



# OCPR ADULT DODGEBALL LEAGUE OFFICIAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

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Please view the court diagram at the end of this document for a visual representation of many rules and boundaries. All rules are subject to change at the discretion of OCPR staff for any reason or no reason. If this occurs during a season, team captains will be notified of the change.

## Section 1: Teams

- A. Team rosters must be made of 6-12 players.
  - a. There must be at least 3 female players on a team's roster.
- B. All players must be 18 years of age or older to participate.
  - a. All players must provide their date of birth on the registration form. Players whose age is in question may be asked to provide identification.
- C. Following the start of the second match of the season, teams may no longer make roster adjustments.
  - a. Prior to this point, players can be added or removed from a team's roster, as long as they have not participated with another team in the league.
  - b. Players cannot switch teams.
- D. A maximum of 6 players from each team will be allowed on the court for each game.
  - a. Teams must have a minimum of 4 players to start a game, if they cannot meet this requirement, the game will be forfeited.
    - i. Teams will forfeit one game every 2 minutes until they meet this requirement.
      - 1. If a team has not met the 4 player minimum requirement after 10 minutes, the match will be forfeited, and all games will be a loss.
  - b. At least 2 female players must play each game if a team intends to play with 6 players.
    - i. If a team has only 4 or 5 players for a particular game, only 1 female player is required.
      - 1. This also means that a team who only has one female player present must play with no more than 5 players.
      - 2. If a team has no female players, they will forfeit one game every 2 minutes until they meet this requirement.
        - a. If a team has not met the 1 female player requirement after 10 minutes, the match and all of its games will be forfeited.
    - c. Players who arrive late cannot enter play in a currently active game, but may enter play in the following game.
- E. Captains are responsible for making sure their team members are present and ready to play at the scheduled start times.

- a. OCPR will provide schedules to team captains and will make the schedule available on our website, but will not contact each player individually.
- F. Substitutions can only be made between games. They may not be made during a game.
  - a. Only players on a team's roster may come in, no last minute substitutions will be allowed.

### Section 2: Uniforms

- A. Teams must wear matching colors.
  - a. Uniforms are encouraged, but not required.
  - b. Anything that may be deemed vulgar, offensive, or inappropriate will not be permitted on team uniforms.
  - c. Please be aware that any and all clothing worn during a game counts as part of the uniform. This means that a ball striking any part of a players clothing will get them out.
- B. **Hats (including headbands, baseball caps, masks, skullcaps, helmets, etc.) are permitted.**
  - a. Be aware that all parts of the hat count as part of the uniform, and a ball striking any part of the hat will eliminate the struck player. This includes the brim of a players baseball cap.
- C. Players must wear non-marking shoes.
- D. Gloves of any kind are prohibited.

### Section 3: Play Format

- A. Each team will play one match each week during the regular season.
  - a. This may be altered to accommodate an odd number of registered teams. For example, double headers or bye-weeks may be added to the schedule as necessary.
  - b. The length of the season will depend on the number of registered teams. It will generally be one less week than the total number of teams, since we will play a round-robin format. For example, an 8 team league will play a 7 week regular season. Again, this is subject to change as necessary.
  - c. Following the regular season, there will be at least one playoff week. Additional playoff weeks may be scheduled if many teams are registered.
- B. A match consists of 9 games, which take place within a **30 minute** time limit.
  - a. If the time limit ends and fewer than 9 games have been played, the match will end when the last game that began within the time limit ends.
  - b. All games are played regardless of results. While the match is decided by the game results, all 9 games will be played even if one team wins the first 5.
    - i. Standings will be determined by match record, with game record used as a tie-breaker.
- C. Teams will have the option of a **one minute** break between games if time allows. If both teams agree to forego this break, the next game can begin immediately.
  - a. **This break can only come into play once per match by each team, and it must take place between played games. This rule cannot be used to "stall" the beginning of the first played game to avoid a game forfeit or to allow late members to arrive.**
- D. All matches will be supervised by a court official. The court official will settle disputes and has the final decision on situations in which teams cannot agree.

- a. Only team captains may approach the official for questions, and this can only take place between games.
  - b. The court official cannot witness every angle of every play at all times; all players are expected to hold themselves accountable to the rules on the honor system.
    - i. Players who fail to meet this expectation may receive a technical foul or ejection.
- E. Matches will begin with one ball placed in the center of the court; this ball is neutral and may be retrieved by any player. Two additional balls will be placed along lines in each team's territory according to that team's wishes. These balls can be retrieved only by the team in whose territory they lie. The court official will whistle to start the match.

