

Water Polo Rules

Any rule and situation not specifically covered are subject to the judgement and discretion of the Intramural Sports staff.

All rules are subject to change at the discretion of the Intramural Sports Office, and the Intramural Sports Office has the final decision on all situations covered and not covered by the rules.

Rule 1: Player Eligibility & Registration

Player Eligibility

- ✓ Currently enrolled (at least half-time), fee-paying Tennessee Tech University students as well as faculty and staff of the University may participate in intramural leagues and tournaments.
- ✓ Prior to each contest and event, participants must check in with a member of the IM staff.
- ✓ **Players can compete for only one (1) team in each single-gendered league** and, if applicable, **one (1) co-rec league**. Once he or she checks-in for one (1) team, that player cannot transfer to another team in that league for the duration of the season.
- ✓ **To be eligible for playoff participation, a player must have participated in at least one (1) regular season game.**
- ✓ Current varsity athletes cannot participate in their sport or related sport. Former varsity athletes cannot participate in their sport or related sport for one calendar year (365 days) after their official affiliation with the University team has ended.
- ✓ Current professional athletes are prohibited from playing in their sport or related sport. Former professional athletes cannot participate in their sport or related sport for a period of five (5) years.
- ✓ Intramural Sports Professional staff shall make the final decision on eligibility issues.

Registration

- ✓ Teams should register on the TnTech FusionIM site (recreation.tntech.edu) by the posted deadline.

Rule 2: League Format & Team Composition

League Format

- ✓ A pool play section shall precede the postseason tournament. The overall number of registered teams will determine the number of pools and number of teams in each pool.
- ✓ Pool standings will determine a team's eligibility for the postseason tournament. The following criteria will determine the pool play standings: (1) number of wins, (2) sportsmanship, (3) head-to-head record, (4) point differential, and (5) coin toss.

Leagues (Subject to Change Due to Number of Registered Teams)

- Co-Recreational
- Men's
- Women's
- Co-Rec: Equal number or more females than males (3:3, 4:2, 5:1)
- Co-Rec: There must be at least one (1) male in the lane at a time.

Team Composition

- ✓ Each team will have six (6) players in the lane at one time, and a minimum of five (5) players are required to start the game.
- ✓ Each team shall designate a captain to serve as the point of contact between the team and IM staff.

Rule 3: Defaults, Forfeits, Grace Periods, & Protests

Defaults

- ✓ A default is an unplayed game without penalty (e.g. dropped from the league).
- ✓ To receive a default, the team captain or representative must notify the Intramural Sports Office by 2:00 PM on the day of the contest.
- ✓ Sportsmanship Rating will be as followed:
 - Winning Team = 8
 - Defaulting Team = 5
- ✓ In order to verify that the request is legitimate, the team captain or representative must notify the Intramural Sports Office via e-mail or in person.

Forfeits

- ✓ A forfeit is defined as one of the following:
 - Failing to field a team for an intramural contest without contacting the Intramural Sports Office.
 - The final score shall be 4-0.
 - Receiving three (3) or more conduct warnings before, during, and after an Intramural contest.
 - If the forfeiting team is ahead, the final score shall be 4-0 in favor of the opposing team.
 - If the non-forfeiting team has the higher score, the game shall end with the existing score.
 - Defaulting two (2) games during pool play.
- ✓ If a team forfeits its first (1st) game of the season, that team may be dropped from the league and replaced with a team on the waiting list.
- ✓ Sportsmanship Rating will be as followed:
 - Winning Team = 8
 - Forfeiting Team = 2
- ✓ A second (2nd) forfeiture may result in removal from the league.

Grace Period

- ✓ If at least **one (1)** team member is **checked-in** at game time, the team will be granted a **five-minute (5:00)** grace period.
- ✓ Once a team reaches the minimum number of players to start the game, the team must start when directed by IM staff.
- ✓ A team may not wait for additional players once the minimum number of players have arrived.
- ✓ If the team has not reached the minimum number of players required to play at the end of the grace period, a forfeit will be declared.

Protests

- ✓ Intramural Sports Graduate Assistants and Professional Staff will consider protests.
 - ✓ During the contest, teams may protest (a) the misinterpretation or the misapplication of a rule or (b) a scoring error. The protest must be submitted immediately, and, if the protest is denied, a timeout will be charged to the protesting team.
 - ✓ **Protests regarding the judgement of the game officials will not be recognized.**
 - ✓ When protesting player eligibility:
 - *Regular season:* The eligibility of any player may be protested at any point during the regular season (e.g. before, during, and after the contest; anytime during office hours)
 - *Postseason Tournament:* Player eligibility must be protested before the start of the contest.
- Protests made after the start or end of the game will not be recognized.**

Rule 4: Playing Area & Equipment

Playing Area

- ✓ All games will be played in the Natatorium of the Campus Recreation and Fitness Center.

