



HYLAND HILLS RECREATIONAL YOUTH BASKETBALL RULES (UPDATED JANUARY 2026)

Created with consideration of USA Basketball Youth Rules and Suggestions

As a coach in this recreational basketball league, please remember that our primary goal is to provide a fun, safe, and positive environment for every player. This is not a competitive or elite-level league. Your focus should be on helping players develop their skills, learn the fundamentals of the game, and grow their love for basketball.

We ask that you emphasize good sportsmanship, teamwork, and respect for all players, coaches, officials, and parents. Every child will receive equal playing time and the opportunity to participate, improve, and enjoy the experience. Winning is secondary to making sure each player feels valued and supported.

Thank you for your commitment to creating a positive atmosphere where kids can have fun, build confidence, and enjoy the game of basketball.

Coaches and players will treat the referees with respect. Any coach or player that displays inappropriate behavior towards an official or staff member will face disciplinary action by the league which could include suspension and possible expulsion from the league depending on the circumstances.

Practice Guidelines

Overscheduling events, overuse injuries, and burnout have become too common in youth basketball. To help address these issues, we referenced materials from USA Youth Basketball, developed in collaboration with the Health and Wellness and Playing Standards working groups, to establish age-based guidelines for games and practices.

Player Group	Practices/Week	Maximum Practice Length
Ages 6-7	1	60 Minutes
Ages 8-9	2	60 Minutes
Ages 10-11	2	90 Minutes
Ages 12-13	2	90 Minutes

Game/Competition Guidelines

Team standings will not be made public until the tournament bracket is posted at the end of the season. This is to avoid conflict and to encourage coaches to keep in mind our main goals fostering teamwork, development, and a positive experience for all players.

Player Group	Maximum Games/Day
Ages 6-7	1
Ages 8-9	2
Ages 10-11	2
Ages 12-13	2

Equipment, Distances and Rim Specifications

Player Group	Ball Size	Rim Height	Free-Throw Line
Ages 6-7	Size 5 (27.5")	8'	14'
Ages 8-9	Size 6 (28.5')	10'	14'
Ages 10-11	Size 6 (28.5)	10'	14'
Ages 12-13 (Girls & COED)	Size 6 (28.5")	10'	15'
Ages 12-13 (Boys)	Size 7 (29.5')	10'	15'

- Ages 6-9 should take free throws from 14 feet to help develop proper form and increase success.
- Using a lower basket for aged 6-7 allows the youngest group to develop proper shooting form and increase success.
- Using appropriately sized basketballs per age group is advised to accommodate the size of children's hands and allows better control.

League Structure

All participants are to receive equal playing time.

- Each team will consist of 10 players, provided that sufficient registrations are received. A roster containing more or fewer than 10 players may be approved at the discretion of the league coordinators based on program needs and player availability.
- Each team is permitted to have a maximum of two coaches: one Head Coach and one Assistant Coach. No additional coaches, including co-coaches or specialty coaches, are permitted at practices or on benches during competition.

Player Group	Game Length (Running Clock)	Between periods	Overtime	Shooting fouls
Ages 6-7	Four 6-minute periods	60 seconds	2 minutes	Clock <i>will</i> stop when shooting fouls
Ages 8-9	Four 8-minute periods	60 seconds	2 minutes	Clock <i>will</i> stop when shooting fouls
Ages 10-11	Four 10-minute periods	60 seconds	2 minutes	Clock <i>will not</i> stop when shooting fouls
Ages 12-13	Four 10-minute periods	60 seconds	4 minutes	Clock <i>will not</i> stop when shooting fouls

- All age groups will start game possession with a jump ball.
- Free Throw: 1 point, All field Goals: 2 Points, Outside the 3-Point Arc: 3 Points
- The game clock will stop during the last two minutes of the 4th quarter if there is a difference of ten points or less.
- Only the head coach may stand and interact with the officials.

