

City of Clayton - Parks and Recreation

Youth Basketball Rules

2026

RULE 1 – Official Rules

All games shall be played in accordance with the rules of the Missouri State High School Athletic Association (MSHSAA), EXCEPT for the following Clayton Parks and Recreation specific league rules.

RULE 2 – Duration of Games

A. The duration of play will be as follows:

1. 1st and 2nd Grades:	Four 8 minute quarters, with a running clock.
2. 3rd and 4th Grades:	Four 8 minute quarters. The clock stops the last minute of each quarter.
3. 5th and 6th Grades:	Four 9 minute quarters. The clock stops the last minute of each quarter.
4. 7th and 8th Grades:	Two 20 minute halves. The clock stops the last minute of each half.

6th-8th Girls will be playing two 20 min halves, and all 7th/8th rules

B. There is **NO** overtime period.

C. Teams will be given one minute between quarters and four minutes for half time. *The scorekeeper will buzz the horn at a minute before and once again thirty seconds before the start of a quarter or half. Once the thirty seconds are up, the scorekeepers will start the clock even if the teams are not ready to begin.*

D. The scorekeepers are responsible for stopping the clock.

E. Games will start on the hour. If a team does not have enough players (4) to start a game, the clock will begin. If the team does not get enough players within five minutes, the game will be declared a forfeit. To avoid forfeits, borrowing of players from the opposing team is allowed and encouraged.

RULE 3 – Equipment

A. The equipment will be as follows:

1. 1st and 2nd Grades:	Junior size (27.5) basketball and shoot on eight-foot baskets.
2. 3rd and 4th Grade Girls:	Junior size (27.5) basketball and shoot on ten-foot baskets.
3. 3rd thru 6th Grade Boys:	28.5 size basketball and shoot on ten-foot baskets.
4. 5th thru 8th Grade Girls:	28.5 size basketball and shoot on ten-foot baskets.
5. 7th and 8th Grade Boys:	Official size (29.5) basketball and shoot on ten-foot baskets

B. Jewelry is not permitted. The only exception is newly pierced ears (must be a stud earring) can be taped. Hoop earrings, necklaces, watches, etc... are not allowed.

RULE 4 – Substitution

A. Proper game substitution should take place. Every player must check in at the scorers table and must be signaled in by the referee.

B. In 1st - 4th Grades, a coach from both teams may meet at center court to match up players. Keep time very brief, as clock does not stop.

C. In 1st - 4th Grades, a substitution time out will be called at the first dead ball with four minutes or less in the quarter. The time out will last one minute, in order to change players and match up. The clock will start again one minute later even if the coaches are still matching up. This time-out is for substitutions only, not for coaching. If a coach tries to call his team to the sideline in order to give them instruction, a time-out will be charged to the team.

In order to make the substitutions easier, we will expand the definition of dead ball to include:

- Any dead ball
- A made basket
- A defensive rebound
- A defensive steal

RULE 5 – Defense

A. The “No Pressing Rule” applies as follows: If a team is awarded an out of bounds throw-in, in their defensive end of the court, whether after points are scored or a turnover, all opposing players must retreat beyond the half-court line. If a team gains possession of the ball by a turnover or rebound, in their defensive end of the court, all opposing players must retreat beyond the half-court line. The ball may not be stolen after the defensive team gains position of the ball on their half.

B. Defense/Pressing by Grade

1. **1st – 2nd Grades:** Only man to man defense is allowed. No pressing is allowed. Each team will be provided with a set of colored wrist bands to help with defense. Players must guard the opponent wearing the **same color wristband**.
2. **3rd - 4th Grades:** Only man to man defense is allowed. No pressing is allowed.

- 3. **1st – 4th Grades:** Since only man to man defense is allowed, there will be no trapping. No Trapping - Deliberate double teaming, where two defensive players guard a single offensive player, is not allowed anywhere on the court at any time during the game. Situations “in traffic,” especially near the basket, will not be considered trapping – i.e. the offensive player attempts to dribble between two defensive players, two players react to an offensive move, or two players are simply confused about whom to guard.
- 4. **5th - 8th Grades:** Man to man or zone defense allowed. Full Court pressing is allowed the last two minutes of the game. A team will not be allowed to press if winning by 10 or more points.

- C. In 1st and 2nd Grade, players may not steal the ball while the offensive player has control of the ball. This includes dribbling or holding onto the ball. This does not include passing. If a player in 1st and 2nd Grade picks up their dribble outside of the lane, only one defender may guard them.

