Foam Rules

(Adapted from USA Dodgeball)

1. Teams

- 6-8 players on the court, depending on team sizes
- Roster sizes will not exceed 12 players
- No on court gender requirements

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2. Equipment

- 6 foam dodgeballs all one color
- Standard court: volleyball court, (~30 ft by 60 ft)
- Center line divides teams into two square zones
- Boundary lines (or line markers) and nets between courts

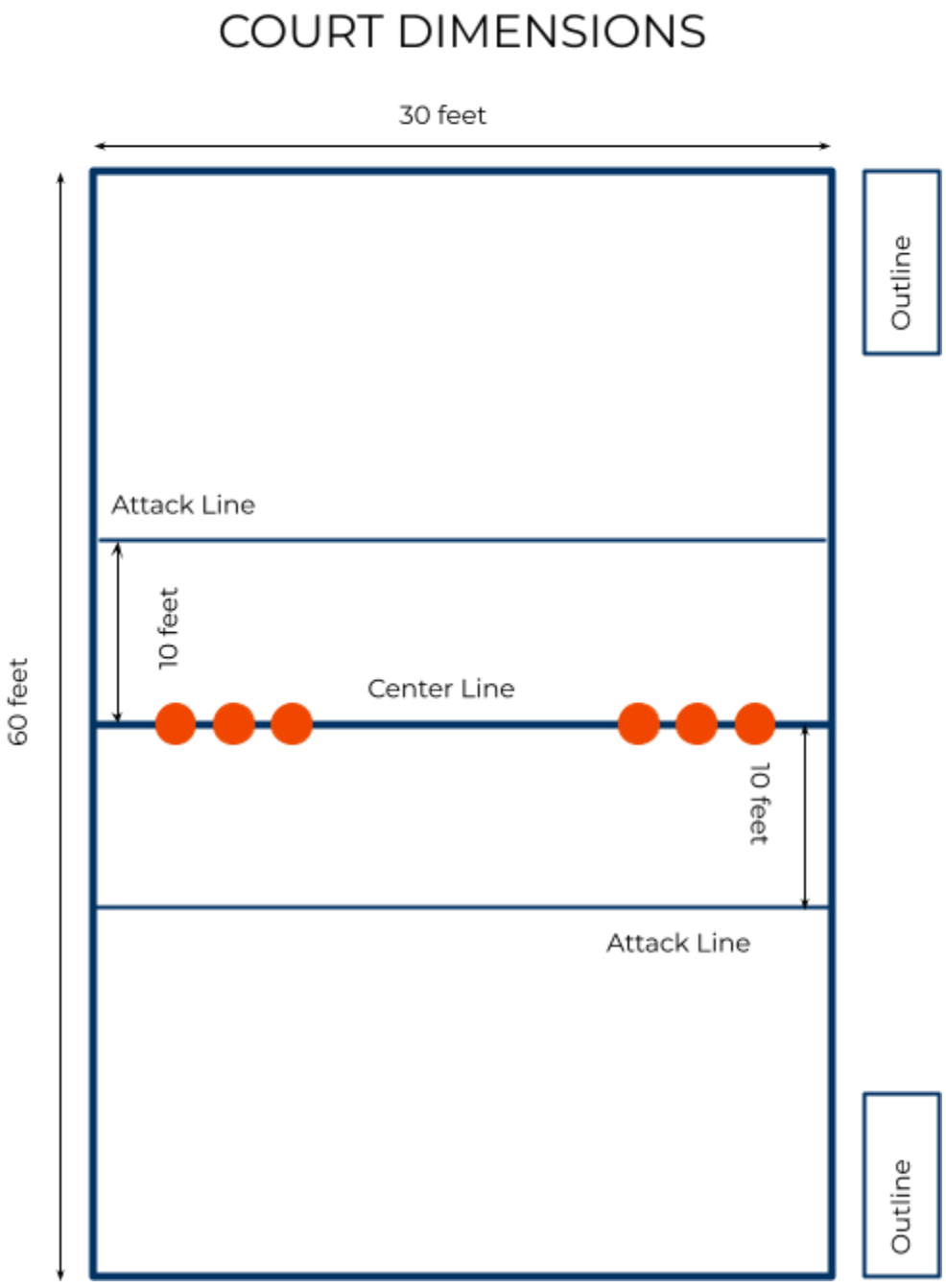
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3. Match Format

- **Each match will last 44 minutes, with two 22 minute halves.**
- Teams will switch sides at half time with a 4 minute break.
- The first team to eliminate all opponents wins a point. Balls reset for the opening rush and a new game starts on the referee's whistle.
- Teams play as many games as possible in 22 minutes.
- Any game in progress when time expires at 22 minutes will be completed using **"No-Blocking". Balls will reset with 3 balls on both sides.** Players must reset with one foot on the backline before continuing play.
- Each team is allowed **one 60 second timeout per match**. The game clock will stop. Timeouts may only be requested between games or during an official stoppage of play.

