

# CMSA Women's+ Division Dodgeball Rules & Play

(Updated January 9, 2024)

## PLAY:

1. A team can have up to 20 players on a roster.
  - a. Six players will compete on a side; at least FOUR (4) players need to be present at their scheduled time of play – from the original team + substitutes.
    - i. Four players is the minimum amount of players in order to play.
  - b. THREE (3) or less will result in a forfeit of the match, unless they can find substitutes for their team, as detailed in number 3 below.
  - c. All players MUST be a current member of CMSA (current fiscal year 9/1-8/31) and have paid both their CMSA membership fee, signed the waiver, and paid the sport player fee.
  - d. If a team uses an ineligible player, that team will forfeit that match and could forfeit their next match. You cannot ask non-CMSA players to sub.
2. A match will consist of a seven (7) game series.
3. Teams who do not have enough players at the time of their match are allowed to pick up substitute players in order to be eligible to play.
  - a. Teams CAN take pickup players from another team until they have 6 players.
  - b. Picked up players should be removed and replaced by regular team players upon their arrival.
  - c. All substitute players must be current registered CMSA dodgeball players with signed waivers.
  - d. Picked up players may NOT be substituted with others once game begins, unless an injury happens, and the player is no longer able to compete.
    - i. Whoever chooses to sub as a player for a team will stay as a substitute for that team for the remainder of the match unless they become injured or an original member of the team arrives.
  - e. The team in need of subs is solely responsible for finding subs to fill their team for play AND line judging responsibilities.

## THE GAME:

4. **Object of the game:** To eliminate all opposing players by getting them "OUT". This may be done by:
  - a. Hitting an opposing player with a LIVE thrown ball anywhere on the body below the shoulders.
  - b. Catching a LIVE ball thrown by your opponent before it touches the ground.
    - i. LIVE ball: A ball that has been thrown and not touched anything including the floor/ground, another ball, another player, official, or other item outside the playing field (wall, ceiling, obstacles, etc.)
5. **Opening Rush:** Game begins by placing the dodgeballs along the center line, three (3) on each side of the court.
  - a. Players take a position behind their end lines, foot or hand touching the wall/bleachers, after a signal/whistle from the referee, the runner approaches the centerline to retrieve the balls.
    - i. On the far court, there is one side where you cannot reach the back wall, players may just stand behind the line on that side.
  - b. Teams can only take the 3 balls to their right at the beginning of the game.
6. **Centerline:** Players are not allowed to step on or over the centerline. If they DO, they are OUT.
  - a. Players may grab a ball from the opposite side of the center line as long as they do not touch the line or the court on the opposite side of the center line.

7. **Boundaries:** Players are not allowed to cross any boundary lines with any part of their body after the opening rush. If they do, they are OUT. Boundary lines are the white rectangular lines outlining the volleyball and dodgeball court.
  - a. A player's hands are allowed to cross any and all boundary lines to retrieve a ball, but if you physically touch or cross the line, you are out.
8. **Game play:** Balls retrieved during the opening rush must be taken back across the attack line before they can be thrown at an opposing player.
  - a. If the ball is not taken back behind the attack line before it is thrown, that ball is dead and does not count.
  - b. Attack Line: the ten-foot volleyball court line
9. All balls must be thrown using your hands. KICKING BALLS IS NOT ALLOWED.
10. If an opposing player is hit with any ball that had not yet touched the floor, wall, or ceiling, that player is OUT.
11. Any player who steps on or out of the boundary lines is OUT.
12. Play continues until one team is eliminated, meaning all 6 players are OUT.

#### RULES OF PLAY:

13. **Clothing is considered a part of a player's body.** If the ball hits a player's clothing, they are OUT.
  - a. If a player has long hair, their ponytail is in play and counts as clothing if hit.
14. A ball is considered live until it touches the floor, wall, ceiling, or is caught. Once either surface is touched or the ball is caught, it is dead. Once either surface is touched or the ball is caught, it is dead.
15. **First out – First In:** If a defender catches a "live" thrown ball, the thrower is out and one player then returns to the defender's side in order of first out, first in (FOFI).
  - a. Please note, to assist your players, there will be lines taped to the floor on the of the gym they are to exit on. Please have players line up using the line for the first person who is out, then add players behind them as they get out.
16. If a defender attempts to catch a live ball, but drops it, that defender is OUT.
17. The defender may block a live ball with another ball. The ball is still live and can be played until it is caught, hits the floor, wall, or ceiling.
  - a. If the ball that was blocked is caught before it touches the wall, floor, or ceiling, the thrower is out.
18. If the ball that is used to block another ball is dropped as a result of contact from a live ball, the player who dropped the ball is OUT. If the blocking ball is caught before it hits the ground, the player is not out.
19. **Deflection Exception:** If a ball deflects off a player's body, the ball is still live and can be caught.
  - a. If the ball is caught by the player whose body deflected the ball, the thrower is out. If a deflected ball is caught by another teammate, then NEITHER the thrower nor defender is out.
  - b. If a deflected ball is not caught prior to coming in contact with another surface, then the defender is out.
20. **Exiting after elimination:** Once a player has been eliminated, they MUST exit the court IMMEDIATELY.
  - a. Players cannot take their time to exit the court in an attempt to distract live players from being able to play a fair game.
  - b. Eliminated players who do not leave the court immediately will be asked to leave for the remainder of the match by a referee.
21. **Dead Balls:** Any ball that hits any surface including the floor, wall, blocked ball, ceiling, or another ball in mid-air becomes a dead ball and any catches or hits made after this do not count.

