

TSP Basketball Rules

Sport-specific rules / 2026 standardized edition

These sport-specific rules must be read together with the TSP General Rules. The General Rules govern unless this document clearly states a sport-specific exception.

NFHS rules apply unless modified below. These rules prioritize player safety, fair participation, sportsmanship, and age-appropriate skill development.

Mandatory Participation and Rotation

- Every eligible, uniformed player must enter and play as required. During the first three quarters, substitutions occur only at the midpoint and quarter breaks. The fourth quarter uses free substitutions, but every eligible player plays at least two consecutive minutes in that quarter.
- Coaches submit a numbered lineup card at least 10 minutes before the game. Games do not begin until the lineup reaches the score table and officials. Players rotate in listed order.
- For injury or illness, the next scheduled player enters until the injured player returns or the next substitution point. If the player cannot return, skip that player in the rotation.
- A player with three fouls before halftime may sit for the remainder of the half; skip the player in the rotation and resume from the same lineup position in the second half.
- At midpoint substitution breaks, players remain on court. A delay may be charged as a timeout.

League Administration

- Games are played as scheduled unless weather forces cancellation; TSP reschedules when possible.
- Lineup sheets are prepared before play. Coaches in the final game help clean the gym and may ask team parents to assist.
- Both teams provide a qualified scorekeeper. The visiting scorekeeper maintains the official book. Scorekeepers compare personnel with rotation cards before each quarter, at midpoint breaks in quarters 1-3, and after injury substitutions.

Timing

- 2nd grade: four 8-minute running-clock quarters; substitution break at 4:00; 1 minute between quarters.
- 3rd-6th grade: four 12-minute running-clock quarters; substitution break at 6:00; 1 minute between quarters.
- Clock stops for official or team timeouts. Halftime is 5 minutes.
- Fourth quarter remains running time, except the final minute uses stop time when the score difference is 6 points or fewer.
- Overtime: one 2-minute period, then if needed one 1-minute period. Stop time applies during the last minute of the first overtime and throughout the second. No further overtime; a game may end in a tie.
 - Each team receives four 1-minute timeouts plus one additional timeout for the entire overtime session. Consecutive timeouts are prohibited until at least one second runs from the game clock.

Defense

- 2nd grade: defense begins 5 feet beyond half court. No defender enters the backcourt or crosses that boundary. No double-team outside the 3-point line or against a player without the ball. After one warning, each violation awards the opponent 1 point and the ball at half court.
- 3rd-4th grade: same backcourt boundary and double-team restrictions. After one warning, each later violation is a technical foul: two free throws and possession at half court. ● 5th-6th grade: full-court man-to-man press is allowed only while the lead is under 10 points; zone presses are prohibited. At a lead of 10 or more, defenders must allow the ball and both feet across half court. One warning precedes a technical foul.
- Man-to-man defense is required. Switching, weak-side help, sliding through, and double-teaming the ball are allowed. A player without the ball may not be double-teamed. Defenders should remain within 6 feet of the assigned offensive player.
- Illegal zone defense receives one warning, then a technical foul awarding two free throws and possession at midcourt.

Equipment and Division Standards

- All players wear non-marking gym or tennis shoes.
- 2nd grade and 3rd-4th grade girls use a 27.5-inch junior ball. 3rd-4th grade boys and all 5th-6th grade teams use a 28.5-inch intermediate ball.
- 2nd-4th grade baskets are 8.5 feet. 5th-6th grade baskets are regulation 10 feet. ● For 3rd-4th grade, the scoreboard is turned off for the remainder of the game once an 18-point difference exists at or after the start of the third quarter.

Offense and Fouls

- Free-throw line is 12 feet for grades 3-6, except Tri-County games use 15 feet. 2nd grade does not shoot free throws but will be awarded one point for a shooting foul. Three-second violations are judged from the 15-foot line. ● Isolation or clear-out offenses designed to leave one player one-on-one are prohibited; teammates must participate. Officials may assess a technical foul.
- The 3-point rule does not apply in 2nd-4th grade.
- After gaining possession, the offense must make a basketball move before the defense is required to clear the backcourt.
- 3rd-4th grade: a timeout called under 2 minutes left in the game before it crosses half court will reset at the baseline.
- Team fouls reset after each quarter. Beginning with the fifth team foul in a quarter, the opponent receives two free throws; there is no one-and-one.