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4. Game Start (Opening Rush)



- 6 balls placed along center line
- Players start with at least one foot touching the back line
- At the start, players run on the **right side only** to retrieve balls from the center

Ball Activation

- A ball must be brought behind the attack line before it is "active", meaning a ball cannot be thrown before becoming "active".
    - If a ball is thrown that is not yet activated, the throwing player is out.
- An inactive ball can be used to block any incoming, thrown balls that are active.
- Initial warning given first. Subsequent offenses from the same player is an out.

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5. Burden to Throw

- The home team has the initial burden at the start of each match.
- The winner of the previous set (one game) starts with the burden.
- Only active players on the court can relieve burden with valid throws.
- Any out players may not roll balls to the opposing team.

Burden is established by:

1. Majority of balls, if equal than
2. Majority of players, if equal than
3. The team who did not have the burden last.

Burden is reset by any **valid throw from either team**.

Valid Throw

- A valid throw is an attempt to hit an opposing player out. The live thrown ball must land or pass within 3 feet of a player or a player's position at the moment the ball was released.
- A two-handed throw is a valid throw.
- Underhand, side-arm, and chest-pass throws are valid throws.
- Throwing multiple balls at once is a valid throw.
- Throwing at a ricocheted live ball to prevent an opponent from securing a catch is a valid throw.

Invalid Throw

- An invalid throw is a live thrown ball entering the opposing team's side of the court within more than 3 feet of a player or a player's position at the moment the ball was released.
- Burden will be re-established and game play will continue.
- The first invalid throw during a match results in a verbal warning; any additional instances from the same player results in the thrower being called out.

- Spiking, slapping, punching, or kicking a ball is not a valid throw. The ball is dead and the throw is invalid.
- Throwing a ball during any stoppage of play is invalid (i.e. when a referee is on the court). Referees may use discretion to call players out or safe depending on the sequence of events.
    - Balls that are thrown after the referee steps onto the court are not valid.
    - Any balls from these invalid throws should be returned to the side they were on before the referee stepped on the court.
    - Play stops if a ball from another court enters the court.

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6. Getting Out

A player is **OUT** if:

- Hit directly by an active/live ball
- Their thrown ball is caught
- Step completely on a boundary line, step out of bounds, or fall out of bounds.
- Step on the center line (except during the opening rush).
- Their blocking ball is knocked out of their hand by an incoming thrown ball.
- Hit on the fingers, hand, or wrist while blocking an incoming ball
- Hit in the head
- **A trap is an out.** A trap is when a "live" ball simultaneously hits a player and the floor.

A player is **SAFE** if:

- They evade balls thrown at them and the thrown balls hit the gym floor or wall
- They catch a "live" ball. The opponent thrower is out, the catcher is safe, and a teammate in the outline enters the court if one is there.
- They block a ball to the ground without any fingers getting hit by the incoming ball.

A ball is considered “live” until:

- It hits the floor, wall or ceiling
- It hits an already out player
- It hits a referee, bystander, or other inanimate object

A "live" ball can create one or many outs:

- A thrown ball can hit one or more players before falling to the ground. All players hit by the ball before it becomes "dead" are out.

- If a player blocks a ball into themselves, they are out.
- If a player blocks a ball into your teammate, the teammate is out.

A "live" ball can be caught before becoming "dead":

- A thrown ball that is blocked and then caught by yourself results in the thrower being out.
- A thrown ball that hits you but is caught by a teammate before hitting the ground results in the thrower being out. The player that was hit is safe.

Losing ball possession

- A player may intentionally release held balls to attempt a catch. If they accidentally lose possession or are disarmed during the catching attempt, they are out — even if they complete a valid catch.
- If a player drops the incoming ball thrown at them, the catch is not valid and the player is out.

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7. Ball Collision

Ball Collision occurs when multiple balls collide in-flight before they hit another object or player.

