



BASKETBALL

Basketball is a team sport in which two teams of five active players each try to score points against one another by propelling a ball through a 3 m high hoop under organized rules.

Points are scored by shooting the ball through the basket above; the team with more points at the end of the game wins. The ball can be advanced on the court by bouncing it (*dribbling*) or passing it between teammates.

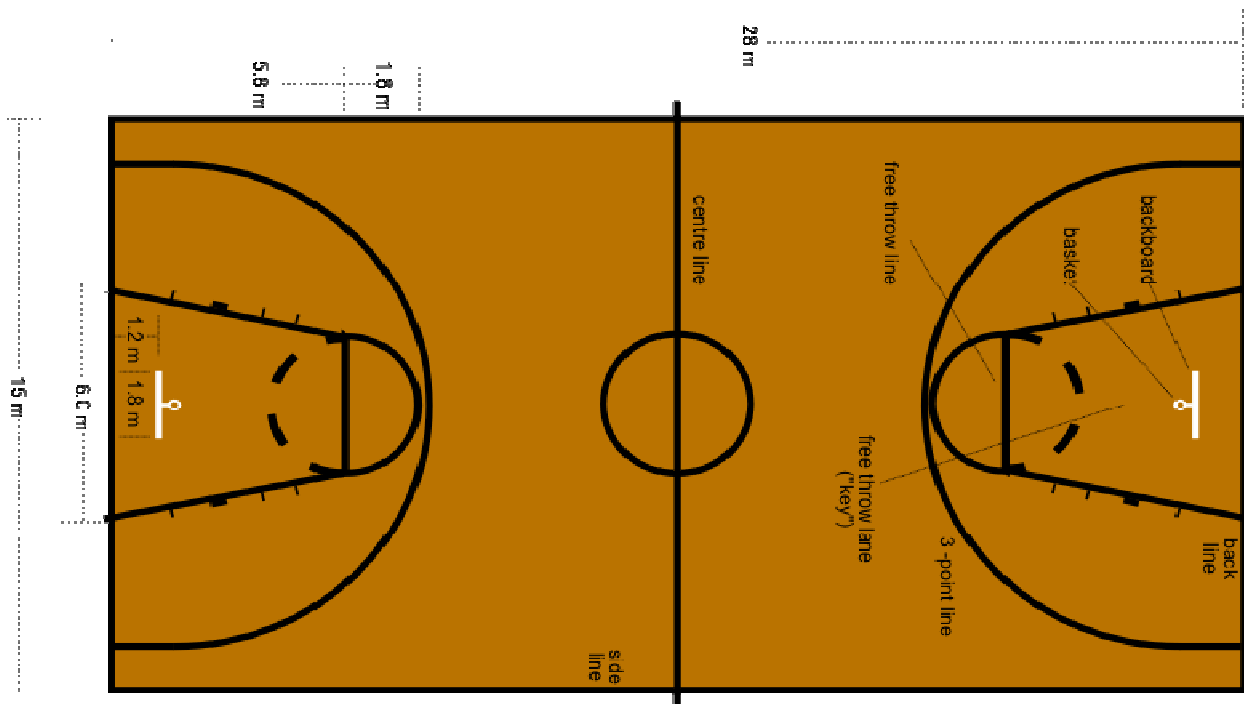
1. Rules and regulations

Playing regulations:

- Games are played in four quarters of 10 minutes.
- 15 minutes are allowed for a half-time break, and 2 minutes are allowed at the other breaks.
- Teams exchange baskets for the second half (third quarter).
- The time allowed is actual playing time; the clock is stopped while the play is not active. Therefore, games generally take much longer to complete than the allotted game time, typically about two hours.
- 5 players from each team may be on the court at one time.
- Substitutions are unlimited but can only be done when play is stopped.
- 1 time-out is allowed in each quarter and 2 in the fourth (clock stoppages requested by a coach for a short meeting with the players).

Equipment

The only essential equipment in basketball is the basketball and the court: a flat, rectangular surface with baskets at opposite ends.



A regulation basketball court is 28 by 15 meters:

- Center line, sides lines and back lines.
- Free throw line (4,5 m) and 3-point line (6,25 m).
- Free throw lane: "Key"

A steel basket with net and backboard hang over each end of the court. The top of the rim is 3.05 m above the court and 1.2 m inside the backline.

Violations

The ball must stay within the court; the last team to touch the ball before it travels out of bounds forfeits possession.

