Regulations:

- A game consists of 4 X 10 minute quarters – the clock is stopped each time the referees’ whistle is blown.
- Each team may have 2 timeouts in the first half and three in the second half.
- A team has 24 seconds to shoot the ball.
- A team has 8 seconds to bring the ball from the back court to the front court.
- After the 4th team foul in each quarter the penalty of 2 foul shots applies.
- Players are allowed 5 fouls – after the fifth foul the player must leave the game.
- The inside of the sideline is the court boundary.

Rules:

- **Out of Bounds**: the ball is out of bounds when it:
  a) bounces on or outside the boundaries of the court
  b) touches a sideline, end line or the floor or any object (including a non-player) beyond those lines.
  c) hits the back of the backboard or any backboard support

A player is out of bounds when the player
a) touches a sideline, end line, or the floor or any object (including a non-player) beyond those lines.
b) If a player touches a live ball while they are out of bounds, they immediately cause the ball to go out of bounds.
c) If a loose ball goes out of bounds, it is caused to go out of bounds by the last player to have touched it.
d) If two opposing players are involved in a held ball situation and one player steps out of bounds, a jump ball results.

- **Dribbling:** A player may dribble for as long as they like up to 24 seconds. They may stand and dribble in one place or run and dribble. A player may not dribble with 2 hands at once. If the player stops dribbling they may not dribble again.

- **Backcourt rule:** if a team has the ball in their front court they are not allowed to cause it to go back into their back court. This rule is all about team control.

- **5 second rule:** if a player is being closely guarded (within 1 metre) he/she has 5 seconds to shoot, pass, dribble or roll the ball. This includes a player throwing the ball in from out of bounds.

- **3 second rule:** A player from an offensive team is not allowed to stay in the restricted area (keyhole) for more than 3 seconds. This applies only to the basket in which they are attempting to score. **Do not call this if**
  a) the shot for goal is on its way
  b) The player has the ball and is about to shoot
  c) the player is on the way out of the area

- **Foot Ball:** players may not kick or divert the ball intentionally. Any other contact with the feet is ok and play should continue. The contact must be **foot to ball** not **ball to foot** to be called.

- **Jump balls:** are only used when you are beginning the game

  Don’t have your whistle in your mouth
  Throw the ball as high as you think the tallest player can jump
  Make the jumpers come up to the line – they may not run out of the circle, leave their positions or tap the ball on its way up
  Other players **do not** have to stand around the circle and **do not** have to stand still
  Each player can tap/touch the ball twice but then must not touch it until it touches another player, the floor or the basket or backboard.
However a jump ball situation can occur when:

a) two opponents both hold the ball and after a reasonable attempt neither can get the ball from the other  
b) the ball gets stuck in the basket support  
c) the referees cannot tell who put the ball out of bounds

In these situations the possession is decided by the directional arrow.

- **Throw-ins:** A player

  a) may only move 1 metre from where he or she has been given the ball  
  b) may not step onto the court before releasing the ball  
  c) may not touch the ball before anyone else  
  d) may not take longer than 5 seconds to throw the ball in  
  e) may not throw over the backboard  
  f) may not throw from the front court to the back court  
  g) may not throw the ball out of bounds or through the hoop before it touches another player  
  h) must not hand the ball to a player on the court; it must be thrown or tossed

- **Progress:**

  This is one of the hardest rules to understand and sometimes it is not easy to see on court as well when you are a new referee. Three things that will help you are:
  a) A player will establish a pivot foot – they may not change it  
  b) A player who is running along and caught the ball is allowed a two count rhythm to stop, pass, dribble or shoot.  
  c) A dribbler may take as many steps as he or she likes between dribbles  
  d) If you count three steps – it is progress
When any of the above rules are broken they are called **VIOLATIONS** and for the most part the ball is awarded to the opposing team out of bounds close to where the violation took place.