RULE 6 – Conduct of Players, Coaches and Spectators

- A. One coach may stand during the game. All other coaches must remain seated on the sideline during game play, except during substitutions and when the game clock is stopped.
 - 1. The first offense will result in a scorekeeper asking the coach to sit down.
 - 2. The second offense will result in a technical foul and expulsion from the game.
- B. The coach is responsible for the conduct of his or her spectators, parents and players on the court and bench. **COACHES, SPECTATORS AND PLAYERS SHALL NOT DISPUTE CALLS MADE BY THE OFFICIAL.** Coaches, players or spectators who are verbally abusive to the officials, players or each other may be ejected by the official or coordinator and must leave the gym and wait in the lobby of The Center of Clayton.
- C. 1st and 2nd Grade – One coach is allowed on the court to assist with game play. Coaches are not to stand inside the “key”.
- D. EACH PLAYER ON THE TEAM MUST PLAY AT LEAST HALF OF THE GAME OR RECEIVE EQUAL PLAYING TIME.**
- E. If, in the official’s or coordinator’s opinion, a player or coach is not conducting himself or herself in a proper manner- such as misconduct, yelling at the official, profane or abusive language directed at another, violent or dangerous play – the player or coach will be given a technical foul. Upon further occurrence the coach or player will receive a second technical foul and expelled from the game. If the conduct is of an extremely violent, dangerous and intentional nature, the referee may give a player or coach a double technical without a prior warning. An expelled coach or player shall immediately leave the gym.
- F. The official shall report all ejections to the league supervisor as soon as possible after the game is completed, together with a brief statement of the occurrence. A player or coach ejected from a game will be automatically suspended by the league for their next game and

can be suspended for longer than one game depending on the seriousness of the infraction. Coaches ejected from two games will be suspended for the entire season.

RULE 7 – The Official

- A. **The official's decision during play shall be final.** The official should communicate all calls made during the game, and with younger players explain the call to the players. Play shall be stopped for all injuries, no matter who has possession of the ball.
- B. The official shall have the discretionary power to give a technical foul to any player or coach guilty of misconduct or inappropriate behavior. As provided in Rule 6E above, an official may expel a player or coach from a game.
- C. Coaches, players and spectators shall not argue or dispute an official's decision during the game. QUESTIONS about specific calls should be held until the end of a quarter, half or game and made to the referee in a calm manner. It is not the responsibility of the official to explain his or her calls during the game or to instruct the coaches on the rules of the game.

RULE 8 – Scheduling and Weather

- A. Games may not be canceled, changed or delayed by the coaches. Schedule changes are the responsibility of the league. Once the final schedule is distributed, the schedule will not be changed. Teams may request special scheduling PRIOR to the schedule being prepared, and to the extent reasonably possible, scheduling requests, which are based upon a conflict for a large number of a teams players, will be honored. Failure to report for a scheduled game will result in a forfeit.
- B. Games will be played whenever possible. Games may be canceled because of road conditions due to snow and ice. **Cancellation of these games will be recorded on the Clayton Sports Hotline 314-290-8515.**

RULE 9 – Scoring and Statistics

- A. The Clayton Parks and Recreation Youth Basketball League is a RECREATIONAL league. Standings are not kept and scores should be de-emphasized, by the coaches, parents and officials.
- B. No score will be displayed on the game clock during 1st and 2nd Grade games.
- C. No statistics are kept for any team or individual player.

- D. Parents or coaches will not harass the scorekeepers about putting scores up on the scoreboard. If a parent or coach harasses the scorekeeper the coordinator or official will have the scoreboard turned off.
- E. **15 Point Rule** – In grades 3rd thru 8th, if a team is winning by 15 or more points the scorekeeper will stop scoring for that team until the difference is back under 15.
- F. **Coaches will be responsible for instructing parents on the 15 Point Rule.**

RULE 10 – Miscellaneous Items

- A. Baskets made from beyond the “Three Point Arc”, which will be counted as three points, will only be allowed in 5th - 8th Grades. In 1st - 4th Grades, three-point shots should be discouraged, as they are of no extra point value. It will be the official’s duty to determine whether or not a basket was made from beyond the three-point arc, and also his/her responsibility to notify the scorekeeper, by raising both hands over his/her head.
- B. In 1st and 2nd Grade games, a player may not foul out.
- C. Foul Shots.
 - 1. **1st and 2nd Grades:** There will be no foul shots. Every foul will result in an out of bound possession by the team whose player was fouled.
 - 2. **3rd Grade Girls:** Foul shots will be taken from the designated line five feet closer to the basket.
 - 3. **3rd and 4th Grade Boys and 4th Grade Girls:** Foul shots will be taken from a designated line two feet closer to the basket.
 - 4. **5th - 8th Grades:** Foul shots will be taken from the foul line.
 - 5. Bonus will result after 7 team fouls per half and result in a 1 and 1. Double Bonus will result after 10 team fouls per half and result in 2 free throws.
- D. The ten-second half-court rule will begin once all opposing players have retreated beyond half-court or when a player begins to advance the basketball. The ten-second half-court rule will not be called in 1st and 2nd Grade divisions.
- E. The over and back rule will not be called in 1st and 2nd Grade divisions.
- F. The five-second-possession rule will not be called in 1st - 4th Grade division.
- G. The three-second-lane violation rule will not be called in 1st - 4th Grade divisions.
- H. 1. **1st thru 6th grades:** Each team will receive two, sixty-second time outs per game.
 - 2. **7th and 8th grades:** Each team will receive three, sixty-second time outs per game.
- I. A team may borrow players from the opposing team if it does not have enough players to start a game.
- J. A player can only be listed on one team roster.

These are only our special league rules. Coaches should be familiar with the general rules of the game of basketball.

Thank You!
