



Cornhole Rules & Handbook

Introduction

Born Sports League was founded with the vision to strive to make the world a better place through sports by bringing together a diverse and inclusive community to have fun, create a sense of belonging and acceptance, and give back to the communities in which we play. The purpose of BSL is to engage members of the LGBTQ+ community, friends, and allies in healthy, active sports and activities by creating and managing structured games, leagues and tournaments in a safe, consistent, and organized fashion.

Our mission is to bring together LGBTQ+ and ally people to build community through organized sports and create an experience that is inclusive, supportive, affordable, fun, and gives back to the community.

Born Sports League follows these principles in order and in precedence. At no time shall any higher ranked principal be compromised for the sake of another by any official, team, or player.

- 1) **Safety:** All measures will be taken so that any and all activities rank safety as the league's number one priority.
- 2) **Participation / Inclusion:** All people are welcome in BSL games and activities, and participation is fundamental to all involved.
- 3) **Respect:** All people affiliated with BSL, its teams or its events shall treat each other with dignity and respect at all times, both on and off the field.
- 4) **Fun:** The purpose of BSL in its core, is to foster a fun, philanthropic, social environment.
- 5) **Honesty / Fair Play:** It is expected that all players, teams and officials shall adhere to a strict honor code at all times.
- 6) **Competition:** While BSL games and activities keep score and award champions, at no time shall any player, team, or official allow the competitive nature inherent in sports take precedence over any of the above founding principles.



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Section I - BSL League Principles and Conduct

1: BSL League Principles

1.1. Sportsmanship

Officials, players and their guests shall conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner at all times, including both on and off the field. BSL expects the highest level of respect from anyone affiliated or attending our events and conduct unbecoming will not be tolerated at any time.

1.2. Agreement: By participating in an BSL event or activity, each competitor agrees

- a) To be governed by the rules as presented by BSL, both as written and in the spirit and intent of said rules.
- b) To accept any decisions or penalties imposed by said rules.
- c) To respect all aspects of the league's priorities.
- d) To treat all materials, equipment, and venues with great care including the environment in which we are playing. This includes, but is not limited to, garbage, foul language, smoking, illegal substance, weapons, and alcohol policies and damage to property.

1.3. Drug & Weapons Policy: Born Sports League is a drug and weapon-free zone, and any use or distribution of any illegal substances or the possession of any weapons of any kind while attending or engaging in any BSL sponsored events is strictly prohibited.

- a) **Alcohol:** While may or may not be regulated by venue restrictions, any public intoxication will not be tolerated and is subject to disciplinary actions, including ejection from the venue for the remainder of the day.

1.4. Venue Rules: All rules and policies put in place by the venue must be respected and will be strictly enforced. (Such as, no pets, no smoking, no loud music, no alcohol, etc.)

1.5. Discrimination: BSL has a strict no-discrimination policy. If anyone feels they have been discriminated against for any reason they are to report it to league management immediately. Any person affiliated with an BSL event making racial, ethnic, religious, or sexual orientation slurs or actions are subject to disciplinary proceedings up to and including dismissal from the league.

1.6. Bullying & Taunting: Teasing, shouting, arguing, cheering against, complaining, name-calling, excessive swearing, verbally or physically abusing or intimidating players or game officials in any way (even if intended as a joke, but not received in that manner) will not be tolerated under any circumstances, regardless if it occurs in person, off venue, or on-line. Off the field behavior, including at social events, public spaces, or even on social media that project any players, teams or league officials in an aggressive or highly negative light will be considered the same as behavior on the field, and is subject to the same disciplinary policies and procedures.

1.7. Disciplinary Policies: Apply to any infraction listed or unlisted that is deemed unsportsmanlike or is contrary to the BSL core philosophy and principles.

- a) Game Referee, league officials, as well as any Umpires may issue warnings.
- b) Only BSL Board Members or Sport Officials appointed by the BSL Board can issue Yellow or Red Cards at any time.

