

Youth Basketball

3rd-6th Grade

PURPOSE: This is an instructional and recreational league for grades 3-6, boys and girls. Teams are formed by grade and gender. It is for the development of all participating youth and not specifically for any individual team or competitive (all-star or stacked) teams. Any town that has competitive players playing in the Rec league should split them evenly across all teams if there is more than one team in that division. A Competitive player is a player who plays in one or more tournaments or league games outside this league. The primary objectives of this program are to teach the fundamental skills of basketball, dribbling, passing, shooting, and defense, as well as promoting and teaching the following:

- Fair play and equal playing time
- A fun experience for youth and adults
- Responsibility, decision-making, leadership, teamwork
- Self-esteem, social and communication skills
- Building positive relationships between players, adults, and parents

If you feel your child is not being treated fairly, always discuss it with your child's coach first, and then your league representative if necessary.

MEMBERSHIP AND LEAGUE ORGANIZATION:

Over the years the league has grown, and currently includes the school districts of West Platte (Weston), Dekalb, Mid-Buchanan (Faucett), North Platte (Dearborn), Platte County (Platte City), Smithville, Plattsburg, Lathrop, Lawson, and East Buchanan (Gower). Each district provides one or two representatives to form the board that governs the league. These reps are listed by name and phone number at the top of the game schedule and may be called to address problems or answer questions. They will normally be available at their respective gyms on game days. An eight-game schedule is played on Saturdays starting in December and finishing in mid-February. Post-season tournaments may or may not be held. Check with your league rep. No league standings are kept, or awards given during the eight-game season (Except by the parents).

A. RULES

The rules will be those governing Missouri State High Schools with a few exceptions that have been determined to meet the objectives of the basketball program. Through trial and error over the years, these exceptions have determined to be the most favorable rules and methods that would allow participants to learn the listed skills in an appropriate environment.

- Use women's (28.5 inch) basketball for all grades.
- For 3rd and 4th grade, use nine-foot goal
 - man-to-man defense only
 - No score keeping on the scoreboard.

The Board believes it is impractical to provide Missouri State Rule Books for each coach but would highly suggest that each coach borrow or purchase a rule book to read.

B. UNIFORMS

Team shirts will be paid for with the league registration money collected and may be kept by the player at the end of the season. Traditionally, these shirts are in the colors of the local high school. Only regulation basketball, gym, or tennis shoes may be worn. The shoes should be hand carried to the gym and then changed into. The shoes must be clean so that the gym floors are not damaged. Game shorts and color are at the discretion of the coach and team parents. Uniforms must have a clearly readable number on the front and back. This helps in player identification for playing man to man defense.

C. BASKETBALLS:

A few basketballs may be provided by each league representative to each team. They remain the property of the league representative, should not be marked on, and will be returned to your league rep after the season. The regulation women's basketball will be used (28.5). Coaches and players may also supplement the team by using their own basketballs. Unless instructed otherwise, teams will provide their own basketballs for warm-up at home and away. The officials or league rep may provide a game ball, or they may ask to use one of the team basketballs for the game. If so, make sure you get it back after the game.

D. GOAL HEIGHT

The basketball goal will be set at

- 9 (nine) feet for 3rd and 4th grade
- 10 (ten) feet for 5th and 6th grade.

E. GAME MINIMUM

Teams must have five players and a coach to start the game. If not, and it is a 5th or 6th grade game, it will be considered a forfeit. For all grades, in case of not enough players, it is recommended to play 4 vs. 4 or even 3 vs. 3, or to borrow players from the opposing team so that the kids can play. League reps should help resolve this situation.

F. TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES

The team consists of players, coaches, and parents. All must be involved in promoting good sportsmanship and proper conduct. Please give special attention to school gym rules. Harassment of officials and competitors will not be tolerated. Teams in violation, and at the official's discretion, will be warned and then penalized by technical foul, removal from the gym, or if necessary, forfeiture of the game, as per the rule book. Head coaches are responsible for not only their players, but their parents and spectators as well.

G. LINE-UP

Each coach must provide the score/timekeeper with a written line-up before the game. League reps will have score sheets at the table.

H. TIME REGULATIONS

1. Five-minute warm-up prior to game start (Subject to league representative discretion due to time constraints).

2. For 3rd and 4th grade, a game consists of two halves, each 20 minutes in duration. A running clock is enforced. The clock will stop in the final 2 minutes of only the 2nd half as well as the last one minute of each overtime and for time outs for. There is no Overtime for regular season games for 3rd and 4th grade.

2-a – In the last 30 seconds of the game the clock **will NOT start** until the offensive player crosses the half court line

3. For 5th and 6th grade, a game consists of four quarters, each six minutes in duration. No running clock will be enforced. Clock starts and stops as per the high school rule book except for the fourth quarter mercy rule discussed below.

4. For 5th and 6th grade, a one-minute rest after the first and the third quarters.

5. Five-minute rest for half-time break, after the second quarter (Subject to league representative discretion).

6. Time outs may be called by the coach or a player. There will only be one full (one minute) and one thirty second timeout per team, per half. Unused time outs do not carry over into overtime, one 30 second timeout is granted per team per overtime session.

I. SCORING AND TIME KEEPING

1. Score will not be kept at the 3rd and 4th grade level. Please encourage parents to not keep score as we are not concerned about winning and losing at this level.

2. The home team league representative will provide one or two responsible individuals to be the official scorer (3rd & 4th grade foul and time-out scorer) and timekeeper.

3. For the 5th and 6th grade, score will be kept. If necessary, a one-minute overtime will be played, if a second overtime is needed it will be the first to score wins. Each overtime starts with a jump ball.

