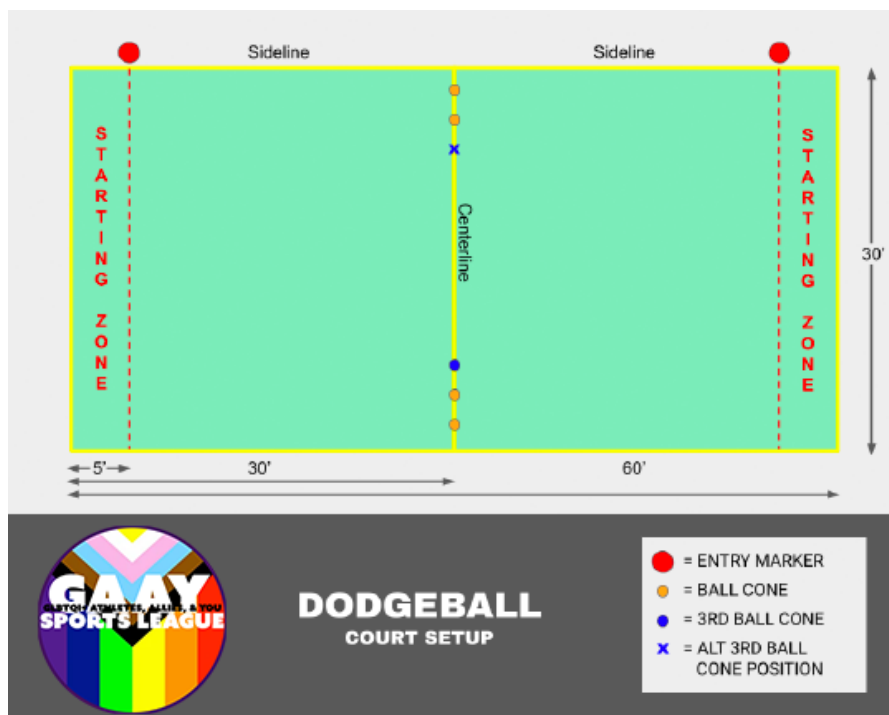
**GAAY SPORTS - DODGEBALL
RULES FOR FALL 2025 SEASON**

Revised September 2025

GAME SETUP

1. COURT

- 1.1 The standard court dimensions are 50 ft. by 25 ft. with a centerline dividing the court into two equal halves of 25 ft. by 25 ft. Courts may vary in size depending on the venue of the court with a maximum size of 60 ft. by 30 ft. being acceptable.
- 1.2 Center, side, and back lines should be marked by tape, rubber markers, or some other indicator.
- 1.3 Centerline – the length of the court will be divided by a centerline.
 - 1.3.1 5 cones will be placed along the centerline. These cones will be the starting location of game balls when a game begins. 3 balls should be placed near the right sideline, 3 feet apart, and 2 cones should be placed near the left sideline, 3 feet apart.
 - 1.3.2 Between each game, the side with a 3rd cone should change to the other side of the court. This is done to accelerate the game and stop teams from switching sides.
- 1.4 Sidelines – the length of the court should have at least a 2-foot sideline on each side of the playing space. Sidelines are occupied by referees and eliminated players only.
 - 1.4.1 Entry markers – a single sideline should have a player entry marker placed 10 feet from the back line. Eliminated players will line up in order along the sideline with the next in line to enter the game (in the event of a catch) standing over the entry marker.
 - 1.4.2 Starting zone – each sideline should have a cone placed 5 feet from the back line. When the game begins, balls from the centerline must enter the starting zone (either run back into the zone or thrown back to a teammate) to be legally thrown.
- 1.5 Backlines – the length of the court will be marked with a back line 25 ft. from the centerline. Cones or other soft markers may be placed along the line to aid players in identifying the line.