- c) Players receiving a Yellow Card must sit out the remainder of the game.
 - d) All “Cards” remain in place for 6 months from date of issue.
 - e) Upon a second occurrence of unsportsmanlike conduct within the 6 month window, the player shall receive a Red Card, and will be ejected from the venue for the remainder of the day, and receives additional two “game day” suspensions to be enacted upon the next occurring game days (which may occur in a future season). This player will also lose eligibility to participate in the next occurring tournament, both internally and among BSL sponsored traveling teams.
 - f) After the Red Card has been issued, any additional infraction within its 6-month window will constitute a charge of gross misconduct and will be subject to long-term suspension or permanent ejection from the league as determined by the GM and League Officials.
 - g) Players receiving suspensions or ejections may apply, in writing, for reinstatement following a 6-month waiting period.
- 1.8. Injury Policies:** Safety is and will always be the number one priority for Born Sports League and the following policies are in place for everyone’s well-being.
- a) Injured players may be replaced or can exit a game at any time without penalties.
 - b) Any injury that incapacitates a player, even if momentarily, will stop active play immediately.
 - c) Any injury to the head that causes any dizziness or unconsciousness must be reported immediately to the attending league officials who shall stop game play to assess the situation. Emergency medical officials will be called for any head related injuries.
 - d) Any injured player that is actively bleeding must exit the field of play and cannot return until the bleeding has stopped or has been treated and covered.
 - e) Injured players that required immediate medical attention must provide a doctor’s note verifying that they are recovered and physically capable prior to returning to active play.

Section II – Cornhole Basics

2: Field & Equipment

- 2.1. **Board Placement:** Boards are placed 27ft from front edge to front edge (or maximum distance up to 27ft based on size constraints of venue). Boards are 24 inches by 48 inches with a 6 inch hole placed 9 inches down and centered.
- 2.2. **Pitcher's Box:** The pitcher's box is the rectangle 4 feet by 3 feet at each end of the court, parallel with, and on both sides of the boards. Each player must remain in the pitcher's box while pitching a cornhole bag.
- 2.3. **Foul Lines:** Foul lines shall be defined as an imaginary line 27 feet between the front of each board. The foul line will be parallel to the front of the board.
- 2.4. **Uniforms:** Matching for all participating team members are strongly suggested following the second game of the season, with the exception of substitutes or newly registered players. There is no penalty for individual players without matching uniforms. However, it is strongly encouraged to match.
 - 2.4.1. While teams are welcome to create and wear custom shirts for league play, **Born Sports League strongly encourages the inclusion of the official BSL logo** on all custom apparel. Visibility of the BSL logo helps promote league identity, unity, and community pride across all teams. To request a high-quality version of the logo, please email info@bornsportsleague.com.
- 2.5. **Team Supplied Equipment:** BSL will provide bags to all teams, however, teams are permitted to bring their own bags to use during matches. If a team uses their own bags, the same 4 bags must be used by all players on the team for the entire match.

3: Teams

- 3.1. **Number of Players:** Each team will consist of at least 4 but no more than 8 registered players. Teams must have a minimum of 2 registered players per team for each game.
- 3.2. **Team Names:** While team names may be suggestive or include double entendre, team names that are deemed offensive or disrespectful in any way are not allowed.
- 3.3. **Team Events:** May organize chat rooms, social media accounts, practices, or events. However, the Born Sports League code of conduct extends to those locations as well and must be followed in the same manner.
- 3.4. **Recreational Team Composition:** To promote fairness and maximize overall enjoyability for the league, if any one or more of the following conditions are met, a maximum of 50% of the team roster is permitted to remain on the same team in the same division for the following season. Note this does not apply to the Competitive Division.

a) The same team (in which over 50% of the team roster from the previous season has carried over to the current season) wins the End of Season Tournament for two consecutive seasons.

b) A team goes undefeated for all played (non-forfeited) games throughout a single season AND wins the End of Season Tournament for that season.

Examples of acceptable ways to meet the maximum 50% requirement include:

- The team moves up a division for the following season if a division above their current division exists.
- The team splits into two new teams that both remain in the same division for the following season, and each of the two new teams includes 50% or less of the original team roster.
- The team splits into two teams, in which only one of the new teams remains in the same division for the following season. The new team that remains in the same division for the following season includes 50% or less of the original team roster.

4: Players

4.1. **Player Eligibility:** All players must meet the following criteria:

- a) Must be 21 years or older.
- b) Must have signed liability and conduct forms.
- c) Must have paid registration (or substitution) fees.

4.2. **Team Captain:** Each team shall have one official “Captain” representing their team. This “Captain” may be substituted should the registered captain be absent.

4.3. **No Show:** Players who no-show, without warning or contact, twice during a regular season are subject to removal and replacement by the team captain with League Approval. Players removed from a roster for this reason are not eligible for refunds.

4.4. **Absenteeism:** Players who miss three or more regular season game days, regardless of the reason, are subject to removal and replacement by the team captain with League Approval. Players removed from a roster for this reason are not eligible for refunds.

4.5. **Substitutions:** May play on any team under these restrictions:

- a) Regular season games only (not tournaments).
- b) They must not be a registered member of any team in the league.
- c) They must sign a waiver and pay a \$10 “per night” fee prior to playing.
- d) The team has less than 2 players in attendance.
- e) Each team may only have a maximum of one sub during any regular season game.

Section III Cornhole Game Play

5: Fundamental Rules

5.1. Games

- a) The game should start within 5 minutes of the original scheduled time, (or within 5 minutes following the conclusion of the previous game.) Teams unable to take the court within 5 minutes are scored as a forfeit and the game is canceled.
- b) Captains will play a game of Rock, Paper, Scissors. The winner will choose either their side of the board (with teammates facing each other on the same side of the board) or the first toss. The losing team will receive the remaining option. Once selected, teams must remain on their designated side for the entire match—no switching sides. Additionally, each team must use the same set of bags throughout the match; switching bags with the opposing team is not allowed. Games are played to 21 points. The first team to reach or exceed 21 points wins.
- c) Matches will be scored as the best 2 out of 3 games played.
- d) Teams of 2-6 players will take turns playing games against their opponent. Players may rotate how they see fit, however, no more than 2 players throwing per frame (1 from each team) and all players present must play at least one frame during each match.
- e) Teams are in charge of keeping their own score.
- f) At the end of the match, captains are responsible for verifying and initialing or signing the score as confirmation the sheet is correct. No disputes will be accepted after the night is complete.
- g) Each team will have 4 bags each per frame to throw.
 - i) BSL will provide bags to all teams, however, teams are permitted to bring their own bags to use during matches. If a team uses their own bags, the same 4 bags must be used by all players on the team for the entire match.
- h) If the board moves during a frame, teams must wait for the end of the frame to realign the board to the proper spot.
- i) Players must deliver the bag with an under-hand release.

5.2. Scoring

- a) Bag Points
 - The approved method of scoring for the sport of cornhole is “cancellation” scoring. In cancellation scoring, the points of one player cancels out the points of their opponent. Using this method, only one player/team can score in each inning. Example: If at the end of the frame, Team A has 3 and Team B has 2, Team A will add 1 point to their score.
 - Bag In-The-Count (Woody) : Any bag which comes to rest anywhere on top of the board. Each is worth one (1) point.
 - Bag In-The-Hole (Cornhole) : Any bag which is thrown through the hole or knocked through the hole by another bag. Each is worth three (3) points.

- b) If bags become piled inside the Cornhole board hole and may interfere or obstruct with the next pitch or if there is question whether a Cornhole bag would have naturally fallen through the hole, a player may request to “rake” the Cornhole bags that have fallen inside the hole.

5.3. Foul Bags

- a) Foul Bags – Refers to any bag that has not been determined as Bag In-The-Count or Bag In-The Hole or was designated a foul bag as the result of rules violation. The penalty is to declare the bag a foul bag, which requires the bags to be removed from the court prior to resuming play. A foul bag is defined as:
 - Any bag pitched when the player has (1) made contact with or crossed over the foul line, or (2) started or stepped completely outside the pitcher’s box before the bag is released
 - A bag pitched from a different pitcher’s box than the first bag
 - Any bag that made contact with the court or the ground before coming to rest on the board.
 - Any bag on the board that is also touching the ground. However, a bag hanging off the edge of the board has value as long as it is not touching the ground
 - Any bag removed from the board before scoring has been agreed upon for that bag
 - The offending team (who touches the bags) forfeits all remaining bags and tallies the score of just the bags thrown before the foul was reported
 - The non-offending team tallies twelve (12) points as if they had thrown four Bag In-The-Holes (Cornholes) during the inning
 - A bag that leaves a player’s hand once the final forward swing of the delivery process has started shall count as a pitched bag.
 - A bag that is accidentally dropped by a player before the final forward swing has started shall not be considered foul and may be picked up and pitched.

5.4. Venue Obstruction

If a bag that is tossed hits an object (Ceiling or an object hanging from the ceiling, such as a wire) the bag will be played out from where it lands. The bag shall not be re-thrown from the pitcher’s box.

5.5. Time Expiration

Each cornhole match has a 45 minute time limit. When time expires, the current frame is scored as-is, even if it has not been completed, and the team with the higher score at that point is declared the winner. No new games may begin once 40 minutes have passed in the match. In the event of a tie at the 45-minute mark, sudden death is immediately implemented, where the next point scored—either by a bag landing on the board or going through the hole—determines the winner. As a result, no game will end in a tie, however, a match can end in a 1-1 tie.

Section IV Cornhole Tournament Regulations

6: Tournament Details:

- 6.1. **Timing:** Following each regular season, and on special occasions, Born Sports League may host a special Cornhole tournament under these guidelines.
- 6.2. **Rules:** Tournaments shall follow the same rules and regulations as the regular season except, the match will be scored as the best 2 out of 3 games played and will not be timed.
- 6.3. **Eligibility:** To play in the tournaments, each player must qualify under these guidelines.
 - a) **Play on a competing team:** As a regular roster player.
 - b) **Tournament Substitutions:** No substitutions are allowed during tournament play, at least 2 rostered players must be present in order to compete.
- 6.4. **Seeding:** Tournament seeds will be based on regular season (or pool play) placings.
 - 6.4.1. **Seeding Tie Breakers**
 - a) **Two-way ties are broken:**
 - A1) First by direct Head-to-Head record.
 - A2) Then, if the same, by who most recently won, Head-to-Head.
 - A3) Then, if the same, by games won differential among all competitors, from the regular season.
 - A4) Then, if the same, by coin toss.
 - b) **Three-way (or more) ties are broken:**
 - B1) First by direct Head-to-Head records.
 - B2) Then, if not broken among all teams, by games won differential among all competitors, from the regular season.
 - B3) Then, if still the same, by coin toss
- 6.5. **Home Team:** Higher seed team is “Home” team and shall Toss first.
- 6.6. **Tournament Bracket:** Utilize a single elimination format.
 - a) Highest seed plays lowest seed.
 - b) Second highest plays second lowest seed.
 - c) Third highest plays third lowest, etc...
 - d) The BSL Board of Directors along with the BSL Cornhole Director reserve the right to organize the tournament into divisions at their discretion, based on the results of the regular season.

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December 21, 2022 Revision Notes: Sections 5.1, 5.5, and 6.5 have been updated for clarity.

February 7, 2023 Revision Notes: Sections 5.1 updated for 5 minute start time.

May 22, 2024 Revision Notes, clarified rule 5.1.D, added rules 2.5 and 3.4

June 18, 2024 Clarified rule 3.4

June 2, 2025 Revision Notes, clarified rules 3.1, 4.5, 5.1g, 5.5, 6.1 & 6.2. Added rule 2.4.1.

