



Family Guide to Club Volleyball

2022-2023 Season

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OUR MISSION

Service | Opportunity | Growth | Education | Safety

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Welcome

North Country Region (NCR) is one of 40 regions of USA Volleyball, representing players, coaches, officials and other volleyball enthusiasts in the states of Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota.

We are constantly striving to make each club volleyball season better and help our parents and players understand what club volleyball is all about. [Click here for contact information for NCR staff.](#)

What is Club Volleyball?

Club volleyball is an opportunity to play volleyball outside of high school or middle school-sponsored activities. Families pay to join a volleyball club that arranges for team practices, coaches, uniforms, insurance, and other items, and also for tournaments that the team will play in, competing against other clubs. A club may have one total team or many, and may have one team per age level, or multiple.

Club volleyball begins in either October for players 14 and under or at the completion of the high school volleyball season in November for those 15 and over, and continues through the USA Volleyball Girls' and Boys' Junior National Championships at the end of June or beginning of July. Players from all over the state try out for different clubs as a way to continue playing volleyball year-round.

A tryout is an assessment of the athlete's ability and skill level, how well an athlete learns from instruction, and how well they play with others. Each club determines its own teams and members as well as tournament and travel schedule; some travel a great deal while others stay more local.

USA Volleyball is the National Governing Body (NGB) for volleyball for the United States and has 40 independently run regions throughout the country. As a Region of USA Volleyball, North Country Region is the umbrella organization of the clubs in Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota and operates as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. North Country Region sets policy, implements USAV and independent education programs, provides insurance and operates various tournaments and championships. The clubs themselves are also independent business organizations, implementing their own policies and are in charge of their own finances. When a player becomes a member of a North Country Region-sanctioned club, they also become a member of North Country Region and USA Volleyball.

SafeSport and Coaching Requirements

We all have a role to play in providing a healthy setting for volleyball – mentally, physically and emotionally. The USA Volleyball SafeSport Program raises awareness about possible misconduct in our sport. Learn more at our [NCR SafeSport page](#).

We're proud to say that every adult in USA Volleyball who will be working with a junior volleyball player (defined as a player 18 or under) is required to pass a very strict background screen every season. This includes club directors, tournament directors, coaches and officials. In addition, every coach is required to complete IMPACT certification, which is at least four hours of online or in-person training.

If you have any concerns about how your child, or another child, is being treated, contact your club director immediately, and then contact the North Country Region office. Addressing a situation swiftly is the best course of action.

New Members To USA Volleyball

A brand-new player is defined as a person who has never participated in USA Volleyball before. If you have attended a tryout, clinic or other event in the past, you would be considered a "Returning Member."

Selecting a club is a family decision and takes some research. Although our clubs must abide by general North Country Region and USA Volleyball rules, each club is different in the way they run their organization and train their athletes. A comprehensive list of [How to Select a Club](#) can be found on the North Country Region website, but here are a few:

Tips On Selecting A Club

- What is the club philosophy? To win? To improve? To have fun?
- How many teams do you have at each age level?
- Who are the coaches at my age level?
- What is their background in coaching?
- How is playing time allocated?
- What are your club dues? Is there a payment schedule?
- What is covered/not covered in that fee?
- Are there any other financial obligations? Travel? Fundraising? Uniforms?
- Where, when and how often do you practice?
- Are practices mandatory? What if my child misses a practice? Misses a tournament?
- Are players allowed to play other sports during the club volleyball season?
- How long is your season?
- How far will the team be traveling?
- What does my child want to get out of the club experience?
- Can we afford the program we choose?

Spending time researching your options will help you have the best season possible.

Member Registration

Before you can step on the court for any tryout or practice, you must become a member of North Country Region/USAV. Your membership covers the insurance, among other things, for sanctioned tryouts, practices and events. The member management system that North Country Region/USA Volleyball uses is called SportsEngine.

Please visit the [Directions to Purchase a Membership](#) page of the North Country Region website for step-by-step instructions on how to purchase the appropriate membership.

You will have the option to purchase a tryout membership, which can be upgraded to a full NCR Junior membership once selected for a team.

If your child is not selected for a team, please visit our [Junior Players Needed](#) page to locate clubs who are seeking additional players.

Tryout and Commitment Policy and Dates

While North Country Region sets an allowable start date for tryouts, each club selects their own tryout schedule. We encourage you to contact each club directly to determine how their tryout process will work. Please see below for the [North Country Region Tryout & Commitment Policy and Dates](#).

