INTRODUCTION TO REFEREEING BASKETBALL

1 WHY BE A REFEREE

There are many reasons why people become basketball referees:
- Love of the game
- Not able to play
- Made to
- For money
- Talked into it
- Learn the rules
- Someone you know does
- No-one else will
- Like being bossy and being in charge

2 HOW TO PREPARE

To be ready to referee a game of basketball the following should be in place:
- You should know, or be learning, the rules
- You should have the required uniform and whistle
- You should have some idea how to react to difficult occasions (coach, player, fans)
- You should know what type of game you might be asked to referee.
- You should spend some time talking to the other referee about the game
- Enjoyment - referees must enjoy what they are doing or they should give it away

3 COURT

Look at court diagrams:
- Court dimensions
- Boundary lines
- Centre circle — other circles
- Restricted area — free throw lanes

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

The following are throw-in violations:

» 5-second time limit to release the ball
» Failure to cause the ball to be touched by a player on the court
» Ball cannot be handed to a player on the court; it must be thrown or tossed

Movement limitations at the throw-in spot:
- one normal lateral step along the side line from the place designated by the referee before releasing the ball
- laterally means along the side line; therefore, a player is permitted to move back as far as they like
- approximately one metre in total distance covered, not one normal step laterally plus another normal step laterally back to the original point. A player could possibly take two or three very small steps as long as the total distance covered is approximately 1 metre

4 GAME START – JUMP BALL

3.1 Beginning of a game

Each game starts with a jump ball. This is the only jump ball in the game. During a jump ball -
• the jumpers occupy their half of the circle with one foot close to the line.
• the non-jumpers are entitled to alternating positions around the circle or any other position on the court.

The jumpers shall not
• tap the ball until the ball has reached its highest point.
• touch the court on or over the line until the ball has been legally tapped.
• tap the ball more than twice.
• leave the jump circle until the ball has been legally tapped.
• catch the ball until it has touched a non-jumper, the floor, the basket or the backboard (or referee).

The non-jumpers shall not enter the circle until the ball has been legally tapped. Any violations of the above shall be called immediately and the ball awarded to the non-offending team at the nearest point out of bounds. If the ball is not tossed straight, the ball touches the floor without being tapped or both teams violate the jump ball, the jump ball shall be retaken.

5 MECHANICS (Where do referees go on the court and who does what)

Purpose

Mechanics have been designed to help both referees cover the whole court and see all players. Mechanics also establish ideal teamwork and understanding between officials.

Look at the diagram titled “Mechanics of Refereeing” and discuss those responsibilities.
Court positioning - general responsibilities

Lead / Trail

**Lead Referee**

» Do not look up
» Open hips to the play
» Keep moving
» 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**

» Keep moving.
» Look away from the ball if it is not in your area.
» If the ball 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.
» Do not back away when offensive team shoots. Take a step in 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 look 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.

6 OFFICIAL SIGNALS

» Look at the diagrams detailing the correct signals.
» They must be easily understood by the score table, players, bench and spectators.
» Explain and demonstrate the correct foul and violation sequence at both the place where it occurs and the reporting to the score table.

**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.

FOULS

7 PERSONAL FOUL

There are three things 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.

Principle of Verticality
Each player has the right to a position on the floor and the space (cylinder) above him/her. A player may not leave his/her vertical position (cylinder) and cause contact with an opponent in a legal position. The cylinder is limited by the palms of the hands to the front, the back of the buttocks to the back and the outside edges of the arms and legs to the sides of a player in normal basketball stance. The hands and arms may be extended in front of the torso no further than the position of the feet. The distance between the feet is proportional to the height of the player.

8 TECHNICAL FOUL

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 out without calling a technical foul. Most of these errors are not intentional; therefore, only penalise the ones that you believe are deliberate.
9 TYPES OF CONTACT

Instructor should demonstrate the following 5 personal fouls and discuss the type of contact that would result in a foul being called:

» Blocking
» Charging
» Hands/hand checking
» Holding
» Pushing

Instructor should demonstrate and discuss the following situations in relation to calling a personal foul:

» Legal defensive stance/Guarding position
» Legal position — Block/Charge
» Principle of verticality

Instructor should discuss the following penalties and their relationship to specific types of fouls.

» Sideline
» Two or three shots
» Team control
» Technical Foul by Player — 2 + possession
» Unsportsmanlike — 2 + possession
» Disqualifying — 2 + possession
» Bench by Coach or Bench Personnel — 2 + possession

10 ACT OF SHOOTING

Instructor should demonstrate and discuss the following matters in relation to the shooting action:

» The gathering of the ball following a dribble and the start of the shot.
» **Note:** There is no set time or distance involved, with limitations only being continuous motion and travel. If there is a pause or a second gather in the act, then the shot ends immediately.
» The gathering of the ball and the start of the shot from a non-dribbling position
» A tap for goal
» A dunk for goal

11 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.
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

Technical Foul/Unsportsmanlike/Bench Technical Foul Administration
» No players shall line up along the lanes
» Lead referee administers free throws at the free throw line
» Trail referee waits at the centre line for the completion of the shots then administers the throw-in from that spot
» Following the free throw, the Lead Referee bounces the ball to the Trail
» Referee who administers the throw-in from the centre line

VIOLATIONS

12 TRAVELLING

Pivot Foot
A pivot takes place when a player, who is holding the ball, steps in any direction with the same foot while the other foot is kept at its point of contact with the floor. Instructor should demonstrate the pivot foot when the following occurs.