#### Section 4: Boundaries:

- A. The play area is roughly 60' x 30'.
- B. A center line runs through the middle of the court, and is marked by black cones at the edge of the play area and a dark line between them. This line may not be touched or crossed. The "plane" of this line may be broken, as long as no contact is made with the line or the other side. For example, a throwing player's throwing arm may extend over the line, but this player's foot may not touch the line or land on the other side.
  - a. The center line extends beyond the play area into the out-of-bounds area.
- C. Side boundaries are marked by orange cones and run along the play area. Players should not cross this boundary unless leaving play because they are eliminated or returning to play after a catch.
  - a. Players who attempt to dodge, catch, or retrieve a ball and cross this boundary will be called out.
  - b. Players may reach across the side boundary to grab a ball that is within arm's reach as long as no contact is made with the other side.
- D. The back line is marked by purple cones at the corners of the play area. To retrieve a ball which has left the play area, players must exit via this line and return via this line.
  - a. Players who are out or currently not participating in the game should avoid making contact with any balls that are rolling outside of the play area.
    - i. They should make no effort to return a ball to their teammates. **If an inactive player throws, kicks, or otherwise returns a ball to an active teammate, the active catching player or nearest active player on the team will be eliminated.**
  - b. This means that players must go all the way around the purple cones, players who attempt to cut this corner and cross a side boundary will be called out.
  - c. Players should stay forward of this back line during play. Players who move backward beyond this line while not retrieving a ball will be reminded to stay forward.
    - i. Players who remain beyond the back line after being warned may be called out.
    - ii. Players who are beyond the back line, but within the extended lines of the side boundaries are eligible targets and may be hit, even when retrieving a ball. Please view the court diagram for a visual representation.

- iii. Players who left the play area via the back line and are outside of the side boundaries are not eligible targets, but must return to the play area quickly after retrieving a ball. They may not remain out of bounds.

### Section 5: General Play

- A. If a player is hit by the ball and the ball then falls to the ground, they are out.
  - a. A ball which strikes clothing counts as a hit.
  - b. Balls which ricochet and hit more than one player only eliminate the first player that was contacted.
  - c. To avoid ambiguity, balls which appear to hit a player and the ground at the same time will still lead to elimination.
  - d. **Headshots are often ambiguous. Our league plays with coated foam balls, and it is difficult (if not impossible) to achieve the level of accuracy necessary to intentionally aim for a player's head. Additionally, players will often duck or use their arms to defend their head, this leads to a situation where the head is usually struck in conjunction with another part of the body or the head is only struck as a result of the change in body position.**
    - i. **To avoid ambiguity, a player struck in the head by an unintentional headshot will be eliminated.**
    - ii. **A player struck by a headshot judged to be intentional is not eliminated, and the throwing player will receive a technical foul.**
    - iii. **Repeated seemingly unintentional headshots may be grounds for a technical foul at the discretion of the court official.**
    - iv. **This rule is not an invitation to hit other players in the head. Players should in all situations avoid throwing at another player's head. A flagrant or intentional headshot will still lead to elimination of the thrower. If headshots become commonplace, this rule will be changed.**
- B. If a player catches a thrown ball, the throwing player is out and a player from the catching team may return to play.
  - a. A ball which hits the backboard, back wall, another ball, or the basketball hoop is dead, and catching it will not eliminate the throwing player.
    - i. Balls which hit a player, then ricochet off of the backboard, back wall, another ball, or the basketball hoop may then be caught by the struck player to avoid elimination.
      - 1. In this event, the throwing player is not out and no player from the catching team returns to play. In effect, the play is nullified.
  - b. A ball which hits a player, then ricochets and is caught by a teammate counts as a catch. The throwing player is eliminated, the struck player is not, and a teammate from the Out Bench may return to play.
- C. Players may block a thrown ball using a held ball, but the block must be "clean."
  - a. This means the blocked ball must not come in contact with the blocking player, and the blocking player must maintain control of the ball being used to block.
    - i. If the thrown ball ricochets off of the blocking ball and contacts the blocking player, they are out.
      - 1. **Minor contact with fingers holding the blocking ball are an exception, this will not eliminate the blocking player.**

