



The following items represent changes to the Rules of the Game for the 2025 – 2026 season of play. Each item will be represented in the following fashion:

- Prior year rule terminology
- Updated rule terminology (changes are notated in red)
- Type of Modification and or Rationale

Chronological changes to 2025– 26 Rulebook file

1. Updated rule text as below

Rule 9.2.3 (2024)

The ball may touch various parts of the body, provided that the contacts take place simultaneously.

Exceptions:

9.2.3.1 At blocking, consecutive contacts may be made by one or more player(s) provided that the contacts occur during one action.

9.2.3.2 At the first hit of the team, the ball may contact various parts of the body consecutively, provided that the contacts occur during one action.

Volleyball Canada, 14U and younger competitions, receiving serve with an overhand motion using the fingers (volleying / setting the serve) is not permitted, regardless of the quality of the contact. The first referee will use the “double-contact” signal to indicate this infraction.

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Type of Modification: Alignment with the FIVB Rules of the Game



Rule 12.5 Screening (2024)

Rule 12.5.1 (2024)

The players of the serving team must not prevent their opponent, through individual or collective screening, from seeing the service hit and the flight path of the ball.

Rule 12.5.2 (2024)

Any player of the serving team is forbidden to raise hands above the head during service, until the ball has passed beyond the net.

The 1st referee is encouraged to educate (advise) a team through the game captain.

Rule 12.5.1 (2025)

The players of the serving team must not prevent their opponent, through individual or collective screening, from seeing the service hit and the flight path of the ball.

Rule 12.5.2 (2025)

A player or group of players of the serving team make(s) a screen by waving arms, jumping, or moving sideways during the execution of the service, or by standing grouped, in order that both the service hit and the flight path of the ball are hidden until the ball reaches the vertical plane of the net. Should either be visible to the receiving team this is not a screen.

Rule 12.5.3 (2025)

Any player of the serving team is forbidden to raise hands above the head during service, until the ball has passed beyond the net.

The 1st referee is encouraged to educate (advise) a team through the game captain.

Type of Modification: ENHANCEMENT of FAIR PLAY and as a safety precaution to update the wording of the Screening Rule.

Tie-Breaking Procedures (2024)

If two or more teams are tied at the end of the preliminary round, the following criteria will be applied, in order:

- a. The team having the best ratio of won/lost matches, considering matches between the tied teams, will be ranked higher.
- b. The team having the best ratio of won/lost sets, considering matches played between the tied teams, will be ranked higher.
- c. The team having the best ratio of won/lost sets, considering all matches of the round, will be ranked higher.
- d. The team having the best ratio of points for/against, considering sets played between the tied teams, will be ranked higher.
- e. The team having the best ratio of points for/against, considering all sets played during the round, will be ranked higher.
- f. As determined by the Organizing Committee (e.g. extra set, toss of coin, etc.)



When you apply this rule to break a tie you should follow this sequence:

- a. When two teams are tied, the tie-breaking criteria are applied one after the other until the tie has been broken.
- b. When three or more teams are tied, the tie-breaking criteria are applied one after the other until all the tied teams have been ranked.

NOTE: This means that if there is a tie among teams X, Y and Z and criteria “b” is able to determine X as first, Y as second and Z as third, then no further criteria are to be used. The tie is broken.

However, if criteria ‘b’ determines the seeding/ranking of any of the tied teams, then the remaining teams which are still tied will use criteria ‘c’ and so on to determine their seeding/ranking. Do not start at ‘a’ again. Continue through the sequence of criteria using the results of teams x, y, and z for criteria ‘d’.

Tie-Breaking Procedures (2025)

Two (2) tied teams: When two teams are tied, the winner of the head-to-head match during the round will be ranked higher.