4. As per the rule book, beginning in the 4th quarter, once a team has a 20-point lead or more, the clock will run continuously except for time outs, technical fouls, or stoppage by the officials. If the lead closes below 20 points, normal clock procedures apply.

J. FREE THROW REGULATIONS

1. The free throw line is **thirteen feet** from the back of the rim for **all grades**. The league representative will place a small piece of tape on the floor to designate 13 feet. If the nine-foot portable baskets are being used for the 3rd and 4th grades, the regular free throw line will be used because these baskets are set up in front of the regular goals, which then equals 13 feet.

2. 5th and 6th grade will shoot a **double bonus free throws on the 5th team foul per quarter** as per the rule book. **3rd and 4th grade WILL NOT shoot bonus free throws, only shooting fouls.**

K. DEFENSE

1. 5th and 6th grade, high school rules apply, except that after a team has a **10 (ten)** point lead, they may not full court press, but must fall back behind half court and inside the 3-point line until the offensive player with the ball crosses half court.
2. For 3rd and 4th grade – when the ball is being thrown in from **ANY location** on the court, the **defense must be inside their 3-point line** until an offensive player with the ball crosses half court
3. 3rd and 4th grade must play man to man defense only. It became very obvious after a couple of years that the kids were learning nothing standing in a zone defense, so the board voted on the man defense only. In fact, this has become a point of emphasis and officials and league representatives are required to pay particular attention to players who are not attempting to stay with their man or appear to be standing in a zone. If that is the case, it should be pointed out to the coaches who should try and correct the problem. **The excuse that “they are only 3rd and 4th graders” is not valid** as they are capable of looking at a jersey number and attempting to guard that person unless they are calling out switches. **If the problem continues, technical fouls may be called for illegal defense.**
4. 3rd and 4th graders may not defend or attempt to steal the ball in the offensive teams back court. In other words, after the defense gains control of the ball by a steal, rebound, score by the offense, or any other means, that team is now on offense and the other team is on defense. **If the offensive team walks the ball up the floor the five defensive players must return down the court and be inside their own three point shot arc until the offensive player with the ball crosses half court.** The defense may then proceed outside the three-point arc to guard their man. This is normally what should occur when the offense walks the ball down court slowly. However, it is understood that if the offensive team is fast breaking by either passing the ball or speed dribbling the ball down the court, the defense will not have time to return to the three-point arc. In that case, **as they are running down the court with the offense, they will now be allowed to attempt any defense or stealing or tipping of the ball as soon as the fast break starts.** If a team wants to fastbreak they are assuming the risk of having a defense play them full court. If the offense stops the fast break before the half court line, then the defense should proceed inside the 3-point arc and set up their team defense.
5. 3rd and 4th grade teams are not allowed to double team outside the three-point arc. They may double team inside the three-point arc.

L. PLAYER PARTICIPATION

To provide equal opportunity for growth and skill development according to the league philosophy, each player must play at least the minimum playing minutes unless he or she is disqualified from the game or is injured. **For 3rd and 4th grade, the minimum playing minutes are 17 minutes.** **For 5th and 6th grade, the minimum playing minutes are 10 minutes.** Players arriving late and missing the first quarter must play at least six minutes. The board recognizes that teams with

more than ten players cannot abide by the equal minute rule. However, it is the coach's responsibility to play each child as equally and as possible during each game. The only exception to the playing rule would be for players that have been sick or missed practice for other reasons or habitually miss practice. Playing time may be reduced for them but not before discussing it with the player's parents, your league representative, and informing the opposing coach before game time. No teams of players under 3rd grade are allowed to play in this league for any reason. If an occasional town needs a younger player to make enough for a team that is allowed. No teams consisting of all 2nd grade or younger are allowed for any reason. No players should be on the roster more than one division per season. If the athlete plays up on a roster, they are no longer allowed to play in the lower age appropriate division.

M. PLAYER OR COACH DISQUALIFICATION

1. Technical fouls and disqualification will be as per the rule book. Most schools are using high school athletes as referees. This is a practical training program for them, and the league representatives are usually at each gym to oversee and provide instruction for them as the coaches provide instructions for their players. **Under no circumstances are these officials to be harassed or badgered, nor will a coach or player question or argue a judgment call.** A coach may question or ask for a clarification on a rule or violation and the league representative should be involved or available. There is no excuse for coaches not knowing the rules that are written in this copy and they should always carry a copy to refer to during games.

2. REMEMBER: Coaches are to coach, players are to play, and neither are to officiate. Coaches, you are also responsible for your parents and fans.

N. TOURNAMENT REGULATIONS

1. Tournaments should be held as close to the end of the season as league representative and gym availability allow.
2. Tournaments should follow regular season rules, especially the even play rule, with a possible exception for the length of the game and the four quarters vs two halves to help keep the tournaments on schedule. The players parents paid an extra fee to have their athletes participate and we are a Rec League, and the tournaments should reflect this.
3. No team will play more than three tournament games in one day.
4. No town MUST host a tournament. With ten member towns and only eight divisions this should not be an issue.
5. Tournaments MUST have a two-game guarantee, three would be ideal, and be seeded with the records from the regular season. Coaches for the 3rd and 4th grades can track their regular season record for this purpose come tournament time. Ideally brackets would be set up so that the any team that goes into the loser's bracket can come back and have a chance to win the tournament.
6. For larger divisions the host representative can use their discretion to split the larger number of teams into an upper and lower division to facilitate more balanced games and a better experience for the athletes.

This league exists for the enjoyment and experience of the players. Coaches volunteer their time along with the referees, scorekeepers, and league representatives. This is NOT Professional Basketball (NBA/WNBA), and everyone should just enjoy the games and not get caught up in winning/losing at these levels.