

Middletown Bocce Ball League

Rules and Regulations

Adopted from "BOCCE STANDARDS ASSOCIATION STANDARD COURT BOCCE RULES FOR LEAGUES & TOURNAMENTS". **These rules are established for the benefit of the league members. If a member feels that a rule needs to be added, removed or altered please submit a request in writing or by email explaining the proposed change and why it will make the league play fairer or more efficient.**

A. Introduction

The game of bocce is played on a rectangular court using eight large balls ("bocce") and one smaller target ball ("pallino"). The object of the game is to roll the bocce closest to the pallino. Teams consist of four players, and each team stations two of its players at each end of the court. Each team member rolls two bocce from one end of the court and when all eight bocce have been rolled, points are scored. Play continues from alternate ends of the court until one team has scored 12 points.

B. Courts and Bocce

Our bocce courts are 76' long and 12' wide which is consistent with many of the bocce courts in the United States. There are five lines across the court: two lines each at 6' and 10' from each end of the court and one line across the center of the court.

Bocce used in League play are regulation diameter ($107 \pm 2\text{mm}$) and weight ($920 \pm 20\text{gm}$) and are supplied for all courts by MBBL.

C. Definitions

Bocce	The large ball that is rolled to score points
Court Manager	The Capos of the respective teams in a match are also Court Managers.
Pallino	The small ball which serves as the target ball
Sideboard	The 76'-long boards on either side of the court
Backboard	The 12'-long boards at each end of the court
Fault line	The line across the center of the court
Pointing foul lines	The two lines across the court at 6' from each end of the court
Hitting foul lines	The two lines across the court at 10' from each end of the court
Pointing roll	A bocce roll intended to leave the bocce in close proximity to the pallino
Hitting roll	A bocce roll intended to strike another bocce or the pallino
Inside bocce	The bocce closest to the pallino

Outside bocce	Any bocce not the inside bocce
Capo	Designated captain of a team who oversees team composition, coin tosses, points scored, and disputed rulings
Registered Player	A person who has signed the <i>Release of Liability and Waiver</i> , signed the <i>Rules and Regulations</i> , signed the <i>Rules of Conduct</i> , signed the <i>Capo Responsibilities</i> and paid their entry fee.

D. Frames, Games, and Matches

1. During the course of a Frame, two bocce are rolled by each of two team players at the same end of the court.
2. A Frame is complete when all eight bocce have been rolled from one end of the court.
3. New Frames start at alternating ends of the court.
4. A Game consists of sequential Frames and is won by the first team that attains a score of 12 points at the end of any Frame.
5. Teams may substitute new players at the beginning of each Game.
6. A Match consists of three Games.
7. A match is won by the team that wins at least 2 out of the 3 games.

E. Teams

Matches are played by two four-player teams whose compositions are designated in advance by their respective team Capos. Teams may have any number of members. All members must have returned their registration packets and paid their fees. The recommended (but not required) team size is 6 to 8. A team may have more than 8 members, but consideration should be made of the limited playing time on large teams. A 4 person team is acceptable, but consideration should be made of the handicap if a team member cannot be present.

If it is found after the fact that a non-registered player participated in any portion of a match, the team that they played for will forfeit the entire match.

To begin a Frame, each team sends two players to each end of the court, and all eight bocce and the pallino are at one end of the court.

A team may play shorthanded (2-3 players), but each player may only roll two bocce per Frame.

A member may play for only one team at a time.

(Added 1/22/22) A team may not add new players or players switching from another team after Sept 5th. Hardship cases or exceptions should be submitted to the Board of Directors.

F. Starting Time and Forfeiture

1. The starting time for all Matches is 6:00pm.
2. A team not present at the starting time forfeits Game 1.
3. A team not present within 15 minutes of the starting time forfeits Games 1 and 2.

4. A team not present within 30 minutes of the starting time forfeits Games 1, 2, and 3.
5. This rule is enforced at the option of the opposing team's Capo, either at the beginning of the match or by prior arrangement with the opposing Capo.
6. If a team has at least 2 members present at courtside at 6 P.M. it is deemed that the team is ready to play and the coin toss shall be made, and the late team will start play with either 2 or 3 players present as outlined in Section "E" ("Teams"). Members showing up late may step in to the ongoing games between frames.

G. Playing the game

1. General

- a. Players must wear only smooth, soft-soled shoes to protect the court's surface.
- b. No one is allowed on the sideboards during play.
- c. Players must be completely inside the court when rolling the pallino or bocce.
- d. After release, the bocce must contact the court's surface before passing the Fault line.
- e. Foot faults occur when the pallino or bocce is released after a player has stepped beyond a foul line.
- f. If a wrong-colored bocce is rolled, it is replaced with the correct colored bocce.
- g. Occasional and brief playing-partner consultations may be conducted at the Fault line.
- h. One Capo from each Match is selected as a Court Manager for another Match.
- i. If the two teams agree, the court may be repaired between games.

