Elite Volleyball Rules

Ball Size & Net Height

- All divisions: Regulation size and weight volleyball.
- Coed & Girls: Net height approximately **7 ft 4 in.** (may vary slightly by game site).
- Boys: Net height approximately **7 ft 11 in.** (may vary slightly by game site).

Players & Eligibility

All age levels will have six players on the court. Teams with fewer than 6 players at the start of the set will result in an automatic forfeit for that set. Players can arrive for set 2, and the set will be recorded as an official set. Players must be within the age limits of the division and be listed on the official roster. Roster and ID checks must be done before each game. Playing time is not guaranteed in the Elite Sports division and is solely at the discretion of the Head Coach.

All players must be registered with National Sports ID (NSID) to be eligible to play. NSID must be completed by Week 1 to be eligible to play. Coaching staff must pass a background check, complete NSID, and have an NYS account to receive a sideline access pass. No sideline pass means no sideline access.

Divisions & Restrictions

Age as of July 1, 2026:

- 11U Division (ages 9–11): Max of 2 boys on the roster; only 1 boy may be on the court at a time.
- Girls 13U Division (ages 11–13)
- Girls 15U Division (ages 13–15)
- Boys 13U Division (ages 11–13)
- Boys 15U Division (ages 13–15)

Jewelry

Players may not wear jewelry during the match. Exception: Earrings that cannot be removed, including newly pierced ears, may be covered with tape or a bandage (no hoop earrings allowed). Religious bracelets may be taped. NYS does not supply tape or bandages.

Game Day Procedures

- Mandatory pre-match meeting before each match.
- Line judges: Each team must provide one line judge (must be 18 or older). Home team provides a line judge; away team provides a line judge.

- Scorekeepers: Home team must provide a scorekeeper (must be 18 or older). Both teams may provide a scorekeeper. Scorekeepers report scores to the site director; no phones or food at the score table, and must remain attentive.
- Coin toss: Home team calls the toss. Winner chooses serve, receive, or side.
- Roster checks: All teams must complete a roster check 15 minutes before the match. All players must be present; coaches and parents may not check in for players. Players not on the official roster may not participate after Week 2. NSID eligibility is required by Week 1.

Warmup & Regular Season Matches

Warmup: 4 minutes. Teams warm up simultaneously on opposite sides of the court and must be ready to play at the end of the 4-minute warmup.

Regular season matches are limited to 50 minutes. Teams play 3 sets within the 50-minute time frame. Each of the first two sets consists of 25 points (NO win by two). If a team wins the first 2 sets, the match is over; a 3rd set is optional if time permits. If each team wins one of the first two sets, a third set is played to 15 points (not win by 2) or the 50-minute limit, whichever comes first. Whoever wins the best two out of three sets wins the match. Each team is allowed two 30-second timeouts per set for the first two sets. No timeouts in the 3rd deciding set.

Playoffs – Tournament Play

Playoff participation is not included with registration. Playoffs are included for qualifying teams. Playoff participation is not guaranteed and may be determined by standings, division size, facility availability, and the playoff format established for that season.

The season tournament will be single elimination. Teams play best 2 out of 3 sets. Each of the first two sets is to 25 points, winning by two if tied at 24, with no maximum point. If a third set is played, it is to 15 points (win by 2), or first to 20 points maximum. Each team is allowed two 30-second timeouts per set. Teams must have 6 players to compete in playoffs or it is a forfeit (no exceptions).

- Players must have been added to the roster before the Week 3 game to participate in the tournament.
- Standings tiebreakers: Match results/standings; head-to-head matches; set differential; coin flip.

Substitutions & Rotations

- Lineup cards: Coaches using substitutions must submit a written lineup card to the official before each set. Coaches and assistants track opposing substitutions.
- Any team not following proper rotation will result in an automatic side out for the opposing team. Coaches must make officials aware of illegal rotation during the match.
- Lineup cards are available at game sites and remain with the official. Coaches may request to copy down opposing lineups.
- For 11U–15U, coaches may rotate players into center back or request substitutions. Coaches must inform the official at the start of the match if using substitutions and must use them throughout the set.
- Coaches may change the substitution lineup for each set. Substitutions may occur before the serve; coaches must signal the official, and the player must wait to be recognized before entering.
- Each player may substitute for only one specific player (Player A for Player B and vice versa). Substitutions must be made quickly.

Libero

13U and 15U teams ONLY may use a libero for games. One libero per team is allowed. A libero is a back-row specialist, may serve once, and may enter for any back-row player. No libero is allowed in 11U.