» Receiving the ball with both feet on the floor
» Receiving the ball with one foot on the floor
» Receiving the ball with both feet off the floor

Progressing with the Ball
Instructor should demonstrate the following:

» A legal stop
» The first count
» The second count
» The pivot movement after a jump stop
» The pivot movement after a stride stop
» The allowable lifting of the pivot foot

Dribbling
Instructor should demonstrate the following.

» A legal dribble
» An illegal dribble
» When does a dribble begin?
   - player must have control
   - dribble can begin with a throw, tap or bounce
   - ball must contact the floor
   - player must touch it again before it touches another player

» When does a dribble end?
   - when the ball comes to rest in one or both hands
- when the dribbler contacts the ball during a dribble with both hands simultaneously

**Note:** Any number of steps may be taken during a bounce or single dribble.

What a player can do after a legal dribble:

» shoot for goal
» pass

### 13 PLAYING THE BALL

A player shall not **deliberately** play the ball with the foot or the leg. A player shall not play the ball with closed hand (fist). On a pass or rebound, a player may not reach through the basket from below and touch the ball.

### 14 3 SECONDS

It is a violation for any offensive player to stay in the restricted area for more than 3 seconds. The count starts once a player on the court has player control and the ball is in that team’s front court and ends when the player’s team no longer has team control.

**Notes:**

» It is not automatically a violation if a player stays in the restricted area for more than 3 seconds; advantage/disadvantage needs to be taken into account.
» The count is suspended if the player receives the ball inside the restricted area before 3 seconds and begins a try for goal.
» The violation is not for 3 seconds but for more than 3 seconds.

### 15 5 SECONDS

It is a violation to hold the ball for 5 seconds either in the court or for a throw in from out of bounds. The following criteria are needed for a violation to be called on the player who is in the court.

» The player must be holding a live ball.
» The defender must be making an active attempt to gain the ball or to aggressively guard.
» The defender must be within touching distance of the player with the ball.
» The only criterion for a violation to be called on the throw-in from out of bounds is that the 5 seconds has elapsed.

**Note:**
The violation is for 5 seconds, not more than 5 seconds.

### 16 8 SECONDS

It is a violation for the offensive team to take more than 8 seconds to progress the ball into their front court. The following criteria are needed for an 8 second violation to be called.

» The offensive team must have team control
The ball does not cross the centre line before 8 seconds has elapsed

**Note:**
Whilst the referees are the sole judge of the 8 second count, they are advised to use the 24 second clock (call on 16 seconds) as this is visible to players, coaches and spectators.

### 17 24 SECONDS

A team has 24 seconds, from the time they have gained possession, to shoot the ball. If they are not able to do so this and at least hit the ring, it is a violation and the opposing team receives the ball out of bounds.

### 18 BALL RETURNED TO THE BACK COURT

It is a violation if the offensive team, once it has progressed the ball to its front court, returns the ball to its back court. The following criteria are needed for a back court violation to be called:

- Team control must first have been established in the front court
- The ball returns to the back court
- The ball is last touched in the front court by an offensive player
- The ball is first touched in the back court by an offensive player

**Note:**
All the above conditions must occur to be a violation. If one is missing, then it cannot be a violation.

### 19 TIME OUTS

**Requests**

A request for a charged time out must come from the coach, assistant coach or playing coach.

**When Allowed**

- The clock is stopped and the ball is dead.
- After the opposition has scored a field goal.
- Time outs will not be granted between free throws.

**Note:**
A coach may withdraw a request up until the sounding of the horn to signal the request to the referees.

**Number and Limits**

- The number of time outs varies depending on each local Association’s rules as well as the various League rules. Familiarise yourself with the local rules regarding time outs.
- Time outs last 60 seconds, but the players must come back from the time out after 50 seconds so that the game can re-start after 60 seconds has elapsed.
- Time outs may be taken one after the other.
» After the last time out is taken in a half, the referees shall inform the coach that there are no more time outs left

20 SUBSTITUTIONS

Requests

A request for a substitution must come from the player who is substituting into the game. The player reports to the score table then waits for the next available opportunity to enter the game. At local Association level, this is not strictly enforced as coaches, assistant coaches and playing coaches can generally request substitutions. Check the local playing conditions regarding substitutions.

When allowed

» The clock is stopped and the ball is dead
» Before the ball becomes alive i.e. at the disposal of the in bounds player or free throw shooter
» Substitutions will not be granted between free throws but may take place when a final free throw is successful
» After the opposition has scored a field goal in the last two minutes of the final quarter/second half

Limits

» Free throwers may not be substituted except in case of an injury.
» If a team wishes to substitute the free thrower, the request must be made before the ball goes into play for the first free throw.

21 INJURIES TO PLAYERS

The referees may stop the game in case of injury to players.

If the ball is live when the injury occurs, the referees shall withhold their whistles until the play is completed, a shot for goal or the ball is lost by the team in control.

Note:
The referees MUST suspend play if there is a danger to the injured player.

Remember to enjoy refereeing basketball!