**FOULS**

A foul occurs when a player or coach breaks a rule covering either contact with an opposing player or unsportsmanlike action.

- Basketball is a so-called **non-contact** sport but basketball rules recognize that it is not really possible to have 10 players running around a small area without making some contact.

- If a referee blew the whistle for every piece of contact in a game it would be disastrous and there would be few players left at the end of the game.

- A game needs to flow to be enjoyable but you must call enough to keep control. **Be fair and consistent.**

- You must always blow your whistle if you think the contact put the opponent at a disadvantage and you must pay special attention to the dribbler to make sure they are not impeded in any way. You will learn more about the **advantage/disadvantage** philosophy of basketball as you become more experienced.

There are 2 types of fouls: **Personal Fouls and Technical Fouls**

There are three attributes that constitute a **personal foul**.
- **Player foul** - all personal fouls can only be called on the ten players actually on the court.
- **Contact involved** - all personal fouls must involve actual physical contact.
- **Opponents** - all personal fouls must involve contact between opponents.

**Note:**
Personal fouls may occur during both live and dead ball periods.
**Technical fouls** are all non-personal fouls (no contact) during playing time and all fouls (including contact) during intervals of play. There are two types of technical fouls.

- *Unsatisfactory conduct* - this involves conduct by a player, coach or bench personnel that includes swearing, disputing decisions, obscene or demeaning gestures, leaving the coaches box, players illegally leaving the court or illegally coming onto the court during play.
- *Procedural infractions* - this involves procedural errors such as 6 players on the court, requesting a time out when none are left, substitution errors, etc.

**Note:**
Make every effort to sort out these procedural infractions without calling a technical foul. Most of these errors are not intentional; therefore, only penalize the ones that you believe are deliberate.

There are five foul calls. They are:

- Blocking
- Charging
- Hands
- Holding
- Pushing

as well as unsportsmanlike foul and disqualifying foul.

Some important points are:

1) All players are entitles to empty floor space as long as they don’t cause contact getting there.
2) Learn the Principle of Verticality – any player is entitled to a cylinder of space from floor to ceiling. This cylinder is about the width of the players shoulders.
3) If the defensive player or dribbler leans outside his or her cylinder and contacts an opponent then he or she is generally responsible for the foul.
4) It is legal for players to extend arms outside the cylinder especially on defence- Contact is another matter.
5) If a player with the ball contacts a defensive player, who has established a legal guarding position, directly on the torso the would will most likely be a charge.

In all foul situations the foul is recorded against the player and the opposing team is awarded the ball at the side or baseline, or shots are awarded if the contact was on a shooting player.

**Free Throws:**

1. Only 5 players may line up when free throws are being taken. Three defensive and two offensive.
2. The player fouled must take the foul shots unless injured then the replacement takes them
3. Both the shooters feet must stay behind the line
4. There is no rule about how the shot must be taken ie jumpshop, underarm
5. The shooter must not move until the ball has hit the ring but all other players may move as soon as the ball leaves the shooters hand
6. Only the shooter can cancel a successful free throw
7. Players not involved in the shooting lane are required to stand behind the free throw line extended and behind the 3 point line until the ball hits the ring or the free throw ends.
8. The shooter has 5 seconds to take the shot

**MECHANICS – court positioning for the two/three referees**

**Lead Referee**

**Court areas 4, 5**

- Do not look up
- Open hips to the play
- Move continuously
- Anticipate ball movement and subsequent defensive player responsibility
- Back away from the baseline for a wider view
- Look away from the ball if it is **not** in your area
- Look for spaces between players. No space could be a foul
Trail Referee

Court areas 1,2,3, 5 and 6. Backcourt in transition.