- If a player's "live" thrown ball and an opponent's live thrown ball collide while in flight, both balls are immediately dead.
- If "live" thrown balls from the same team collide while in flight, those balls are considered "live". Those balls can create outs or be caught.
    - Balls that ricochet from one another, hit blocking balls, or active players, remain "live" until they become dead.
- If a player executes a controlled drop or throw of a live ball from their possession and that ball collides with the live thrown ball from the opponent, both balls are immediately dead.

8. Headshots

- **Headshots are highly discouraged**
    - Headhunting is not allowed. Players caught head hunting will be ejected from the game, season, or league.
    - Any player who throws high (above a player's standing shoulder height) repeatedly can be given a warning.

- A headshot does result in an out. This includes any headshot received while standing, bending, crouching, sliding, ducking, or jumping.
- If you throw a headshot, it is your responsibility to check in on the player who received the headshot
- Referees must stop the game to ensure the player is okay to continue or if they prefer to step off the court.
    - If a player chooses to sit out, the next player in the outline enters
    - If no players are in the outline, a rostered or substitute player may take their place for that game (one point).

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9. Blocking

- Players may block with a ball
- If the blocking ball is knocked out of their hand → blocker is OUT
- A player must maintain control of all balls in possession before a block and after a block.
    - Example: Player holds two balls and one is knocked out of hand while blocking → player is OUT
    - Example: Player holds three balls and one falls out of their arm while blocking → player is OUT
    - Example: Player holds two balls, blocks with one ball and throws the other ball during or after the block → player is SAFE
- **If the player is hit on the fingers, hand, or wrist → blocker is OUT**
- If the player cleanly blocks but the ball ricochets and hits the player's head or body → player is OUT

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10. Catches

Control means a live player secures a ball with any part of the body and can intentionally retain, carry, or direct it without relying on a surface, object, or another player.

A valid catch requires demonstrated control and one point of contact inbounds.

- A valid catch gets:
    - The thrower OUT
    - The first teammate from the outline returns to the court
    - Players must enter from the **BACK** of the court and **NOT** the sideline.

    - Catches must be controlled (no trapping against the ground or other objects)
- **Entering players become live once they establish one point of contact inbounds.**
- Out-of-order entry: player goes to the end of the outline and no player enters from that catch.
- A player must be off the court in order to re-enter play from a valid catch.
    - The player does not have to be at the outline or off to the side of the court but the player must have both feet off the court.
    - A player who is hit on the court while a catch simultaneously happens on the court is still out and must go to the outline. The catch does not revive the player on court.

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11. Ball Retrieval

Ball retrieval is also called "shagging". Active players may not leave the court at any time to shag a ball if the team has additional rostered players who can retrieve balls or has out players who can shag balls.

If the team has no designated ball retrievers or out players, a player may raise their hand and exit anywhere at the back of the court. Players must retrieve the ball quickly and return to the court by raising their hand. **A player is active with one point of contact with the court.**

Active players may not leave the court in anticipation of a ball going out of bounds. They must wait for the ball to be out of bounds before putting their hand up to exit the court.

All balls must remain on the court. **A player cannot exit the court with a ball in hand.**

For ball retrievers and out players, a ball can be shagged once it is completely out of the court.

- Any ball sitting on a boundary line is considered inside of the court.
- Any out player that touches a ball that is still inside of the court results in forfeiting that ball to the opposing team.

Active players on the court are allowed to reach over any boundary line to retrieve balls without touching out of bounds or their opponent’s zone.

- Ball retrievers / out players are prohibited from fighting for stray balls with active players.
- Ball retrievers / out players are prohibited from reaching over the extension of the center to line to retrieve balls. **If a ball is on the opponent's side, it is the opponent's ball.**

Any ball retrieved for a team cannot be passed or rolled to the opponent's side of the court. You can only retrieve balls for your team.

- If a team's ball retriever accidentally gives the ball to the opposite team, the ball shall remain with the opposite team.

Active players may not purposefully place balls over the center line to relieve burden or to force opponent players to retrieve balls near the center line. This results in those balls being given to the opposing team.

Balls should be returned to the court by passing them to teammates (in hand, rolling, or bouncing) or by placing the ball at the back of the court.

Balls can be held on the side line. A ball retriever or out player may hold a ball for active players on the court. The 10 second countdown to release burden begins when all balls are within the court boundaries **OR** are being held by active players, out players, or ball retrievers.

