Basic Basketball rules

Number of players

If you want to play basketball for fun, you have the possibility of playing on your own. But you can also play team games with either 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 players on each teams. Teams can be mixed, with boys and girls, or not.

On a competition level, a team is made up of 5 players playing on the court and 5 players sitting on the bench that can be used for substitution during the whole period of the game.

Positions

Each player is assigned a position when playing. This position is usually determined by the height of the player.

The tallest player on the team usually plays "center" also known as "position 5", while the medium size ones play "forwards" / "position 3 and 4". The shortest players then play "guards" / "position 1 and 2".

Scoring

A player scores when he manages to throw the ball into the basket, with the ball passing through the basket from above the hoop. Scoring a basket increases the team's score by 3, 2 or one point.

If the player successfully shoots from outside of the 3 points line, the basket is worth 3 points, otherwise it is worth 2 points.

It is also possible to score one point when shooting from the free throw line, after a foul for instance.

Violation

A violation occurs when the player breaks one of the rules of Basketball. A violation results in the awarding of the ball to the opponents.

It can also result from the player taking more than 2 steps without bouncing the ball on the floor. This is called Traveling.

Another example of violation occurs when a player stops dribbling and then starts dribbling again or when he bounces the ball with both hands on the ball. We call this a double Dribble.

A violation is also committed if you twist your hand, when in contact with the ball, beyond the vertical, bringing it under the ball. This is called Carry, as the hand must always remain on the top of the ball.
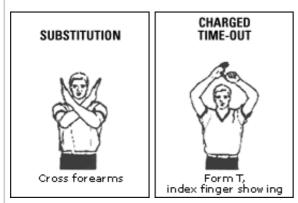
Fouls

A foul is an illegal action that can be committed by player from one team against a player from the opposing team. Basketball is generally said to be a non-contact game. If contact occurs beyond what is deemed to be reasonable, or if a player thereby obtains an unfair advantage from it, a foul is committed.
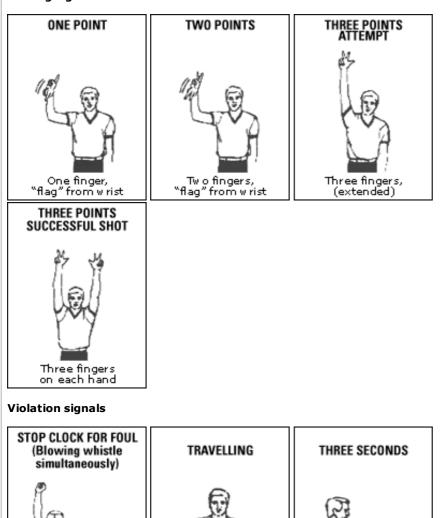
There are two types of fouls. The first are called defensive fouls. They occur when the offensive player is being fouled by the defender. Defenders should not block, push, trip, strike or hold the player in possession of the ball. The second ones are the offensive fouls. For example, a player in offence commits a foul when charging into a stationary defender.
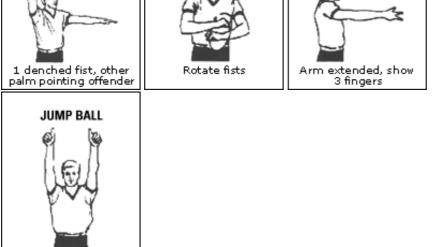
Referee signals

Administrative signals

SUBSTITUTION

Cross forearms

CHARGED TIME-OUT

Form T,
index finger showing

Scoring signals

ONE POINT

One finger,
"flag" from wrist

TWO POINTS

Two fingers,
"flag" from wrist

THREE POINTS ATTEMPT

Three fingers,
(extended)

THREE POINTS SUCCESSFUL SHOT

Three fingers
on each hand

Violation signals

STOP CLOCK FOR FOUL
(Blowing whistle
simultaneously)

1 clenched fist, other
palm pointing offender

TRAVELLING

Rotate fists

THREE SECONDS

Arm extended, show
3 fingers

JUMP BALL

Thumbs up