2. EQUIPMENT

- 2.1 Five (5) official no-sting 7" dodgeballs should be used in each game.
- 2.2 Players may wear protective equipment providing it does not offer the wearer an unfair performance advantage. Taped fingers, knee pads, sweat bands, etc. ARE permitted.
 - 2.2.1 All player attire is an extension of the player.
- 2.3 Gloves ARE NOT permitted.

PARTICIPANTS

3. REFEREES

- 3.1 Games must be officiated by one head referee/center line judge and two sideline referees. The head referee governs all gameplay and issues all final rulings, including equipment issues. Sideline referees may assist the head referee when asked.
- 3.2 All referee calls are finals! Do not argue with referees. In the **RARE** instance that a call needs to be discussed, time should be paused, all three referees should confer and come to an agreement and the head referee should make the call.
- 3.3 Referees can call players out; however, they should not have to. Players should be honest and call themselves out when they've been hit or their ball has been caught. Players who repeatedly do not call themselves out may be subject to a subsequent game or match suspension.
- 3.4 Referees should group before the game and clarify each person's role. The head referee should watch the centerline and one sideline. Sideline referees should be on the opposite side of the head referee and watch their backline and sideline.
- 3.5 Referees can stop play by blowing their whistle and walking onto the court, at which time all live balls are immediately declared dead until the referees resume play with their whistles.
 - 3.5.1 Time should be paused in the event of a referee time out
 - 3.5.2 In the event of an injury, referees should blow the whistle, pause the clock and check on the player.
- 3.6 Referees should announce how much time remains between each game and when there is one minute remaining.
- 3.7 Referees must keep a record of the final match score in the GAAY Sports Dodgeball scorebook.
- 3.8 Referees may make rulings on any points not specifically covered in the rules (at the time of the occurrence), but the ruling shall not be deemed as a precedent for future rulings.
- 3.9 All teams participating are required to provide one (1) centerline referee AND two (2) sideline referees for games assigned on the schedule. Failure to provide required referees for assigned games will result in forfeiture of your next match.

4. TEAMS, CAPTAINS, & PLAYERS

- 4.1 Each match shall have two (2) participating teams.
- 4.2 Each team will begin a match with at least four (4) and no more than six (6) players on the court at a time.
- 4.3 Each team must utilize at least four (4) of their own rostered (non-substitute) players.
- 4.4 Each team must decide on a captain. Only the captain may dispute calls with the head referee. The captain should identify themselves to the referees before the start of the game.
- 4.5 If a player sits out of one game, they should start the next game. It is expected that all players will be allocated equal playing time per day of play.

5. SUBSTITUTE PLAYERS

- 5.1 A team must have a minimum of four (4) players to start the match or the match to avoid a forfeit. Teams with less than six (6) players may add substitute players in accordance with the following:
 - 5.1.1 Substitute players must sign the waiver form.
 - 5.1.2 Only one substitute may be on another team's roster.
- 5.2 Substitute players are NOT permitted in the playoffs/tournament.
- 5.3 If after week 4, a player has not attended any matches, they will be removed from the league and a substitute may be added to the roster.
- 5.4 If a team does not have four players and no substitutes are available, a player on another team may participate so the opposing team can still play; however, play is considered a scrimmage and the team without enough players automatically loses the match in the standings.

6. REGULATION MATCHES AND GAMES

- 6.1 Matches - A match will be 18 minutes, with as many games being played as possible in that 18-minute time period.
 - 6.1.1 A match can only begin if each team has at least 4 eligible players.
 - 6.1.2 The team with the most game wins during a match, wins the match.
 - 6.1.3 Teams will stay on the same side the entire match. The third cone on the centerline will switch sides every game to alternate the team starting with ball control.
 - 6.1.4 Referees will announce how much time is remaining between each game, and at the 17-minute mark will announce one minute remaining.
 - 6.1.5 When time expires, whichever team has the most people remaining will win that game. If there are an equal number of players, play will continue until one player is eliminated.
- 6.2 Game – games are won by eliminating all players on the opposing team.
- 6.3 Forfeits – Teams must have at least 4 players to participate in a match to avoid a forfeit. In the event of a forfeit, teams are still encouraged to play a friendly scrimmage, but the win goes to the non-forfeiting team regardless of the outcome of the scrimmage.