22. **Stray balls:** Stray balls can and should be retrieved by those who have been called out but can only be done on their half of the court.
- Referees and line refs should also retrieve balls for the teams.
23. If a ball remains astray for a period of time, a referee will attempt to retrieve it and roll it down the center line.
24. A team intentionally delaying the game is subject to a penalty.
25. **7 Second Holding Rule:** Players can only hold the ball for 7 seconds. This will apply to all individuals regardless of the number of players left on the court.
- After 7 seconds, the ball is considered dead and must be rolled to the other side of the court.
  - Individuals intentionally leaving balls on the ground to delay the game will be subject to the 7 second holding count.
  - Violations will result in forfeiting the ball to the opposing team.
  - Referees will use a slow three-count when a ball is picked up, then will begin the 7-count countdown immediately.
  - The referees will call out the color of the ball as they begin the 7 second holding count to alert the players as to which ball is in the countdown.
  - The only exception to this rule is during Sudden Death.
26. **Dropped Balls:** If a player drops a ball while blocking another ball, that player is eliminated.
- Intentionally dropping balls to avoid the 7-second rule is illegal. If a player intentionally drops a ball to stop the 7-second count, the ball will be immediately surrendered to the other side.
27. **Head Shots:** Head shots occur when the offensive player throws a ball that comes into direct contact with the defender's face/head. A "head shot" will be called if the ball hits the front, back, or side of the face, even if the defender dodges to prevent ball-to-head contact.
- An unintentional headshot, or a ball that hits a defender in the head whether they were moving or not moving will result in the **immediate stoppage of play**.
    - Referees will pause the game to ensure the player who was struck is okay and/or if they need a sub.
    - The thrower who threw the headshot will be called out and go to the end of the "out line" on the right-hand side of their side of the court.
    - The dodgeballs players were holding should be placed on the ground where they were and all players will go back behind the end line to restart play.
  - Play will resume after** the thrower is called out, the headshot player is deemed okay, and all players have moved behind the end line. **Referees will give a countdown of 3...2...1... and blow their whistles to resume play.**
  - Under no circumstances may a player purposely use their head to block/headbutt the ball to save themselves and force the thrower to be out.** Players who intentionally block the ball with their head will be called out.
28. **Substitutions and timeouts:** Substitutions and timeouts are not allowed unless there is an injury or another medical situation. The same 6 players who started the game, must end that same game.
29. **Playoff substitutions:** There will be NO substitutions allowed during playoff games. However many players a team has will be the number of players they will play with during playoffs (minimum of 3, maximum of 6).
- Using subs during playoffs creates an unfair advantage and will not be allowed.
30. **Sudden Death:** if there is only 1 player left from each team, sudden death automatically goes into play and will be set up by the referees.

- a. Procedure: The centerline boundary is dissolved, leaving the whole court open. Players begin with 2 balls in their hands at their own end lines, diagonal from each other. The other 2 balls go on the ends of the centerline. When ready, sudden death begins by a signal from the referees.
  - b. Play continues with these 2 players until one player hits the other with a ball, making that player OUT.
- 31. Ball Treatment: No kicking, crushing, dunking, or playing basketball with the balls at any time.**
- a. Crushing the balls creates a different speed, texture, and trajectory for throwing which can be more dangerous to the other team. Any thrower who repeatedly ignores this rule and the reminder from a referee will be removed from the match.
  - b. It is illegal to intentionally toss or throw a ball into any other ball that is thrown by the opposing team.
- 32. Line Judging:** All teams have designated line judging times. If your team does not fulfill these duties, you will forfeit the first 4 games of your next match.
- a. If your team is unable to fulfill the assigned duties, it is up to your captain to make alternative arrangement for line judges to be present during those scheduled times – FIND SUBS.
- 33. Refereeing:** Any player, coach, or commissioner may not referee a game/match involving the team they play on or coach.
- 34. Commissioner/Change of Commissioner:** If the commissioner decides not to return or there is expressed written interest from another player to become commissioner, within 6 weeks of the end of dodgeball, an email will be sent out to all players, captains, referees, and commissioners for voting. Each person will have one vote. The person who received the most votes will be the new CMSA Women's Dodgeball Commissioner.
- a. If a tie occurs and the current commissioner is not running, they will decide the winner. If a tie occurs and the current commissioner is running, the CMSA president will decide the winner/the process to determine the winner.

