

# YOUTH PLAYING GUIDELINES

## Game Specific Rules



These playing guidelines and rules serve as recommendations for those administering basketball programs. We understand organizations and facilities may not always be able to accommodate all guidelines. In that case, we suggest modifications where limitations exist (i.e. inability to raise or lower the height of a basket, re-drawing court lines, or not having a shot clock). These guidelines help align [Canada Basketball's Long Term Development Model](#).

Canada Basketball also recommends all ages play small-sided games of 3on3 and 4on4. Especially at [younger ages](#), these games help with higher repetitions and touches to focus on skill development.

## GAME SPECIFIC RULES

Age	Backcourt Timeline	Shot Clock	5 Seconds Guarded Closely
7-8	N/A	N/A	N/A
9-11	10 seconds	N/A	Only when the offensive player is holding the ball.
12-14	10 seconds	30 seconds <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Full 30 second reset on offensive and defensive rebounds.</li><li>• Full 30 second reset on any foul.</li></ul>	Only when the offensive player is holding the ball.
15-18	8 seconds	24 seconds <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 14 second reset for offensive rebounds.</li><li>• Full 24 second reset for fouls committed in the backcourt.</li><li>• If a foul is committed in the frontcourt and the shot clock is above 14 seconds, there will be no reset and the clock will continue from the time it was stopped.</li><li>• If a foul is committed in the frontcourt and the shot clock is under 14 seconds, it shall be reset to 14 seconds.</li></ul>	Only when the offensive player is holding the ball

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Age	Clock Stoppage	Length of Time for a Free Throw	Number of Players Permitted in Free Throw Lane
<b>7-8</b>	On any dead ball	10 seconds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Offense may have 3 players in the lane, including the shooter.</li><li>• Defense may have 3 players in the lane.</li></ul>
<b>9-11</b>	On any dead ball	10 seconds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Offense may have 3 players in the lane, including the shooter.</li><li>• Defense may have 3 players in the lane.</li></ul>
<b>12-14</b>	On any dead ball and after a made field goal in the last 2 minutes of the 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter and extra time.	8 seconds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Offense may have 3 players in the lane, including the shooter.</li><li>• Defense may have 3 players in the lane.</li></ul>
<b>15-18</b>	On any dead ball and after a made field goal in the last 2 minutes of the 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter and extra time.	5 seconds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Offense may have 3 players in the lane, including the shooter.</li><li>• Defense may have 3 players in the lane.</li></ul>

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Age	Player Substitutions	Advancing the Ball After a Timeout
<b>7-8</b>	Either team may substitute when the clock is stopped	N/A
<b>9-11</b>	Either team may substitute when the clock is stopped	N/A
<b>12-14</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Either team may substitute on any dead ball.</li><li>• Either team may substitute before the first free throw attempt or after the last free throw if made.</li><li>• A non-scoring team may substitute after any field goal scored in the last 2 minutes of the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter and extra time. If the non-scoring team substitutes, the scoring team may also substitute.</li></ul>	In the last 2 minutes of the 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter and extra time following a timeout, the ball will be inbounded from the offensive team's frontcourt opposite the scorer's table.
<b>15-18</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Either team may substitute on any dead ball.</li><li>• Either team may substitute before the first free throw attempt or after the last free throw if made.</li><li>• A non-scoring team may substitute after any field goal scored in the last 2 minutes of the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter and extra time. If the non-scoring team substitutes, the scoring team may also substitute.</li></ul>	In the last 2 minutes of the 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter and extra time following a timeout, the ball will be inbounded from the offensive team's frontcourt opposite the scorer's table.

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## Definitions & Rationale

**Backcourt Timeline:** Not having a timeline violation for 7-8 year-olds allows coaches to communicate to players before they reach half court. This assists coaches in teaching children, particularly for those first learning the game. The progression to 10 seconds for 9-11 and 12-14 year-olds, and later to eight seconds for Grades 9-12, allows the game to flow while developing skills such as ball-handling, passing and decision-making.

**Clock Stoppage:** Stopping the clock following a made basket within the last two minutes of the fourth period and any extra periods for 12-14 year-olds and 9th-12th graders allows for additional strategic decision-making. Fewer clock stoppages for 7-8 and 9-11 year-olds allows for a better game flow.

**Shot Clock:** The 30-second shot clock for 12-14 year-olds, along with the 24-second shot clock for 9th-12th graders, allows for more possessions for each team, better game flow and places decision-making elements in the hands of players.

**Advancement of the Ball After a Timeout:** For 7-8 year olds, the focus is on development over strategy. Therefore, there is no pressing defense at this level, and the ball will not automatically advance after a timeout. Similarly, the ball does not advance after a timeout for 9-11 year olds because the focus remains on development over strategy.