Team Benches

- ✓ Team benches will be located on the patio side of the Natatorium.

Game Ball & Inner tubes

- ✓ The Intramural Sports Office shall provide the ball and inner tubes for competition.

Clothing & Equipment

- ✓ All participants must be dressed appropriately for the pool. **Swimsuits are required. If female participants choose to wear a two-piece suite, a non-white t-shirt is required.** Clothing that is deemed unsafe, inappropriate, revealing, or unnecessary by Intramural Staff must be removed or covered with additional clothing.
- ✓ Jewelry
 - Religious or medical items are not considered jewelry and must be taped against the body.
 - Participants must remove all watches and necklaces prior to each contest.
- ✓ Headwear
 - Players may wear hair control devices made with soft and non-abrasive material.
- ✓ Blood
 - Participants that are bleeding, have an open wound, and/or have an excessive amount of blood on the uniform will be directed to leave the game.
 - The bleeding must be stopped, the open wound must be covered, and/or the bloody uniform must be changed/cleaned before the player can return to the game.
 - **When blood is found in the pool, play will be suspended immediately.**

Rule 5: Timing & Scoring

Timing

- ✓ The game will consist of two (2) ten-minute (10:00) halves with a three-minute (3:00) halftime.
- ✓ The clock will run continuously unless there is a timeout or an unexpected interruption.

Scoring

- ✓ Each goal is worth one (1) point.
- ✓ A goal is scored when a legal shot from outside the goal box completely crosses the goal line.
- ✓ A goal is not scored in the following situations:
 - A goal is taken inside the goal box.
 - The player falls out of his or her inner tube before the ball crosses the goal line.
 - The player commits any infraction, personal foul, or major foul while attempting to score.

Overtime

- ✓ Regular season games may end in a tie; therefore, shootouts will not occur during the regular season.
- ✓ During the postseason, the following procedure shall determine the winner:
 - Shootout
 - A coin toss or single game of rock/paper/scissors will determine which team shoots first (1st).
 - Each member of the team currently in the game at the end of regulation will be eligible for the shootout.
 - The goalkeeper shall be the player that served as goalkeeper at the end of regulation.
 - Three (3) players from each team shall attempt one (1) shot each, and the teams alternate.
 - The goalkeeper for each team must remain the same for the entire shootout.
 - The goalkeeper may serve as one (1) of the three (3) attackers for his/her team.
 - The team with the most goals at the end of a round shall be declared the winner.

- If a tie still exists at the conclusion of the shootout, teams shall alternate penalty shots until one team has a one (1) goal advantage after the same number of goal attempts for both teams.
 - Each of the six (6) players in the pool must make an attempt at the goal prior to any player attempting to shoot a second (2nd) time. The order of shooters will remain the same throughout the shootout.

Timeouts

- ✓ Each team shall receive three (3) thirty-second (0:30) timeouts for the entire match.
- ✓ Players currently in the water may call a timeout when their team has possession of the ball.

Mercy Rule

Point Differential	Time Remaining	Result
Ten (10) or more goals	At ten minutes (10:00) or less in 2 nd half	End of Game

Rule 6: Playing Rules

Starting the Game

- ✓ At the start of each half, both teams shall line up at opposite sides of the pool.
- ✓ The official will drop the ball into the pool and blow his or her whistle, signaling play has begun.
- ✓ After the whistle, players may propel themselves toward the ball.

Sitting in the Tube

- ✓ With the exception of the goalkeepers, all players must remain seated in the tube, feet out, bottom in the hole.
- ✓ **Players that fall out of their tubes cannot participate in any way until they have returned to their tubes.**

Ball Control

- ✓ A player has control in the following situations:
 - Pushing the ball in the water
 - Holding it with one or two hands
- ✓ **A player cannot hold the ball completely under the surface of the pool.**

Game Clocks

- ✓ Shot Clock
 - A team has forty-five seconds (0:45) to take a legitimate shot on the goal.

Free Throw

- ✓ A free throw is an uninhibited pass to an open teammate.
- ✓ A free throw is awarded to the offended team near the spot of the foul or infraction.
- ✓ A goal cannot be scored by the thrower.
- ✓ The thrower has five seconds (0:05) to release the ball.
- ✓ The defense must give the thrower three (3) feet of space until the ball is released.

