

BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS - NNYS

2026 Youth Basketball Rules & Regulations

Kindergarten – 8th Grade

1. Players & Team Format

- **Kindergarten – 1st Grade:** Games will be played 4-on-4. Games will be played 3-on-3 when necessary.
- **2nd–8th Grade:** Games will be played 5-on-5.

2. Game Length & Substitutions

Kindergarten – 1st Grade

- Games will consist of four 7-minute quarters.
- A mandatory substitution break will occur halfway through each quarter.
- All players on the bench must enter the game during each substitution break.

2nd – 4th Grade

- Games will consist of four 8-minute quarters.
- A mandatory substitution break will occur halfway through each quarter.
- Substitutions are permitted only at the beginning of each quarter and during the designated halfway substitution breaks.
- All players on the bench must enter the game during each substitution break.

5th – 8th Grade

- Games will consist of two 20-minute halves.
- A running clock will be used throughout each half.
- The clock will stop during the final minute of second half.

3. Defensive Rules

Kindergarten – 2nd Grade: Man-to-Man Defense

- Teams must play man-to-man defense.
- Each defender must remain within approximately five feet of their assigned offensive player.
- Players must wear corresponding wristbands to identify their defensive assignments.
- Defenders may switch assignments when defending screens or picks, provided only one defender guards the offensive player outside the lane.
- Double-teaming is permitted inside the lane.

3rd– 8th Grade

- Any defensive formation is permitted, including man-to-man and zone defense.

4. Wristband Rules (Kindergarten – 2nd Grade)

Wristbands are used to identify defensive matchups and help coaches, players, and referees manage offensive responsibilities.

Blue Wristband – Point Guard

- The player wearing the blue wristband will serve as the team's point guard for that rotation period.
- Each rotation period equals one-half of a quarter.
- Every player must wear the blue wristband for at least one rotation period during each game.

Red Wristband – Inbound Passer

- The player wearing the red wristband will be responsible for inbound the basketball on all out-of-bounds plays during that rotation period.

Player Development & Matchups

- The wristband system is designed to give every child an opportunity to develop ball-handling, passing, and leadership skills.
- Coaches are encouraged to communicate and coordinate player matchups to promote fair and competitive play.
- Coaches may strategically assign the red wristband to a more experienced player when a developing player is serving as point guard.
- Referees may adjust matchups when a significant skill difference creates an unfair or potentially negative experience for a player.

The primary purpose of this rule is to encourage participation, build confidence, and support skill development for all players.

5. Defensive Lines & Full-Court Press

Players may not begin defending the opposing team until the ball reaches the designated defensive line.

Division	Defensive Line
Kindergarten – 1st Grade	Half-court line
2nd Grade	Volleyball line
3rd – 4th Grade	Half-court line
5th – 8th Grade	Full-court defense permitted

Full-Court Press Rules (5th–8th Grade)

- Full-court pressing is permitted.
- A team leading by 20 or more points may not use a full-court press.
- Once the 20-point lead threshold is reached, the leading team must allow the opposing team to advance the basketball beyond half court before initiating defensive pressure.

6. Stealing the Basketball

Kindergarten – 1st Grade

- Players may not steal the basketball directly from an opponent who is holding or dribbling it.
- Stealing or intercepting passes is permitted.
- Blocking shots is permitted.

2nd – 8th Grade

- Players may legally steal the basketball in accordance with standard basketball rules.

7. Time-Outs

Kindergarten – 4th Grade

- No team time-outs will be permitted.
- Coaches may use scheduled substitution breaks to provide instruction and make adjustments.

5th – 8th Grade

- Each team is allowed two time-outs per half.
- Unused time-outs do not carry over to the following half.

8. Iowa Rule (Kindergarten – 2nd Grade)

The Iowa Rule applies to all divisions through 2nd grade.

- Players may not initiate a held-ball situation (jump ball) by grabbing or attempting to tie up the basketball or hit the ball out of a players hands while it is controlled by an offensive player.
- This rule is intended to promote player safety, reduce unnecessary physical contact, and encourage proper defensive techniques.

9. Basketball Rim Heights

Basketball rim heights will be adjusted according to grade level and division.

Division	Rim Height
Kindergarten (5-year-olds)	6'6"
1st Grade Girls	7'0"
1st Grade Boys	7'0"
2nd Grade Girls	8'0"
2nd Grade Boys	8'6"
3 rd – 4th Grade Girls	9'6"
3rd Grade Boys	9'6"
4th – 8th Grade	10'0"

10. Three-Second Lane Violation

Kindergarten – 4th Grade

- The three-second lane violation will not be enforced.

5th – 8th Grade

- Standard high school basketball rules regarding three-second lane violations will apply.

11. Basketball Sizes

The following basketball sizes will be used:

Division	Basketball Size
Kindergarten – 2nd Grade	27.5" (Youth)
3rd Grade Boys	27.5" (Intermediate)
3rd – 8th Grade Girls	28.5" (Intermediate)
4th – 5th Grade Boys	28.5" (Intermediate)
6th – 8th Grade Boys	29.5" (Official)

12. General Basketball Rules

Unless specifically modified within these recreational league rules, all games will follow standard high school basketball rules.

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Elko encourages coaches, players, parents, and spectators to demonstrate good sportsmanship and maintain a positive, respectful environment.

Our primary goal is to provide a safe, enjoyable basketball experience where all participants have the opportunity to learn, develop their skills, and build confidence.

13. Fouls

4th grade and above divisions will follow regulation high school foul shooting rules. 3rd grade and under do not track personal or team fouls.

WEATHER CANCELLATION PROCEDURES

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Elko makes every effort to hold scheduled basketball practices and games, including during periods of inclement weather.

However, weather conditions or other circumstances may occasionally require cancellations to ensure the safety of participants, families, coaches, and staff.

Cancellation Notifications

- When cancellations are necessary, announcements will be posted at www.NNYSA.org.
- Cancellation notices will be posted at least three hours before the scheduled practice or game whenever possible.
- Parents and coaches are responsible for checking the website during adverse weather conditions.

For the most current information regarding basketball schedules and weather-related cancellations, please visit www.NNYSA.org.