14 & Under Boys and Girls (born July 1, 2008 and after)

First available date for tryouts:

NCR BOYS: First Sunday after Labor Day (September 11, 2022)

NCR GIRLS: Last Sunday of October (October 30, 2022)

- A junior player may be offered a letter of commitment by a club and the junior player may sign the letter of commitment on or after the first official tryout date.

15 & Older Boys and Girls (born June 30, 2008 and before)

First available date for tryouts:

NCR BOYS: First Sunday after Labor Day (September 11, 2022)

NCR GIRLS: Day after the conclusion of the State Tournament

MINNESOTA (November 13, 2022) / NORTH DAKOTA & SOUTH DAKOTA (November 20, 2022)

- A junior player may be offered a letter of commitment by a club and the junior player may sign the letter of commitment on or after the first official tryout date.
- Junior members who are entering the 18s age division may commit to any North Country Region sanctioned clubs starting August 1, 2022.

As always, players are encouraged to let clubs know of your intentions as soon as the decision has been made – a player does NOT need to wait until the deadline to accept or decline an offer. Individual clubs may choose to extend offer deadlines, at their discretion, or athletes may ask for this extension. Any extensions granted (or not) are the sole responsibility of the individual clubs.

A club program who has given an offer of membership to a player may make one (1) club-initiated follow-up contact with that player between the time of the offer and the subsequent commitment date. A club-initiated contact shall be defined as a phone call, email, text or Facebook message by a representative of the club program making the offer.

North Country Region Junior Player/Club Contact Policy

North Country Region has a policy regarding when and how clubs can contact junior players and their families. These rules are designed to protect the interests of the player and or/family regarding club contact, and allow players and families to seek information they want from clubs.

There are in-season and off-season definitions and guidelines, as well as what to do if you or your child are receiving unwanted contact from a club. Policies can be found under [Recruiting Restrictions](#) on the Policies page.

Frequently Asked Questions

How can I best prepare my child for tryouts?

Tryouts can be a very stressful experience as dozens of players may be trying out for teams of 10-12. Our best advice is to have your child well fed and rested before tryouts begin. Also, have a back-up plan in case they are not selected to their first choice. After tryouts, many clubs are still seeking players. Check the [Junior Players Needed](#) page on our website for additional opportunities. Focus on a positive attitude and having fun at tryouts. Coaches and clubs are not only filling a team for skill, but attitude and hard work. While one player, in your eyes, may be a better skilled player, another player may bring more positive intangibles.

Once my child chooses a club, can he/she change her mind and join another club? No, they have made a season-long commitment to that club. Clubs are under no obligation to release players until their season is finished and all financial obligations are met. If both of these conditions are met, players may join another club to finish out the season, abiding by the NCR [Junior Player Transfer](#) policy found on the page of the North Country Region policy page.

What happens if my child gets injured at practice or at a tournament?

The coach will report the injury immediately to the club or tournament director and seek medical attention if warranted. The director, along with the coach and parent or guardian, will complete an incident report form, which will then be submitted to the North Country Region office. The North Country Region office will verify membership of the player and also the sanction of the event, and submit to the insurance company. If you (the family) choose to file a claim for the secondary insurance, you can download the paperwork from the [North Country Region Forms](#) page and follow the instructions to submit the claim.

I can't print out my membership card yet?

If you have a \$10 tryout membership, the membership card will be available for printing on Oct. 1. If you need to mail documentation of membership prior to that, please send the confirmation and payment email you received.

What are USA Volleyball Age Definitions?

Teams in North Country Region are categorized by using the [USA Volleyball Age Definitions](#) for 2022-2023:

	18 & Under ¹	18 & Under ²	17 & Under	16 & Under	15 & Under ³	14 & Under ⁴	13 & Under ⁵	12 & Under	11 & Under	10 & Under	9 & Under	8 & Under
July	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Aug	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Sept	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Oct	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Nov	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Dec	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Jan	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Feb	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Mar	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Apr	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
May	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
June	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015

¹ Players who were born on or after July 1, 2003 and a high school student in the twelfth (12th) grade or below during some part of the current academic year are eligible to compete in 18 & under.

² **Female Only** - Players who were born on or after July 1, 2004, (who are defined as 18 & under by the USAV Age Definition) and are in the 11th grade for the current academic year are waived to compete in 17 & under. (This age waiver is based on recruiting concerns for 11th grade girls previously required to participate in girls 18's qualifiers and the 18's GJNC.)