Coaching Staff & Team Rosters

- All coaches must stay in the coaching/bench area. Up to 3 coaches are allowed in the coaching area; only one may stand at a time. Coaches may not stand on opposite sides of the court. Coaches stay behind the 10-foot line.
- Coaches with multiple teams in one division must maintain distinct rosters and may not share players. No non-rostered substitutes are permitted.
- Players registered and paid in two different age divisions may play in both at their own risk. NYS does not accommodate schedule conflicts involving games, playoffs, or championships.
- Teams may have a maximum of 2 dual-rostered players per season.

Automatic Side Outs & Serving Limits

- All divisions: Server continues serving until their serve is broken. Underhand or overhand serves are permitted at all levels.
- 11U: Players may serve up to five feet in front of the end line.
- 13U: Players may serve two feet in front of the end line.
- 15U: Players must serve from behind the end line and may not touch or cross the line during service.
- Players must serve within 5 seconds to keep the pace of play.

Scoring, Attacking & Violations

Rally scoring will be used for all ages. Any team can score a point when it wins the rally or the opposing team commits a fault. If the receiving team wins the rally, it scores a point and gains the right to serve. During rally play, it is illegal for the same player to play the ball in two consecutive contacts (double-hit), or to carry the ball over the net.

Attacking, spiking, and blocking are allowed in all age levels; however, it is illegal to attack or block a serve. Blocking does not count as the team's first contact.

- Net fouls are called at all ages. Two-hand open/palm hits (underhand or overhand) or throwing hits are illegal; one-hand contacts are legal if the ball does not come to rest.
- 11U: Illegal hits will be called more liberally.
- 13U & 15U: Illegal hits will be called with underhand pass (hands together) and overhand sets (brief contacts with finger pads).

Forfeits & Injuries

There will be forfeits! If a team does not show up on time or with 6 players, they will forfeit the game. Teams may play with fewer players as a scrimmage (not allowed in playoffs or championships), but the official game will be forfeited by the team with fewer than 6 players.

If a player is injured during the game and a team drops to fewer than 6 players, the game will continue. When it is the injured player's turn to serve, the team with fewer than 6 players receives a side out and a point is awarded to the opposing team. The game restarts with the team with 6 players serving. Officials may stop play for 30 seconds for an injury; the player may return or be substituted. A timeout may be used if more time is needed.

Unsportsmanlike Conduct & Obstructions

- No disconcerting acts or words when an opponent is about to play the ball. Yelling or chanting during a serve is not allowed.
- No disrespectfully addressing a referee or site staff, questioning or trying to influence a decision, or showing disgust with decisions.
- No profane or insulting language or gestures or taunting anyone involved in the contest. Referees use a yellow card as a warning and a red card for ejection.
- Any ball touching an obstruction on the opponent's side (basketball hoop, poles, antennae, ceiling, etc.) is out of bounds. A ball touching the ceiling on the playing team's side is playable. A ball touching the net and crossing to the opponent's side is permitted.

Behavior, Sportsmanship & Sidelines

All players and coaches are required to shake hands before and after the game. Coaches, parents, observers, and players may not stand, congregate, or walk behind the end lines while another game is being played, including during rally play. All must follow the NYS code of conduct. A violation may result in a warning/yellow card; a second violation may result in a red card, removal from the facility, and possible suspension. Officials must be treated respectfully.

Any issues with rules, officials, or teams must be brought to the attention of the site director or league administrator. Coaches may use a timeout to discuss issues with NYS staff. Officials communicate with coaches only. Bench players must remain off the court and seated when chairs are available. Coaches are responsible for their sidelines.

Spectators must remain in designated areas. No drugs, tobacco, or alcohol at NYS facilities. Artificial noisemakers (including air horns, cowbells, drums, and megaphones) are not allowed. Electronic devices used to communicate between players and coaches are not allowed. Inappropriate, rude, or confrontational behavior may lead to disqualification or suspension at the discretion of NYS league officials.

Uniforms

Elite Volleyball uniforms are not provided by NYS. Custom uniforms must have numbers on the front and back. Exception: Teams choosing to use NYS uniforms or grandfathered NYS teams with uniforms from before Fall 2017 should contact the Director for more information.

- Jerseys must be identical for all regular players (non-libero). Uniform numbers must be permanent Arabic numerals; 1–99 are legal, while 0 and 00–09 are not.
- Minimum number height: Front 4 inches; back 6 inches. Recommended: Front 6 inches; back 8 inches. Number strokes must be solid and at least 3/4 inch wide, clearly contrasting with the jersey.
- Numbers must be visible and centered on front and back; upper-half placement is recommended. Numbers may not extend below the waist or be tucked into bottoms.
- The libero must wear a jersey with a clearly contrasting dominant color.
- Crocs are prohibited for players.
- Avoid insufficient color contrast, such as black/navy, red/maroon, black/dark green, white/light yellow, and navy/maroon. A grayscale photograph may help assess contrast. When colors are borderline, have an alternate clearly contrasting jersey available.

RULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE