

Volleyball England

Rules and Regulations 2025-26 Season

Frequently Asked Questions

Section 1: Rules Interpretation

- 1. The setter plays the 2nd team hit in a clear double contact. As a result, the ball travels closer to the net than intended. A defending team player reaches over and blocks the ball in the opponents' court space with an attacking team player in position to play the 3rd team hit. Should the referee whistle a 'double contact'?**

In this situation the blocker has prevented an attacker from playing the ball (the 3rd hit of the team) and therefore the decision of the referee should be 'reaching beyond' against the blocker.

- 2. A setter attempts to set up an attack but because of a double contact the ball travels over the net in to the opponents court and not near his outside hitter. Should this ball be judged for double contact?**

Yes, this is a clear case where the second internal hit has become an attack hit and therefore the double contact should be judged as a fault. The referee can only whistle once the attack hit has been completed.

- 3. The player on the second team hit plays the ball but in doing so the ball slips through their hands and hits their head. The contacts occur in the same playing action; is this allowed under the new interpretation?**

No, this is a clear case where the player has made two distinctly different contacts on the ball and therefore this is a double contact.

- 4. Does the relaxation of the rule for the second team hit also apply to the first team hit? If the first team hit becomes an attack hit should it be judged for double contact?**

No, there is no change to the long-understood judgement of the first team hit. Multiple contacts are allowed on the first team hit if they occur in the same playing action. If this becomes an attack hit then play will continue.

- 5. The 2nd referee identifies a positional fault in the receiving team at the moment the ball is tossed for service. When should they whistle the fault?**

The ball is not in play until the moment of the service hit. Therefore, the 2nd referee must NOT whistle the positional fault of the receiving team until after the service hit. Rule 12.6.1 still applies in that a fault of the service execution has precedence over a positional fault of the receiving team.

- 6. How should we deal with positional faults on the receiving team?**

Unless it is completely obvious—like players are fully switched and clearly out of position—let it go. Smooth Refereeing is about prioritizing what matters, reading the moment, and stepping in only when necessary. Coaches have asked for fewer interruptions to keep the game flowing.

- 7. A player of the receiving team is at position 5 but wishes to go to position 1. On the ball toss they run out the back of the court to gain their intended position. At the moment of the service hit they are off the court. Is this a positional fault?**

Rule 7.4 is clear: *At the moment the ball is hit by the server, each team must be positioned within its own court (except the server).* Therefore, a player that has left the court prior to the service hit is out of position and the 2nd referee would whistle this as a positional fault at the moment of the service hit.

- 8. The server makes to serve but does not release the ball. The receiving team on seeing the server move to make the ball release change positions. The server waits until the players have moved out of position and then serves the ball. How should referees deal with this situation.**

The 2nd referee in this situation should call and signal a positional fault of the receiving once the service hit has been executed. The 2nd referee must be aware of the movement of the receiving team players. They must be certain that the players are out of position at the ball release. They must also use good communication skills to remind players that are moving too soon. The 1st referee must remain vigilant that the server must still execute the service within 8 seconds.

- 9. A back row player of the serving team is stood at the net during service acting like a front row player. Is this player out of position?**

Whilst the players of the serving team can occupy any position on the playing court at the point of service this type of action by a back row player should be discouraged. There is no benefit to this player acting in this way as they must revert to the back row as soon as the ball crosses the plane of the net following the service.

- 10. The serving team opposite player is in rotation at position 4 and the team's outside hitter in the front row is at position 2. When the server hits the ball the opposite player is stood at position 2 and the outside hitter is at position 4. Is this allowed?**

Yes, this is one of the more obvious changes allowed for the serving team to occupy any position at the service hit. The two players must remember that if service is lost then they must return to their correct positions in the rotational order.

- 11. The serving team players wish to remain in the rotational order. When can they move to the playing position?**

The serving team players may not move positions until the served ball has crossed the vertical plane of the net. This means that players remaining in the rotational order may not 'switch' until the ball has crossed the net. Moving sideways until the ball has crossed the net constitutes a screen.

- 12. How should referees deal with the serving team moving at the service hit and before the ball has crossed the vertical plane of the net?**

On the first observation that the serving team players are moving or 'switching' before the ball has crossed the vertical plane of the net the 1st referee should inform the players that they cannot move. **The 1st referee should not resort to calling a 'screen' unless the players clearly do not respond to the advice.** If this happens later in the match, that is in another set, then the 1st referee should educate the players again. Referees must not look for opportunities to call a 'screen' but actively prevent teams from making these actions.

13. A player of the serving team stands at the net with their hands raised next to their head but not protecting the back of their head. Is this action allowed?

The spirit of the rule change to blocking is that players should be allowed to protect themselves. Raising their hands to the level of their head whilst not protecting themselves is not in the spirit of this rule change. The 1st referee must intervene and request that the player lower their hands. Failure to do so would result in a screening fault when the ball is hit by the server.

14. An attacking player spikes the ball towards the opponent. The attack hit is blocked by the receiving team and the ball strikes the attacking player on the head whilst they are still above the top of the net. Can this be classified as a block and the team have three hits to return the ball?

No, the definition of a block cannot be applied in this instance. This must be classified as the first hit of the team. The attacking player is not attempting to intercept the ball coming from the opponent.

15. A team only has 6 players and a Libero. A regular player is injured. Can the Libero play as a regular player?

Once the Libero has been designated on the team roster as a Libero they cannot operate as a regular player under any circumstance. If a regular player in this situation becomes injured and is unable to play then the team is incomplete.