#### COVID-19 RULE ADDITIONS:

1. Masks are STRONGLY recommended indoors at all times. As of Jan 5, 2024, they are not required.
  1. **Approved masks: disposable, KN95, N95, & cloth. NO GAITERS OR BANDANAS.**
2. We know that all players are vaccinated, but also know that the COVID-19 virus is everchanging. If rates rise in Chicago and we are told to increase mask wearing, masks will become mandatory during dodgeball. Consistent mask wearing inside the gym will help us keep everyone safer.
3. If a player is feeling sick or have any of the COVID-19 symptoms, stay home!
  1. Your team can play with a minimum of 4 people and are allowed subs from other teams, (up to 6 total players) if your team is short.
4. If you have been exposed to someone (unmasked, face-to-face contact for longer than 15 minutes) who tests positive for COVID-19 you must test negative before coming to dodgeball. We recommended that you test within the next 2-5 days after exposure because that is typically when symptoms arise.
  1. **If you are exposed within 24-48 hours of dodgeball, do not come. Let your captain know you have been exposed so they can plan accordingly and get subs if necessary.**
5. If you or anyone on your team tests positive or you have been exposed after being at dodgeball, email [womensdodgeball@chicagomsa.org](mailto:womensdodgeball@chicagomsa.org) so we can alert other players to get tested.

1. Refer to the CMSA email about how to alert CMSA to COVID-19 exposure or infection.
2. We will keep the player's identity confidential but must let others know for their safety.
6. Should you test positive for COVID-19, wait to come back to play until you have at least 2 negative rapid tests.
7. **Spectators:** If your team brings spectators, know that there is a COVID-19 capacity limit on each side of the gym. If/when we reach capacity, we will ask people to leave. This will be a first come, first to stay rule.

## CODE OF CONDUCT:

# New Code of Conduct Rule

**If a player should intentionally or unintentionally cause any significant injury to another player through physical contact, especially injuries which involve bleeding or requires hospitalization, then one or more players involved in the incident may be removed from play, and the injury must be reported to the board of directors.**

### Goals:

Decrease aggressive play  
Track with the plan to decrease significant injuries over time

### We ask:

Your support in our efforts to achieve the goals above  
Update your documents  
Inform your officials and captains of the new rule  
Enforcement is by officials or league representatives such as the commissioner, not enforced by players  
Your visible support to creating a safe and fun environment for all players

- HONOR SYSTEM OFFICIATING: The players are ultimately up to enforcing and upholding the rules of Dodgeball when playing and/or officiating. Referees will make most calls but it is expected that players will read and follow the rules during each game. If there is a controversial play, the referees will make the FINAL DECISION! A Referee have the right to stop a game and discuss the incident with the other referee before proceeding.
  - In respect for the spirit of the game, and for your fellow players, there is absolutely NO protesting. Any and all questions regarding a call by the referee will be done by captains only.
- Unsportsmanlike conduct will NOT be tolerated.
  - This includes foul language, racial slurs and verbal abuse, regular hits above the shoulders (head-hunting), unnecessary roughness and physical abuse, slamming down or kicking balls in anger when hit, arguing with officials, staff, participants, or fans, or abuse the honor system.

Minor violation(s) of these codes will result in a YELLOW CARD WARNING. More severe violations warrant a RED CARD EJECTION. Two yellow cards equal a red card.

- If a player receives two yellow cards in the same match, that player must sit out the rest of the evening.

- If a player receives 2 red cards in a season, that player will be suspended from league play for the remainder of the season.

#### THINGS TO REMEMBER:

- Understand, appreciate, and abide by the rules of the game.
- Respect your opponents and congratulate them in a courteous manner following each match whether in victory or defeat.
- Line Judges have the same authority to call players OUT for being hit or stepping out of bounds.
- Respect the integrity and judgement of game referees. There will be NO ARGUING WITH OFFICIAL OR LINE JUDGES.
- Be responsible for your actions and remain in self-control.
- **Shoes: Your street shoes/boots should not be worn as your court shoes. If for some reason you are using your street shoes, you MUST, and we stress, MUST bring a towel or something to clean your shoes off before stepping into the gym. ALL wet shoes must be removed prior to entering the gym.**
- NO alcohol is allowed on Park District property. If you or any of your teammates are discovered drinking you will be asked to leave, resulting in your team forfeiting your matches for the evening.
- The league commissioner and/or CMSA Board of Directors member has the right to suspend someone from participating in the Dodgeball League due to unsportsmanlike conduct.
- All players are required to carry a valid identification card (e.g., driver's license, state I.D., etc.). CMSA Board Members, referees, and the league commissioner have the right to ask any player to see their ID at any time.
- Teams who forfeit games with less than 24 hours notification will be subject to a \$50.00 team fee. This fee must be paid prior to your next scheduled matches.
- All dangling or sharp jewelry should be removed prior to playing.