7. GAME START PROCEDURES

- 7.1 Five (5) balls will be arranged on the centerline. Three (3) balls for one team, two (2) balls for the other.
 - 7.1.1 Each game, the location of the 3rd ball should be moved to the other side of the court, alternating every game.
- 7.2 Initial ball control will be determined at the start of the match by rock, paper, and scissors between the two captains.
- 7.3 The match time, set to 18 minutes, will begin at the whistle of the designated start time. It is both teams' responsibility to be ready to play on time. (There is no leeway on time, each game must start on time to get all games in during our allotted time)
- 7.4 Six (6) players start at the back of each court in their own starting zone.
- 7.5 The game will start on the referee's whistle with players rushing for their own team's designated ball (on their right). Balls must be "cleared" before use by bringing them back into the starting zone.
 - 7.5.1 Players may cross the centerline on the initial rush when obtaining their ball; however, at any other point during the game, crossing the centerline will result in the player being out.
 - 7.5.2 Players may only retrieve one (1) ball from the centerline.
 - 7.5.3 Players may "clear" the ball by either taking the ball back into the starting zone themselves or by throwing the ball back to their own player in the starting zone.

8. LIVE BALLS/DEAD BALLS

- 8.1 Live Ball – a ball is live from the time it leaves a thrower's hands (The ball must be thrown, it may not be kicked or served like a volleyball, or set into motion any other way) to when it hits anything other than another player or a non-held ball. Opponents hit by a live ball are "out".
 - 8.1.1 Blocking – Players may use balls in their possession to block incoming balls. Incoming balls deflected by blocks are still live balls. Players must maintain control of all balls used when blocking. If the player drops the ball used to deflect, then they are out.
- 8.2 Dead Ball – is a ball that is no longer capable of getting opponents out. A ball is dead when it:
 - 8.1.1 touches the floor, wall, ceiling, net, or any other part of the building
 - 8.1.2 touches another ball not being held by a live player (if a ball deflects off another ball in the air, then both balls are considered dead balls)
 - 8.1.3 touches a player who is already out, a non-player, or a referee
 - 8.1.4 is caught

9. OUTS AND CATCHES

- 9.1 A player is out when a live ball (Rule 8.1) hits any part of the player's body or clothing.
 - 9.1.1 If a live ball hits more than one (1) player, all players hit by the ball are out.
 - 9.1.2 A live ball deflected into you is an out
 - 9.1.3 Headshots are inevitably part of the game. If you are hit in the head, you are out.
(However, players who are thought to be headhunting or throw an excessive number of headshots, whether intentional or the result of a lack of control, will be warned by the referee and are subject to game or match suspensions by the league commissioner.)

- 9.2 If a player deflects an incoming ball with a ball they are holding, they must maintain control of the ball(s) that they were holding immediately following the deflection or they are out. The same applies to catches if players are holding balls at the time of a catch.
- 9.3 A player is out when they touch the floor outside of their marked playing area. The exception is a player may cross the centerline during the initial rush.
- 9.3.1 Players may reach into these areas to retrieve balls, but if they touch the ground, they are out.
- 9.4 Catches – The throwing player is out when a defending player catches a live ball. If a player catches a live ball while their team has fewer than six (6) players on the court, they may add a player to the court who is designated to enter from the entry marker.
- 9.4.1 If a ball is thrown, hits a player, and is then caught by another teammate before becoming a dead ball (see dead ball rules), the player who threw the ball is out and the player(s) that the ball hit are all safe.
- 9.4.2 Players who enter a game as a result of a catch must enter in the proper order, beginning with non-starting players and then with players in the order that they were called out. Players entering in the incorrect order will be called out.
- 9.5 Exiting the court – when a player is out, they should raise their hands to designate they are out and leave the court as quickly as possible. Players will line up, after non-starting players, in the order they were called out on the sideline at the entry marker.