16. A back-row player attacks the ball and in doing so their momentum carries them into the opponent court. Should this player be sanctioned with a penalty for entering the opponent court without cause?

No, this is not how this guideline should be implemented. The guidance that a player that enters the opponent court without cause should receive a penalty (or other sanction if already served a penalty) applies only where a player does so to air a grievance or to confront an opponent player. Players entering the opponent court to check on an opponent player's welfare, or through an extension of a playing action, should be permitted to do so as long they return to their own court as soon as possible.

Section 2: NVL Regulations

1. Post Padding

The match confirmation should include confirmation that post-padding for both the posts themselves and the base (if required). If this is not stated on the confirmation please contact the club and ask the question. All clubs will be sent the below policy from Competitions.

For the avoidance of doubt – if the post-padding, or mitigation, is not in place then the match cannot take place. If the match confirmation says that post-padding is not available then the referees do not need to travel. Do not referee a match in a VE Competition without the padding in place – you will potentially be jeopardising your insurance if any injury occurs.

Which competitions does this encompass?

1. All National competitions, including;
 1. National Volleyball League
 2. National Cup
 3. National Shield
 4. Student Cup
 5. U18/U16/U15 Junior Grand Prix Series & Inter-Regional Championships
 6. Sitting Volleyball Grand Prix

What are the standards?

1. As determined through the [Volleyball England Facilities Strategy](#) on pages 12 and 13 post padding and base protection are required
2. This is reinforced in the NVL Regulations *“D.3 Equipment MOS, All equipment to adhere to Minimum operating standards: The aim of the MOS are to increase the presentation of matches, increase participant satisfaction and create an aspirational pathway through the leagues, to lower barriers to entry into National competitions in the NVL and in the National Cup and Shield and reduce unplanned costs.”*
 1. *(12) Post Pads – To enhance player safety by reducing the risk of injury from impacts with the posts and base during play. It shall be correctly fitted before the warmup.*
 2. *(13) Base Padding- If the posts have anchor points, then base padding is required to ensure all components of the base are entirely covered.*

What are my solutions if I am missing either?

1. Purchase the equipment. This can be found on [VolleyStore](#)
2. If this is not possible in the short term could you partner with another local club / facility to share the equipment, or enquire with the away team?
3. If this is not possible please contact competitions@volleyballengland.org to have a conversation about a temporary solution

Why is there no relaxation of this regulation?

Any volleyball injuries caused as a consequence of equipment are assessed by Volleyball England's insurance provider. If the equipment used does not have the protection as outlined in Volleyball England's Technical Guidelines the match was not played following the correct standards. Volleyball England are currently managing claims from last season of this nature, and cannot relax standards that may jeopardise the outcomes of claims.

2. Coach

The issue of 'who can be coach?' and recorded on the scoresheet as such is raised each year. A coach under the NVL regulations must have a Level 2 qualification or be in the process of gaining such qualification. Therefore, please follow the guidance below:

- The teams should produce a printed copy of the team roster for that match which should have all the participants listed including the coaching staff (this can be electronic but must be completed properly)
- If a coach has been entered into the 'Coach' position in the team roster then the referees must accept that coach as 'Head Coach' and allow them to fulfil all the responsibilities of the coach at that match
- Referees should **not** request 'proof of qualification' from a coach

If a coach attends a match with a team but is not shown on the team roster from Volleyzone as the coach then they cannot assume the responsibility at the match. The rules of game allow an assistant coach to become coach but **only** where the coach is absent after the match has commenced – that is, the coach has to be present at the start of the match. A coach is not absent by being a player on court.

If the team has no coach then the team captain will assume the role.

If at the end of the match the team shown in SportLomo is not the same as the team that has played the match then please make sure a comment is added in the Referee Remarks.

3. Scoresheet Remarks

The remarks section of the scoresheet should only be completed if the 1st referee authorises a comment to be made. These are limited to:

- The Most Valuable Player for each team, e.g. Team A MVP #2
- Reason for a delayed start to the match, e.g. The previous match overran etc
- That a protest has been made – this must record the actual point in the match at which the team protested. The full protest should be submitted by the team via email and not on the scoresheet, e.g. Team A Protest accepted at 21:12 Set 2 – Reason Second Yellow card awarded to Team B

Please note that a protest **must be requested by the game captain of the 1st referee following the point to which the protest applies** (Rule 5.1.2.1 and 27.2.3.2). It cannot be retrospectively made after the match.

The 1st referee should refrain from making detailed comments on the scoresheet. Any issue that occurred during the match, or is noticed after the match, that is required to be reported to VE Competitions should be made either through the 'referee report' in SportLomo or via email. The referee has no authority to determine the outcome of a dispute raised at a match and should report and allow the Competitions Working Group to make the determination (cwg@volleyballengland.org).

4. Compression

There has been some comment regarding the NVL (and Rules of Game) around the use of compression sleeves. The basics around this topic are:

- All players on the team must wear the same colour compression sleeves
- These can be all black, all white or the colour of the uniform sleeve

- Players may not wear visible non-compression clothing under their playing shirt – e.g. a long-sleeved t-shirt. If it is not compression it should not be worn.

A great shot of Germany complying with the compression requirements of the Rules of Game during the VNL Finals this year.



Above: Italy complies – the compression is dark blue, and the jersey edging is also dark blue.

Below: Italy – men – note captain #6 and player #18 wear a compression shirt under the uniform – it complies as the same colour as the playing shirt. The captain also complies with shorts under shorts.



This FAQ is version 2 and dated 2nd December 2025.