2. Starting

- a. A coin toss determines which team initially rolls the pallino and chooses its ball color. The coin flip may be performed by any team member if the Capo is not present. That team member shall be designated Capo until the Capo arrives. The game may be started from either end of the court.
- b. When rolling the pallino, a player may step on but not beyond the pointing foul line before the pallino is released.
- c. The pallino must be rolled past the fault line and come to rest at the opposite end of the court and at least 12" from the backboard and sideboards.
- d. If the initial pallino fails to come to rest in the designated area, the opposing team then rolls the pallino.
- e. If neither team rolls the pallino successfully, it is placed in the center of the hitting foul line at the opposite end of the court and the team that rolled initially rolls the first bocce.
- f. If the first bocce thrown in a frame is a dead ball (Section G (4)) the other team shall roll the first bocce.

3. Rolling Bocce

- a. Unless the player declares otherwise, all bocce rolls are considered pointing rolls. When making a pointing roll, a player may step on but not beyond the pointing foul line before the bocce is released.
- b. If declared in advance, a hitting roll may be undertaken. When making a hitting roll, a player may step on but not beyond the hitting foul line before the bocce is released.

- c. Once the pallino is in play, the team that initially rolled the pallino rolls its first bocce, and immediately thereafter, the opposing team rolls its first bocce to determine the inside and outside bocce.
- d. The team with the outside (“away”) bocce then rolls consecutively until they roll a new inside bocce.
- e. When a new inside bocce is rolled, the opposing team then rolls consecutive bocce until they roll a new inside bocce or they finish rolling all four of their bocce.
- f. After a team rolls its fourth bocce, any remaining bocce are then rolled by the opposing team.
- g. Any one player may roll a maximum of two bocce in a single Frame. The order of rolling on the respective team members is determined by the rolling team at the beginning of each frame.
- h. If a player rolls out of turn, the bocce is returned and any bocce that have been moved are replaced as near as possible to their original position.
- i. If the pallino leaves the court or crosses the Fault line after initially coming to rest, the Frame ends and no points are scored.
- j. A Frame is complete when all eight bocce have been rolled.

4. **Dead balls**

- a. Any bocce deemed a dead ball is removed from the court for the duration of that Frame.
- b. Any bocce moved by a dead ball is replaced as near as possible to its original position.
- c. Bocce hitting the sideboards are not dead balls unless they meet one of the dead ball definitions.
- d. Dead balls are defined as:
 - 1. Bocce that touch the backboard before touching another bocce or the pallino.
 - 2. Bocce that leave the court.
 - 3. Hitting roll bocce that fails to contact another bocce or the pallino.
 - 4. Bocce first contacting the court's surface beyond the Fault line.
 - 5. Bocce released during a foot fault.
 - 6. Third or fourth bocce rolled by the same player in a single Frame.
 - 7. Any team's bocce at rest that is moved by one of its team members

5. **Scoring**

- a. The first team to reach 12 points wins the game and the respective points are recorded on the score sheet.
- b. During play, if a player touches an opposing team's bocce while it is in motion, the opposing team may re-roll the bocce if desired. If a re-roll occurs, any bocce moved by the deflected bocce shall be replaced as near as possible to their original positions before the re-roll.
- c. During play, if a player moves an opposing team's bocce while it is at rest, the bocce is replaced as near as possible to its original position.
- d. A frame is complete when all 8 bocce have been thrown. On completion of a Frame, the inside ball team scores one point for each of its bocce closer to the pallino than any bocce of the opposing team.

- e. If each team's bocce closest to the pallino is equidistant from the pallino, no points are scored for those two bocce and the scoring is made based on the remaining bocce.
- f. Once the scoring for a Frame is complete, the team which just scored points rolls the pallino from the other end of the court to begin the next Frame.

6. **Measurements**

- a. Capos are responsible for measurements from the pallino to any bocce. Each team's Capo shall designate one person to stand adjacent to the pallino in order keep the players informed about the position of the balls and which color ball is "away". These persons shall do measurements necessary during the game unless the Capo chooses to make the measurement.
- b. If a visual judgement cannot be made about a measurement, the players must use an MBBL-approved measuring device to determine any pallino-to-bocce distance.
- c. If a bocce or the pallino is accidentally moved during a measurement, it shall be replaced as near as possible to its original position.

7. **Dispute resolution**

Team Capos are expected to referee their Games, but if an unresolved dispute arises, the Game must be halted until a Court Manager from another Match resolves the matter. A Court Manager's decision is final and binding on both teams involved in the dispute.

8. **Switching ends**

At the completion of a Game, players must switch ends so that no player plays two consecutive Games from the same end of the court.

9. **Rainouts**

If a Game is terminated because of rain, the score sheet shall be up to date and retained and the match re-scheduled for a later date convenient to the teams. Play will resume at the same point in the match.

10. **Rule Changes:** Members are encouraged to suggest rule changes and all requests in writing will be considered. Please make suggestions by email to a member of the Board of Directors.