• Move continuously.
• Look away from the ball if it is not in your area.
• If the ball penetrates (goes below the foul line extended) on a pass, dribble or shot, the trail referee must penetrate to at least the foul line extended to help partner with calls under the basket. Most of the contact in the game occurs in the restricted area (key).
• Look for spaces between players. No space could be a foul.
• Anticipate ball to defensive player responsibility.
• Do not back away when offensive team shoots. Penetrate and help partner.
• Anticipate the fast break by reacting quickly after the team on defence secures the ball.
• If caught behind the play on a fast break, hook in behind the players for a better angle.

Both Referees
• Do not focus on the ball if it is not in your area of responsibility.
• Keep all players boxed in between the referees as much as possible.
• Make eye contact as much as possible.

Referee not calling foul
• Freeze: Usually, if anything is going to happen, the time is immediately after a foul. DO NOT chase the ball (someone will get it sooner or later as the game cannot continue without it). Keep all players in view and wait until your partner has reported the foul to the bench, then proceed to position.

Free Throws

Duties of the Trail Referee
After returning from reporting the foul to the score table and allowing reasonable time for the players to take their positions, the Trail Referee shall:
• Check lanes spaces
• Check score table for incoming substitutions or problems
• Back away and move to a position where the free throw line intersects the 3 point line and using your arms, hold up the number of free throws to be taken. This should be held at shoulder height.
• Check right side of lane and the shooter’s feet for violations and fouls
• Observe whether the ball goes through the basket or misses the ring
• Signal point if free throw successful

Duties of the Lead Referee
• See that the players are lined up in the correct positions
• Bounce ball to the shooter
• Take a position off the end line with one foot either side of the line extended lane and observe the free throw lane opposite your side for violations and fouls

SIGNALS AND SIGNALLING

There are 57 hand signals in basketball refereeing – you certainly don’t need to know them all to begin with but it is a good idea to know enough so that your co-official, scorebench, players, coaches and spectators know what is going on. Learn the basic calls for the fouls and violations you will be calling on a regular basis and the others as the need arises. Attached are the signals as per rule book.

Signals
• Very important — One must know and practise the exact signals that are in the FIBA Rule Book.
• Impression — If one communicates properly and with confidence, that feeling is contagious. Players, coaches and spectators have the right to know what is happening or has happened.
• Sell the call — Correct signals will help the official in difficult situations.
• Communication — Signals as in the FIBA Rule Book are the official’s way of communicating. If done properly, it helps to prevent problems.
• Practice — Like everything else, to be done properly signals must be practised. Signalling in front of a mirror helps.

- Count: 3, 5 and 8 seconds. Practise counting in your head as it is very important. It would be unfair for a team pressing if the count were slow or for the offence if the count were too fast.
• Tossing the ball: Practise, either one or two hands, so that it is higher than the players can jump.
  Remember: It is better to toss the ball too high than too low.
• Handling the ball: Out of bounds, free throws, etc, are only small things but must be done correctly.

Use don’t abuse your whistle !! One short, sharp blow on the whistle is all that is required to stop play.
Referees Communication

Referees should communicate in the following ways:

• Use Preventative Officiating Techniques
• Remain Cool and Calm
• Use tact and thought before the whistle
• Counsel first, technical foul second
• If questions are asked in a courteous manner, give a courteous reply
• If questions are asked in a poor manner, ignore the question and get on with the game
• Make calls clearly and if necessary repeat the call
• Co-operate at all times to encourage a better understanding between officials and players
• If there is likely to be trouble after a game, check and sign the score sheet and leave quickly
• The Coach is the first person the official should counsel in the event of unsportsmanlike conduct
• The coach is held responsible for actions of the team bench. If the official tolerates bad behaviour by taking no action, then the official is at fault if the behaviour worsens
• If a player is spoken to and warned they should have enough sense to refrain from repeating the action
• When the situation warrants it, the official should deal with it promptly and with tact
• Officials must earn the respect of players and coaches

Referees should not communicate in the following ways
• Argue or be disrespectful with players, coaches or spectators
• Lose self-control, make statements or ridicule the teams or players