³ **Male Only** - Players who were born on or after July 1, 2008 OR players who were born on or after July 1, 2007 (15 years or younger) who shall neither have completed nor are in a grade higher than the eighth (8th) grade during the current academic year are eligible to play in the 14 & Under division. This exception is based on the net height difference of 7'4 1/8" to 7'11 5/8" between the 14 and Under Division to the 15 and Under Division.

⁴ **Male Only** - Players who were born on or after July 1, 2008 (14 years or younger) who shall neither have completed nor are in a grade higher than the seventh grade (7th) during the current academic year are eligible for a Region approved waiver to compete in the boys 13's age group.

⁵ **Male Only** - Players who were born on or after July 1, 2009 (13 years or younger) who shall neither have completed nor are in a grade higher than the sixth grade (6th) during the current academic year are eligible for a Region approved waiver to compete in the boys 12's age group.

Can my child "play up" in an older age division?

Yes, if your child is selected to play on an older team, then he/she can "play up." All rules and regulation of the team age level (ball used, net height) will be followed, regardless of the age of the players.

My child is too old to play on a specific team with his/her school classmates. Can we get an age waiver?

Age waivers are for in-region play only and cannot be used in any national or qualifying tournaments. Either the team cannot compete in these, or your child will not be allowed to play in that tournament. Clubs decide on an individual basis if they will accept age waived players, so please contact the club prior to tryouts to discuss. Age waivers are limited and must be submitted by the club director. Any waiver submitted by a parent will be rejected.

Why does my child have to keep score and line judge?

USA Volleyball believes in teaching players the entire game and that includes officiating. When they are not playing, players will develop leadership skills and knowledge of the game when they assist in officiating. Prior to any competition, clubs are required to instruct their players on proper techniques in refereeing and scoring.

What happens if I don't pay my child's club dues?

A Junior Club player (and their family) must remit all club fees as specified by their club/team, within the club's scheduled timeframe. If fees are unpaid at the end of the club's season, the club director may use any legal means necessary to obtain payment (ex., a collection agency).

For more parent information, please visit the [USA Volleyball parent resource information website](#).

Once The Season Gets Under Way

You will more than likely be responsible to get your child to and from practices and tournaments, and being on time, or early, is important. Club coaches are responsible for the care and safety of your child until you arrive to pick them up. Most clubs also rent practice space, so if you're late, they may be obligated to pay for an additional hour of facility rent.

Encourage your child to speak to their coach if they're concerned about practice drills, skills and/or playing time. Almost all coaches want to speak directly with the player about playing time, not the parent. It is better to address questions or concerns early before they potentially spiral out of control.

Find like-minded parents to car pool with and arrange for travel on the road. Club volleyball becomes less expensive and more fun when families share travel expenses and experiences.

First Aid

Not all practices or tournaments will have a certified athletic trainer available. Many club coaches will carry a team first aid kit, but it's a good idea to have your own, just in case. Some suggested items: Band Aids, athletic tape and pre-wrap (in case of ankle sprains), antiseptic wipes/ spray, cold packs, elastic bandages (to wrap ice on sprains), blister pads, pain relief (Advil, Aleve, etc.), large Ziploc bag to hold ice, lip balm and hand sanitizer.

Nutrition

Prepare your child with healthy snacks for the way to and from practices, and also during long tournaments where sometimes the food isn't the greatest. And don't forget food and snacks for yourself! USA Volleyball often posts nutrition articles on their [Resources for Athletes](#) page.

Where And When Is The Team Playing?

In North Country Region, tournament directors are directed to have the tournament schedule available the Wednesday prior to the event. There are a lot of moving pieces to running a tournament, including reformatting the event when a team drops, which changes everything. Most tournament directors will either send out an email to the club/coach or post the schedule (or a link to the schedule) on their website. Please do not question the tournament director. Your coach should provide you with the information or take the lead in getting it. Most likely, play will start at 8 a.m., so be prepared to be on-site by 7 a.m., and prepare to stay for most of the day.

Many parents enjoy volleyball weekends and like to treat volleyball tournaments like a tailgate. We all love tailgates, but remember **no alcohol** should be brought to junior volleyball events. Each facility has a specific food and drink policy. An easy rule of thumb: **Water only in the gym**. If someone from the facility or tournament staff asks you to remove some items from the gym, please do so immediately, or you will risk being removed from the event or having the police called.