10. SHAGGING

- 10.1 Players who are out may collect balls for their team that is fully out of bounds. They must then return these balls to the court immediately.
- 10.2 They may be passed to their own players.
- 10.3 If a ball in active play (i.e. on the court) is interfered with by a player who is out, the ball will be required to be given to the other team and a sportsmanship warning will be given by the referee.
- 10.4 All league participants not playing in a match should help shag balls to help the games progress faster. Balls should be returned to the side of the court they are retrieved from.

11. SHOT CLOCK/POSSESSION OF BALLS

- 11.1 A player may not possession more than (2) two balls at a given time.
- 11.2 Once an individual has possession of a ball, they cannot hold it for more than 10 seconds. During that time, they must throw the ball across the court. If they give the ball to another player, that player inherits the time from that player. EXAMPLE: If I hold a ball for 5 seconds and hand it off to my teammate, they now only have 5 seconds to throw the ball across the court. A ball held by a team for more than ten seconds, must be rolled across the court to the opposing team. Setting the ball on the ground on your own side of the court does not stop or reset the clock. Once you possess it in a hand, shot clock begins.
- 11.3 Any balls in excess of the total possible a team can possess must be rolled toward the center of the court for either side to go for. EXAMPLE. 1 on 1 dodgeball, either side can only possess two balls, so the fifth ball should be rolled toward the center of the court by refs, shaggers, and/or spectators.

12. INJURIES

- 12.1 In case of injury or illness, a time-out may be requested for a participant to be removed from the game and a substitute brought in. In this incident, the player removed must remain out for the duration of that game.

13. CONDUCT

- 13.1 All players are expected to treat all players, referees, and any personnel at the facility we are using with dignity and respect both on and off the court. Any verbal or physical abuse by an individual or team will not be tolerated. Players may be sent home for the day or the season at the discretion of the director of the league.
- 13.2 If, during the course of a match, a player acts with poor sportsmanship, a referee may issue a warning. Warnings result in a player sitting out the remainder of that game and the next full game (not matches). Players who receive multiple warnings may be subject to suspension from the league. Examples of poor sportsmanship that may result in warnings include, but are not limited to:
 - 13.2.1 A player repeatedly not calling themselves out when hit by a ball.
 - 13.2.2 An out player purposely interfering with active play when leaving the court.
 - 13.2.3 A non-active player interfering with balls on the court from the sidelines.
- 13.3 Balls must be thrown with a traditional palm grip. "Pinching" or otherwise gripping the ball in any manner that causes the rubber to stretch or distort will not be tolerated. It results in the balls becoming misshapen and then they do not travel in a straight linear path resulting in people getting hit in the head and face unnecessarily.

SEASON AND TOURNAMENT

14. STRUCTURE AND SEEDING

- 14.1 The dodgeball season is 8 weeks. Teams will play 7 weeks of regular season play and 1 week of a seeded single-elimination tournament.
- 14.2 Teams will be seeded for the tournament based on the W-L-T record for matches throughout the regular season.
- 14.3 In the event of a tie in the W-L record, the teams will be seeded based on the following tiebreakers:
 - 14.3.1 1st – Head-to-head matchup
 - 14.3.2 2nd – Total game wins
 - 14.3.3 3rd – Game differential
 - 14.3.4 4th – Coin flip

15. TOURNAMENT RULES

- 15.1 Teams are NOT permitted to use substitute players in the tournament. All players must have been on the original roster or have been added to the roster by the league commission as a result of a player not showing up for four consecutive weeks.

- 15.2 Matches in the tournament will be a best-of-7 series OR 18 minutes maximum. The first team to win 4 games will win the match and advance in the tournament. Once a team has won four games, the match is over. ***This tournament will be single elimination.***

ABOUT THE RULEBOOK

The rules were created by GAAY Sports with the influence of various elements including OUT Sports League, OutLoud Sports, and Stonewall Sports.