Three (3) teams or more: When three or more teams are tied, the tie-breaking criteria are applied one after the other until all of the tied teams have been ranked:

- a. The team having the best ratio of won/lost matches, considering all matches played during the round between the tied teams, will be ranked higher.
- b. The team having the best ratio of won/lost sets, considering all matches played during the round between the tied teams, will be ranked higher.
- c. The team having the best ratio of won/lost sets, considering all matches during the round, will be ranked higher.
- d. The team having the best ratio of points for/against, considering sets played between the tied teams during the round, will be ranked higher.
- e. The team having the best ratio of points for/against, considering all sets played during the round, will be ranked higher.
- f. As determined by the Organizing Committee (e.g. extra set, toss of coin, etc.)

NOTE: This means that if there is a tie among teams X, Y and Z and criteria “b” is able to determine X as first, Y as second and Z as third, then no further criteria are to be used. The tie is broken.

However, if criteria ‘b’ determines the seeding/ranking of any of the tied teams, then the remaining teams which are still tied will use criteria ‘c’ and so on to determine their seeding/ranking. Do not start at ‘a’ again. Continue through the sequence of criteria using the results of teams x, y, and z for criteria ‘d’.

Type of Modification: Restructuring to address and clarify misconceptions regarding the formula to calculate a tie.

Note: This change in language does not alter the formula in any capacity.



Alternative Consideration: Free Playing Space Requirements

Volleyball Canada recognizes that competition facilities may not always meet the technical requirements of the Rules of the Game. Specific to rule 1.1:

The free playing space is the space above the playing area which is free from any obstructions. The free playing space shall measure a minimum of 7m in height from the playing surface.

In conjunction with rule 8.4.2:

The ball is out when it touches an object outside the court, the ceiling or a person out of play.

Where a competition environment does not meet the minimum requirements for free playing space, Volleyball Canada will permit the use of an adjusted rule set under the following conditions:

Conditions for Implementation:

1. Authority to Determine Free Playing Space
 - a. For consistency of the competition environment, only the competition hosting entity has the authority to assess and determine the actual height of the free playing space.
 - b. No individual participant (coach, referee, manager, player, spectator, etc.) has the authority to determine the actual height of the free playing space.
2. Advance Communication Requirements:
 - a. Where a hosting entity has identified a competition environment that does not meet the minimum requirements of the free playing space, it must clearly communicate the following to all participants prior to the competition:
 - i. The actual height of the free playing space
 - ii. The defined free zone as part of the playing area
 - iii. Clearly identifiable markings on the ceiling or overhead object(s) that define the free playing space above the playing area.
3. Default Application of the Rules:
 - a. If the competition hosting entity fails to provide the information outlined in 2i, 2ii, and 2iii, Rule 8.4.2 will be applied as written for the entirety of the competition.

Adjusted Rule Set:

1. A ball shall remain in play if it contacts the ceiling or overhead object(s) directly above the playing area on the team's own side of the court.
2. A ball, coming from the first hit of the team, that has crossed the net plane to the opponent's free zone totally or partly through the external space, may be played back within the team hits, provided:
 - a. A ball contacting the ceiling or overhead object(s) directly above the opponent's free zone is retrieved from within the opponent's free zone.



- b. A ball contacting the ceiling or overhead object(s) directly above the opponent's free zone may not return to the team's own side of the court. The ball will be deemed 'out'.
3. A ball is deemed 'out' if it contacts the ceiling or overhead object(s) beyond the limitations of the playing area.
4. A ball is deemed 'out' if it contacts the ceiling or overhead object(s) directly above the playing area on the team's own side of the court and immediately thereafter crosses the plane of the net.
5. A ball is deemed 'out' if it crosses the plane of the net and immediately thereafter contacts the ceiling or overhead objects above the opposition's side of the court.
6. A ball is deemed 'out' if it contacts the ceiling or overhead objects on the opponent's side of the court immediately following a completed block.

Important Note:

The language of the adjusted rule set is specific to Volleyball Canada controlled competitions. Provincial/Territorial Associations (PTAs) or other hosting entities may choose to adopt, modify, or replace this language for their own competitions.

It is the responsibility of all participants to:

1. Understand who the hosting entity is,
2. Confirm whether an adjusted rule set is in effect, and
3. Understand how it will be applied throughout the competition.

Rationale: At the request of the Coach and Athlete Pathways Committee