Delay of Game

- ✓ If being guarded by an opponent, a player has five seconds (0:05) to pass or make an attempted shot.
- ✓ For the first (1st) offense, the official may warn the player or team.
- ✓ For all subsequent offenses, the opposing team shall be awarded a free throw closest to the spot of the penalty.

Substitutions

- ✓ **Both teams may substitute during timeouts and after a goal is scored.**
- ✓ During a free throw, the team awarded the throw may substitute a player.
- ✓ Team that are trying to substitute **MUST** let the official know **BEFORE** he begins play after a goal is scored.
- ✓ No team may substitute on a penalty throw.

Out of Bounds

- ✓ The edges of the pool and the floating lane lines are out of bounds.
- ✓ The ball must completely pass over the lane line to be considered out of bounds.
- ✓ The handrails and the streamers above the pool are out of play.
- ✓ When a team causes the ball to go out of bounds, a free throw is awarded to the other team.

Goalkeeper Restrictions

- ✓ During play, the goalkeeper may not leave the goal box area.
- ✓ The goalkeeper may not leave his/her tube in an attempt to block a shot.
 - If the official judges that the ball would have entered the goal without the illegal action of the goalkeeper, the official shall award a goal to the opposing team.
- ✓ Once the goalkeeper gains possession of the ball, he/she will have five seconds (0:05) to release the ball.
- ✓ **The goalkeeper may never pass the ball beyond the mid-pool line.**
- ✓ Following a score and after the official's whistle, the goalkeeper shall put the ball into play.

Goal Box Restrictions

- ✓ The goalkeeper is the only player allowed in the goal box.
- ✓ It is a violation for a player's inner tube or body to break the plane of the goal box.
 - Exception: Defensive players may enter their own goal box to retrieve a ball that is out of the goalkeeper's reach

Fouls and Misconduct

- ✓ Infractions
 - Infractions are minor violations that result in a free throw.
 - Some examples of infractions
 - Holding onto or pushing off the pool wall during actual play
 - Holding the ball under water
 - Goalkeeper throws the ball more than half the length of the pool.
 - Offensive player breaks the plane of the goal box.
 - Touching or maneuvering the ball while out of the tube
 - Shot clock violation
- ✓ Personal Fouls
 - Personal fouls will result in a free throw for the opposing team.
 - Depending on the severity and frequency of the fouls, a player may be assigned a **yellow** card.
 - Two (2) **yellow** cards will result in a **red** card.
 - Some examples of personal fouls
 - Holding, pushing, hitting, or dumping an opponent or their tube
 - Pushing another player with your tube (swimming into them), on or away from the ball.
 - After the official's warning, a player persistently repeats an infraction
 - In an attempt to nullify a goal, a defender tips an opponent out of the tube immediately after a goal or during an attempted throw
 - Kicking or attempting to kick the ball
 - Deliberately splashing water in the face of an opponent
 - A player grabs, kicks, pushes, or holds an opponent's tube
 - Kicking or holding another's players legs under water
 - A player, while not sitting in his or her tube, contacts an opponent's tube or body
- ✓ Major Fouls
 - The offending player shall be ejected from the contest and shall leave the Natatorium.
 - A penalty throw shall be awarded for each major foul.
 - A **red** card may be assigned.
 - Any player that receives a **red** card is immediately ejected.

- **A team that received two (2) red cards shall forfeit the contest.**
- Ejected players are suspended from future participation in all intramural sports until they contact the Intramural Sports Office to set up a meeting with a professional staff member.
- Some examples of major fouls:
 - After the official's warning, a player repeatedly commits personal fouls
 - Fighting
 - Attempting to or contacting an official
 - Attacking, striking, or kicking an opponent in a dangerous manner.

Rule 7: Co-Recreational Modifications

Team Composition

- ✓ Please refer to the following table for legal team ratios.

Number of Players	Male to Female Ratio
Six (6) Players	3:3, 2:4, or 1:5
Five (5) Players	2:3 or 1:4
Four (4) Players	2:2 or 1:3

- ✓ If a team has five (5) players checked-in, that team may not play with less than five (5) players at any point in the match.
 - Exception: A player becomes injured and there are no eligible substitutes.

****A co-recreational team may never have more males than females in the lane.**

****A co-recreational team must have at least one (1) male.**

Scoring

- ✓ Each goal, scored by a male or female, is worth one (1) point.
- ✓ During a shootout in co-recreational games, all goals shall be worth one (1) point.

Shootout

- ✓ During a shootout and if the team ratio allows, males and females shall alternate as attackers.

Substitutions

- ✓ All substitutions must allow a team to maintain one (1) of the aforementioned legal ratios.