- ii. If the blocking player drops the blocking ball as a result of contact with the incoming ball, they are out.
    - 1. A player may drop a ball in advance of an oncoming ball in order to go for a catch. **In the event this is ambiguous, the ruling will be in favor of an “unclean” block and the player will be eliminated.**
  - iii. If a blocked ball makes contact with another player, that player is not out.
  - iv. If a blocked ball is caught by another player, the throwing player is not out; it is considered the same as if the ball rebounded off of the wall, backboard, or hoop.
- D. If a player touches or crosses the center line, they are out.
- a. If they crossed or touched the line while throwing and hit a player, then the player who was hit is not out.
- E. If a player leaves by any boundary other than the back line when retrieving a ball, they will be called out.
- a. Players who are out are encouraged to leave the play area as quickly as possible, and may cross the side boundary.
  - b. Players coming back in from the Out Bench may return to play by crossing the side boundary or entering via the back line. They should be aware that they will be an easier target if reentering through the side boundary.
- F. Players have five seconds to throw a ball after it is in their possession.
- a. Possession is defined as having authority over the ball, and does not necessarily mean ball-in-hand.
    - i. If play slows due to held balls, the official will warn the teams. If those in possession of balls do not throw them quickly, they may be called out.
- G. Players who have been eliminated must line up in the “Out Bench.” They must line up in the order they were eliminated, and reenter the game in that order. For example, the first person eliminated must be the first to return to play.
- a. Players must be in the Out Bench in order to return to play. If they are eliminated, then their teammate catches a ball before they made it to the Out Bench, they are still out. For this reason, it makes sense to hurry out of the play area.
- H. If play must be stopped for any reason, the players who had possession of the ball must retain possession.
- I. Be honest when you are hit and go out. All players are expected to go out without being told to go out by the court official. Players who repeatedly need to be told to go out may receive a technical foul or ejection. Don’t be the person who ruins the fun by trying to cheat or fudge the rules.

#### Section 6: Technical Fouls or Ejections

- A. A technical foul removes the player from the game and makes them ineligible to return during the current game.
- B. An ejection removes the player from the current match; they are ineligible to return for any games during that match. They are also ineligible to participate in the following week’s match.

- C. If a player on a team receives a technical foul or ejection, they must play one player down for the remainder of the game or match. They may not substitute in another player to account for the missing player.
- D. If an action warranting ejection is considered extreme by the court official, the offending player may be removed from the league.
- E. If more than one player is deemed at fault for an action warranting a technical foul or ejection, the entire team may forfeit the game or match.
- F. A technical foul issued between games counts toward the next game. The same is true for matches.
- G. Conduct which may warrant a technical foul or ejection is any action which is deemed unsportsmanlike by the court official. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - a. Protesting the official's decision.
  - b. Arguing with the official or the opposing team.
  - c. Any intentional physical contact with the opposing team.
  - d. Intentional headshots or targeting players who are out.
  - e. Excessive foul language, gestures, or anything deemed unsportsmanlike or vulgar.
- H. **This is not the NFL, we do not have instant replay and we do not have several angles from which to observe play. The spirit of this league is recreational, so please keep that in mind.** Even if you feel the court official has made a mistake, do not complain to the court official about calls and do not ask for a rule clarification during a game. This is considered unsportsmanlike conduct and will result in a technical foul or ejection. Team captains are the only players who may approach the court official between games. Protests of judgment calls will not be entertained, so please keep them to yourself. Excessive protests will lead to a technical foul or ejection.

#### Section 7: Miscellaneous

- A. Alcoholic beverages are prohibited. Players who are found to be consuming alcoholic beverages on the premises before, during, or after a match will be ejected from the league. If the issue is not resolved immediately, police will be notified, and additional charges may be filed.
- B. Game balls will be foam balls with a rubber skin coating. Please do not squeeze the ball to alter the size/shape. Please do not kick the ball before, after, or during a match. This damages the ball and can make them unusable.
- C. OCPR will not schedule, plan, organize, provide equipment for, or otherwise assist in setting up practices. Any team that is interested in holding practices should organize these on their own.
- D. Contact between OCPR and the teams will be handled through team captains.
  - a. Regular league update emails will be sent to team captains. This will be the primary method of contact, so team captains should provide an email address that they check frequently.
    - i. Team captains are then responsible for getting the information to their team members.
  - b. Players who are not captains can find information about the league (including standings and schedule) on the Adult Programs page of the OCPR website: [www.orangecountyva.gov/parksandrecreation](http://www.orangecountyva.gov/parksandrecreation).

Section 8: Unusual Rulings/Precedents

- A. If a ball strikes a ball held by a player, who then drops the held ball and catches the thrown ball, the player who is catching the thrown ball is out. This plays like an “unclean” block, because the player is out as soon as they lose control of the “blocking” ball. That being the case, they are already out by the time they catch the thrown ball, even if these events seem to happen simultaneously. See *Rule 5.C.a.ii*.
- a. If the player maintains control of the blocking ball and catches the thrown ball after it ricochets, there is no catch, since the ball is dead for catch purposes after it strikes the blocking ball. See *Rule 5.B.a*.
    - i. If a player catches a ball while holding another ball, the catch is good as long as the incoming ball did not contact the held ball.

