



Basketball – Sport Rules Modifications, Interpretations, and Points of Emphasis

The Official Special Olympics Sports Rules for Basketball dated June 2020 will be in effect for the 2020-2021 SONC program year. This document is intended to be used in conjunction with the USA Basketball rules and SOI Rules. SONC also follows North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA) and National Federation of High Schools (NFHS) rules where indicated. Some of those rules are repeated here for clarification; NCHSAA rules will be used unless in direct conflict to SONC modifications.

Team 5-on-5 and individual skills will be offered at 2022 SONC Summer Games. Team 3-on-3 and 5-on-5 alternate Summer Games years in which they are offered at the state-level event.

Team competition interpretations and modifications

- Athletes must enter the game on two separate occasions and will be recorded in the scorebook. All athletes should be involved in meaningful competition. Failure to play all athletes at least twice may subject the team to forfeiture.
- In order for a player to establish legal guarding position, both feet must be touching the “playing court,” (i.e. both feet in-bounds).¹
- **Forfeiture:** A team automatically forfeits the game if they are ten minutes late.
- Teams will have two 45-second time-outs per half both 5-on-5 and 3-on-3 competitions. Time-outs are not cumulative and cannot be carried over to the 2nd half.²
- Rosters may change from training roster to registration, but must remain consistent after games registration.

5-on-5 full court team competition:

- The maximum allowable roster size is 12 players.³
- A game consists of four eight-minute quarters with a running clock, except for the last minute of the second and fourth quarters, all shooting fouls, time outs, and during substitutions. Quarter breaks are 2 minutes, halftime breaks are 5 minutes. If a team leads by 20 points or more, a running clock will occur for the rest of the game. The clock will only stop for time-outs or at the request of an official.⁴
- If a game is tied at the end of regulation, a one-minute overtime period will occur with possession determined by a jump ball. The clock will be stopped on all dead balls, foul shots, and timeouts. If the game is still tied after the one-minute period, the game will be decided by the team that scores the next basket (i.e. sudden death). This untimed period will occur following a one minute break.
- A substituting player must notify the scorekeeper and wait for the referee’s signal to enter the game. Substitutions will only be made during dead balls.⁵
- The penalty for a double personal, double technical and simultaneous fouls will result in an alternating possession throw-in to resume play from the point of interruption.
- If a player participates after being disqualified (fouled out), the coach will be penalized with a direct technical foul.⁶

¹ NFHS Rule 4 Section 23 Article 2, A

² SONC modification of SOI Section 7.6.8 USA Basketball found at www.usabasketball.com/inside.php?page=rules.

³ SONC modification SOI Section 6.3.2.

⁴ SONC modification of NFHS Rule 5 Section 5 Article 1

⁵ NFHS Rule 3 Section 3 Articles 1 and 2

⁶ NFHS Rule 10 Section 6 Article 3

- There may only be 4 defensive and 2 offensive players permitted on marked lane spaces during free throws, with the spaces closest to the free-throw line remaining vacant.⁷
- One and one free throws are awarded on the 7th team foul.⁸
- Team control⁹ exists during a team throw-in. The defending team, if in bonus, is no longer granted free throws if the throw in team commits a foul.¹⁰
- When an opponent contacts the inbounder, an intentional foul will be charged to the offender.¹¹
- Five second closely guarded count begins as soon as the ball is in play.¹²

⁷ NFHS Rule 8 Section 1 Article 4, A

⁸ SONC modification of SOI Section 6.2.7 (also complies with NCHSAA rule)

⁹ Rule used to state player control.

¹⁰ NFHS Rule 7 Section 5 Article 7, B

¹¹ NFHS Rule 4 Section 19 Article 3, E

¹² SONC modification of SOI Section 6.2.6 (SOI requires 5 seconds guarded count in front court, (also complies with NCHSAA rule)