Violations of the food and drink policies can lead to penalties for teams (even if parents or fans are the violators). Not knowing the rules is not an excuse for breaking them.

Professional Referees and Scorers

North Country Region always welcomes individuals who are interested in becoming a professional (paid) referee or scorer. [Please click here for more information.](#)

Please note that the work crews (the team line judging and working the score table) are NOT professional officials, so treat them with the respect you would wish for your own child. Especially at the younger age groups, players are still learning how to perform the various tasks. We encourage parents to become trained in order to help out or at least have knowledge of the rules. [Please click here for training materials for junior players.](#)

North Country Region-Hosted Tournaments

Find all North Country Region hosted tournaments on the [Find an Event](#) page of our website.

Club-Hosted Tournaments

Many of our clubs elect to host their own tournaments. These are called "club-hosted" tournaments. While North Country Region sanctions (approves) these events, the club manages these tournaments. There are different entities that run tournaments within North Country Region, and our insurance coverage and other policies only apply to North Country Region-sanctioned events. A list of these can be found on our [Calendar](#) page.

North Country Region High Performance

North Country Region is proud to sponsor an exciting High Performance program for boys and girls. The age divisions are set by the FIVB (the international governing body of the sport) and change yearly. This program is

designed to be an all-star program, with tryouts held in March or April in conjunction with NCR-hosted events in each state that is represented in our Region, a camp and training sessions the summer, and then high-level competition at the USA Volleyball All-Star Championships in July. [Click here to learn more about the NCR HP program.](#)

USA Volleyball

Recognized by the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) as the leader for the sport of volleyball in the United States, USA Volleyball provides a host of services and information, as well as a connection to our [National and Olympic Teams](#). There are different educational opportunities for [coaches](#) and [officials](#), [indoor and outdoor championships and competitions](#) as well as blogs and information on how to Grow the Game from some of the best minds in the volleyball world.

- USA Volleyball: www.USAVolleyball.org
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/USAVolleyball>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/usavolleyball>
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/usavolleyball/>

North Country Region/USA Volleyball Spectator/Parent Code of Conduct

The North Country Region/USAV Spectator Code of Conduct should be posted at every facility during a North Country Region-sanctioned event. Please take a moment to read what is expected of you as a spectator and the ramifications for unacceptable behavior.

North Country Region/USA Volleyball Spectator/Parent Code of Conduct

I will:

- I will abide by the official rules of USA Volleyball.
- I will display good sportsmanship at all times.
- I will encourage my child and his/her team, regardless of the outcome on the court.
- I will educate myself on the unique rules of this facility.
- I will honor the rules of the host and the host facility.
- I will generate goodwill by being polite and respectful to those around me at this event.
- I will direct my child to speak directly with his/her coach when coaching decisions are made that may be confusing or unclear. I will redirect any negative comments from others to the respective event director or program administrator. I will direct all concerns regarding officials to the head coach or club director for my team/club as opposed to the head official directly.
- I will immediately notify the event director and/or program administrator in the event that I witness any illegal activity.
- I will support the policies and guidelines of the team/club that I represent.
- I will acknowledge effort and good performance, remembering that all of the players in this event are amateur athletes.
- I will model exemplary spectator behavior while attending this event.
- I will respect the history and tradition of the sport of volleyball by being a good ambassador.

I will not:

- I will not harass or intimidate the officials.
- I will not coach my child from the bleachers and/or sidelines
- I will not criticize my child's coach or his/her teammates.
- I will not participate in any game or game-like activities (including on-court ball shagging) unless I have a current membership card with USA Volleyball.
- I will not bring and/or carry any firearms at any region event.
- I will not bring, purchase or consume alcohol at any youth/junior volleyball event.

Event management may refuse admission to, or eject without refund, anyone who is deemed disorderly, or who fails to comply with these guidelines or any and all security measures and laws.

Spectators assume all risks incident to the game, or related events and activities, including the risk of lost, stolen or damaged property or personal injury.

Grand Finale

Club volleyball can be the most fun parents and kids have together in middle and high school years, so focus on the road trips and time together and watch your child become an athlete and a leader. It's their road, but you can enjoy the ride. We want your child to have a great experience this year and hopefully continue to play the sport we all love for a lifetime.

If there is information that you feel would aid other parents in navigating the club volleyball world, please email the ideas to Laura Bush at laura@ncrusav.org.

For additional information, please visit our website, www.ncrusav.org, and don't hesitate to contact the [Region office](#) with questions!