A violation of these rules results in loss of possession:

- The ball-handler may not move both feet without dribbling: **traveling**.
- The ball-handler may not dribble with both hands or catch the ball in between dribbles: **double dribbling**.
- A player's hand cannot be under the ball while dribbling: **carrying the ball**.
- The ball may not be kicked nor struck with the fist.
- A team, once having established ball control in the front half of the court, may not return the ball to the backcourt and have to pass the ball to the front half in no more than **8 seconds**.
- There are **24 seconds** for a team to attempt a shot.
- A player can't hold the ball more than **5 seconds**.
- The offense can't remain in the "Key" for no more than **3 seconds**.

Fouls

An attempt to unfairly disadvantage an opponent through physical contact is illegal and is called a foul.

Players who are fouled either receive the ball to pass inbounds again, or receive two or three free throws if they are fouled in the act of shooting (three is they were shooting back the 3-point line). One point is awarded for making a free throw.

If a team exceeds a certain limit of team fouls in a given period (4 in a quarter or 10 in a half), the opposing team is awarded two free throws on all subsequent fouls for that period.

2. Common techniques and practices

Shooting: Shooting is the act of attempting to score points by throwing the ball through the basket.

The player should be positioned facing the basket with feet about shoulder-width apart, knees slightly bent, and back straight. The player holds the ball to rest in the dominant hand's fingertips (the shooting arm) slightly above the head, with the other hand on the side of the ball. To aim the ball, the player's elbow should be aligned vertically, with the forearm facing in the direction of the basket. The ball is shot by bending and extending the knees and extending the shooting arm to become straight; the ball rolls off the finger tips while the wrist completes a full downward flex motion. Generally, the non-shooting arm is used only to guide the shot, not to power it.

Common shots:

- The **set shot** is taken from a standing position, with neither foot leaving the floor, typically used for free throws.
- The **jump shot** is taken while in mid-air, near the top of the jump. This provides much greater power and range, and it also allows the player to elevate over the defender.
- The **layup** requires the player to be in motion toward the basket, and to "lay" the ball "up" and into the basket, typically off the backboard.

- The **slam dunk** in which the player jumps very high, and throws the ball downward, straight through the hoop.

Rebounding

The objective of rebounding is to successfully gain possession of the basketball after a missed field goal or free throw, as it rebounds from the hoop or backboard. This plays a major role in the game, as most possessions end when a team misses a shot.

There are two categories of rebounds: offensive rebounds, in which the ball is recovered by the offensive side and does not change possession, and defensive rebounds, in which the defending team gains possession of the loose ball. The majority of rebounds are defensive, as the team on defense tends to be in better position to recover missed shots.

Passing

A pass is a method of moving the ball between players. Most passes are accompanied by a step forward to increase power and are followed through with the hands to ensure accuracy. The crucial aspect of any good pass is being impossible to intercept.

- **Chest pass:** The ball is passed directly from the passer's chest to the receiver's chest. A proper chest pass involves an outward snap of the thumbs to add velocity and leaves the defence little time to react.

- **Bounce pass:** The passer bounces the ball crisply about two-thirds of the way from his own chest to the receiver. The ball strikes the court and bounces up toward the receiver. The bounce pass takes longer to complete than the chest pass, but it is also harder for the opposing team to

intercept. Thus, players often use the bounce pass in crowded moments, or to pass around a defender.

- **Overhead pass:** is used to pass the ball over a defender. The ball is released while over the passer's head.

- **Outlet pass:** occurs after a team gets a defensive rebound. The next pass after the rebound is the *outlet pass*.

- **Behind-the-back pass:** involves throwing the ball behind the passer's back to a teammate.

Dribbling

Dribbling is the act of bouncing the ball continuously, and is a requirement for a player to take steps with the ball. To dribble, a player pushes the ball down towards the ground rather than patting it; this ensures greater control.

When dribbling past an opponent, the dribbler should dribble with the hand farthest from the opponent, making it more difficult for the defensive player to get to the ball. It is therefore important for a player to be able to dribble competently with both hands and without watching the ball.

Good dribblers (or "ball handlers") tend to bounce the ball low to the ground, reducing the travel from the floor to the hand, making it more difficult for the defender to "steal" the ball. Additionally, good ball handlers frequently dribble behind their backs, between their legs, and

change hands and directions of the dribble frequently, making a less predictable dribbling pattern that is more difficult to defend.

Blocking

A block is performed when, after a shot is attempted, a defender attempts to alter the shot by touching the ball. In almost all variants of play, it is illegal to touch the ball after it is in the downward part of its arc. It is also illegal to block a shot after it has touched the backboard, or when any part of the ball is directly above the rim.

To block a shot, a player has to be able to reach a point higher than where the shot is released. Thus, height can be an advantage in blocking.