Player Group	Set Defense	Pressing Defense	Crowding/Double Team	Stealing from Dribbler
Ages 6-7	Player to player only	Pressing is <i>not</i> allowed	Crowding is <i>not</i> allowed	Stealing is <i>not</i> allowed
Ages 8-9	Player to player only	Pressing is <i>not</i> allowed	Crowding is <i>not</i> allowed	Stealing is allowed on the pass only, not on the dribble
Ages 10-11	Player to player only	Pressing allowed during final 2 minutes within 15-point differential	Crowding is allowed	Stealing is allowed

Ages 12-13	Set defense allowed	Pressing allowed within 15-point differential	Crowding is allowed	Stealing is allowed
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- The player-to-player requirement for ages 6-11 encourages physical activity and movement and promotes the development of individual skill related to guarding a player both on and off the ball.
- Pressing defense is not allowed for ages 6-9 to help children develop principles of movement with and without the ball in a half-court setting. For ages 10-13 pressing is permitted to allow players to become accustomed to full-court defense while not having to understand sophisticated zone presses.
- If the score difference is 15 points or more, the winning team IS NOT allowed to press. The team trailing may still press. Violation of this rule will result in:
 - The referee will blow the ball dead and issue a warning to the violating team.
 - A technical foul will be issued to the violating team.
 - If the score differential becomes less than 15 points, then the team ahead may press again.
- Crowding the ball with multiple players is not allowed for ages 6-9 due to skill and size discrepancies among children at these ages. Crowding is allowed for ages 10-13 and older to remain consistent with pressing defense standards.

Personal Fouls

A personal foul is illegal physical contact committed by a player against an opponent while the ball is live or dead.

Personal fouls include, but are not limited to, the following actions:

- Blocking: Illegal contact that impedes the progress of an opponent.
- Charging: Illegal contact by an offensive player who pushes or runs into a defender who has established a legal guarding position.
- Hacking/Slapping: Striking an opponent's arm or hand while attempting to steal the ball.
- Holding: Grabbing or restricting an opponent's movement.
- Pushing: Forcing an opponent backward or sideways with hands or body.
- Illegal Screening: Setting a screen while moving or making excessive contact with a defender.
- Free Throws are awarded when a player is fouled while shooting or when the defending team has reached the team foul limit, as defined by league rules.

A player who commits five (5) personal fouls in a game is disqualified and must be removed from the game. Disqualified players may remain on the team bench and continue to support their team.

Bonus Situation

- The bonus situation (one and one) will occur on the seventh team foul. Two shots will occur on the tenth team foul.

Technical Fouls

- The opposing team will shoot two free throws and receive the ball at mid-court. Clock does not stop for technical foul administration.
- In the event a technical foul is assessed to a spectator; no free throws shall be attempted. Instead, the opposing team shall be awarded four (4) points added directly to their score and possession of the ball at the designated spot for resumption of play. Any spectator who commits a repeat offense within the same game shall be removed from the facility by league coordinators or security at the direction of game officials and league representatives.
 - If a technical foul is given to a spectator, the individual will receive an official warning card from the on-site Sports Supervisors. This warning serves as formal notice that the behavior is unacceptable.

Overtime

- 1st overtime session: 2-minute stop clock. Each team will receive one time-out. Regulation time-outs DO NOT carry over into overtime.
- One 60-second timeout permitted in overtime.
- In the result of a second overtime, teams will play a sudden death overtime with the first team to score 2 points being declared the winner.

Timeouts

- Two 60-second timeouts are permitted in each half.
- One 60-second timeout permitted in overtime.
- Timeouts do not carry over into the next half or overtime.

Players may only play in one age division on one team. Any team found playing a player on two different teams will forfeit all games and not be eligible for tournament play.

Coaches may only coach one team in one age division. Coaching an additional team in a different age division is allowed.

Mercy Rule

- Ages 10-13: If at any point in the second half the score differential exceeds more than 35 points, the game will be ended by the officials.
- Ages 6-9: If at any point in the second half the score differential exceeds more than 20 points, the game will be ended by the officials.
- If both teams agree to continue play after the mercy rule threshold has been reached, they may do so for instructional and recreational purposes. In such cases, the game clock may continue, but the score shall no longer be displayed or tracked on the scoreboard. The official score posted online shall be the score at the time the mercy rule was triggered.

Game Intensity and Sportsmanship Control

If a game becomes excessively intense due to unsportsmanlike conduct by players, team personnel, or spectators, the officials will declare an Officials' Timeout. This timeout shall not be charged to either team. During an Officials' Timeout, all players and team personnel must immediately retreat to and remain at their respective benches for the duration of the timeout.

Following the timeout, the officials shall address both head coaches and issue a formal warning that continued unsportsmanlike behavior will result in the immediate termination of the game.

If, in the judgment of the officials, unsportsmanlike behavior persists or escalates after the warning, the officials have the authority to end the game immediately.

- This rule is enforced in the interest of player safety, fairness, and to promote a fun, positive, and respectful game environment for all participants. The Hyland Hills Youth Basketball League is a recreational league, not a competitive league, and all games are intended to emphasize sportsmanship, skill development, and enjoyment of the game over winning.