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12. Stalling Rule

- A team cannot control the majority of balls for more than **10 seconds**
- Referees will count down from 10 and the team with the burden must throw at least one ball to reset the burden.
- If a referee says "zero" out loud and a ball has not crossed to the opponent's side, then the burden has not been relieved.
- **Failure to throw and relieve burden results in all balls being turned over to the other team**

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13. Boundaries

- **Lines are lava**
    - Stepping on a boundary line = OUT

    - Stepping completely outside = OUT
    - Touching the gym floor outside a boundary line = OUT
    - EXCEPTION: A player may legally step over the center line only during the opening rush.
    - SUBJECT TO CHANGE: Boundary lines may be "soft" depending on court lines and other markers used in the gym. A "soft" boundary line is one you can step on but not completely over.
- **If you catch a ball and fall out of bounds → CATCH AND OUT**
    - The thrower is out from the catch
    - The catcher is out from falling out of bounds
    - One player from the outline enters the court from the valid catch
- If you catch a ball with any body part touching a boundary line or outside the court = player is OUT
- Catching can be done over a boundary line. However, the player must have at least one point of contact inbounds (not on a line) for a valid catch.
    - **Catching a ball mid air and landing out of bounds is not a valid catch and results in the catcher being out.**
- **No suicide throws.** Players cannot jump over the center line to throw at opponents.

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14. No Blocking

At the end of a period or half, balls reset with 3 balls on each side. Active players on court also reset with one foot on the backline. The referee will blow the whistle to start no-blocking.

During no blocking, a held ball is considered an extension of the player's body. A live thrown ball striking a held ball counts as a hit on the player holding it.

The thrown ball remains live after contacting a held ball and continues its live-ball sequence until it becomes dead. It may be caught or cause additional outs by ricocheting into other players, subject to the normal catch and live-ball rules.

- The blocked ball can ricochet to create additional outs.
- The blocked ball can be caught by the blocking player or a teammate.
- A player can intentionally drop their ball to catch an incoming ball.
- If balls collide after release from opponent players, both balls are dead.

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15. Disciplinary System

Verbal Warning

Match referees and tournament staff may give verbal warnings during gameplay as a reminder to keep the play continuing. Warning offenses include the following:

- Invalid throws.
- Inactive players stepping onto the court while a game is in progress.
- Pinch throwing or pinch blocking.
- False starts during the opening rush.
- Minor verbal taunting, jeering, screaming, temper tantrums.
- Wearing apparel that is not permitted.
- Minor interference per the referee's discretion.

Verbal warnings do not carry over across matches. A player may only receive a verbal warning once within a match for specific offense. Continued verbal warnings for the same offense will result in the player receiving a blue card.

Blue Card

The team must start with one player in the outline at the start of the next game.

- Any non-captain arguing with a referee.
- Any non-captain arguing with the opposing team.
- Any captain arguing excessively or aggressively with referees or opponents.
- Pinching a dodgeball during gameplay.
- A ball retriever excessively fighting with a live player for a stray ball.
- Wearing apparel or equipment that is not permitted after a verbal warning.
- Taunting an opponent.
- Interference per the referee's discretion.

Yellow Card

The player receiving the yellow card must leave the court, cannot be caught back in, and must sit out the next game. The team is allowed to substitute the player.

- Verbal aggression or threats to any opponent or referee.
- Taunting or intimidating any referee.
- Playing without registering.
- Cheating or manipulating a rule.
- Attempting to use video replay on a referee's decision.

Red Card

The player must leave the court, cannot be caught back in, and is suspended from playing for any remaining games and matches. Players may not return to play in any SF Dodgeball event without league approval.

- Two Yellow Card offenses in the same match by the same player.
- Intentionally kicking a ball in an aggressive manner.
- Intentional ball deflation or damage.
- Intentionally colliding with an opponent during gameplay
- Committing any verbal offense to any referee, player, or spectator including racial slurs or discriminative comments.
- Any physical altercation between players before, during, or after gameplay.
- Spitting at any player, spectator, or referee.

Ejection

- Physical fighting.
- Refusal to remove uniforms containing hateful or vulgar content.
- Intentionally vandalizing the venue or equipment, including equipment.
- Spectators harassing and interfering with participants or gameplay.
- Participants harassing the spectators.
- Providing alcohol and illegal drugs at the event.
- Heavily intoxicated participants.
- Using objects as weapons to harm participants.

Sportsmanship Rules

- Keep it respectful
- Be competitive and kind. Tell your opponents "great hit" and "great catch".
- Referee decisions are final
- No head hunting