

AIA Unified Basketball

Sports and Competition Rules

Special Olympics Arizona

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AIA Unified Basketball is an AIA-sanctioned sport supported by and in conjunction with Special Olympics Arizona (SOAZ) to allow interscholastic competition in Unified Sports between Arizona high schools. It was established to foster inclusion, camaraderie, and the development of meaningful relationships among high school athletes with and without intellectual disabilities as teammates.

REGISTRATION TERMINOLOGY

Participants with intellectual disabilities will be registered as "Unified Athletes," and participants without intellectual disabilities will be registered as "Unified Partners."

MEANINGFUL INVOLVEMENT

Meaningful Involvement ensures that every player can contribute to their team's success by leveraging their unique skills and qualities.

A. Indicators of Meaningful Involvement
   i. Teammates compete without causing undue risk of injury to themselves or others.
   ii. Teammates demonstrate sufficient sports skills and participate according to competition rules
   iii. Teammates play a valued role on the team and have the ability and opportunity to contribute to the performance of the team
   iv. Teammates adjust their skills according to other players' skills, resulting in improved performance by team members with less ability.

B. Meaningful Involvement is not achieved when certain team members …
   i. Display superior sports skills without involving their teammates.
   ii. Serve predominantly as on-field coaches rather than teammates or mentors.
   iii. Control most aspects of the game, especially during critical periods.
   iv. Lower their ability level dramatically so they do not hurt others or control the entire game.

Coaches are responsible for educating all players about the spirit of AIA Unified Sports—TEAMWORK and the INCLUSION of everyone. Teams should not include players who dominate the play. Player domination violates the principle of meaningful involvement by significantly limiting other players' roles and opportunities.

EQUIPMENT / UNIFORM SPECIFICATIONS

A. Only a size 6 (girls) basketball with a circumference of 28.5 inches may be used.

B. Teams must comply with all AIA policies and procedures regarding proper attire. Players must wear appropriate athletic clothing and shoes. No jewelry (rings, bracelets, necklaces, earrings, etc.) may be worn.

C. Uniforms must match and consist of athletic shorts without pockets and jerseys/shirts with numbers on the front and back, which can be tucked in at the waist.
   a. ***Unified Athletes must wear <u>even</u> numbers, and Unified Partners must wear odd numbers.***

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TEAM COMPOSITION

A. Each team shall have an adult non-playing coach responsible for the lineup and conduct of the team.

B. **Teams are required to play all team members during each game** *(except injured players)*

C. Teams will be **COED** with no limitation on the number of boys or girls on a team.

D. Team rosters shall consist of at least 7 players and no more than 12 active players. If you have any concerns regarding roster size, please contact Thomas Miranda at Thomas@SpecialOlympicsArizona.org.

E. Teams must always adhere to a 3:2 ratio of Unified Athletes to Unified Partners on the court.

F. Freshman, JV, or varsity basketball team students are not eligible to compete on the AIA unified basketball team for both athlete and partner.

G. Team rosters should include a proportionate number of Unified Athletes and Partners. In addition to the five players consistently on the court, teams should have a minimum of 1-2 unified athletes and 1-2 unified partners available for substitution throughout the game.

H. Unified Basketball teams planning to enter AIA tournaments should adhere to the following player selection criteria. These tournaments are considered competitive Unified Sports events. For the safety of everyone involved, all players must meet minimum standards to participate as outlined below:

   i. Players must be ambulatory (able to walk/run)
   ii. Players must be able to catch, pass, and shoot the basketball
   iii. Players must have a basic understanding of dribbling
   iv. Players must have a basic understanding of general basketball gameplay rules

MODIFICATIONS / ADAPTATIONS

I. Game Structure

A. Each game will consist of **four quarters** with **6-minute periods.**

   i. A 30-second break will occur between quarters
   ii. . 2-minute warm-up and Half-time will be 2 minutes
   iii. A jump ball will be used at the start of the game and for any overtime periods.

B. **The clock will be a <u>running</u> clock,** except during the following situations:

   i. Time Outs
      a. Two (2) 30-second time outs
      b. Three (3) full (one-minute) timeouts
   ii. Official Time Outs – e.g., injured player, clean spill on court, etc.
   iii. Dead Ball Situations – *Only during the <u>**last 2 minutes**</u> of the second and fourth quarters.*

C. Overtime

   i. If overtime is necessary, the period is three minutes running time.
   ii. During the first 2minutes of overtime, the clock stops ONLY on foul shots and timeouts.
   iii. During the last minute of overtime, the clock stops in all dead ball situations.
   iv. Each team receives one additional full timeout during the overtime period.
   v. Time-outs earned in previous overtime periods do not carry over in additional overtime periods.

D. Substitutions

   i. Allowed during time-outs, before the beginning of a quarter, or during dead ball situations
   ii. Substitute players must report to the scorer, who will notify the referee. Players must wait

for the referee's signal before entering the court.

II. Competition Rules

A. *THE REFEREE IS THE AUTHORITY ON THE COURT AND WILL CALL ALL VIOLATIONS/FOULS AT HIS/HER DISCRETION.* ***ALL DECISIONS MADE BY OFFICIALS ARE FINAL.***

B. Violations

i. Dribbling / Traveling

a. A player may shuffle his/her feet while holding the ball without changing position on the court.

b. A player may take one extra step when gaining possession of the ball from a dribble or pass.

ii. Fouls – All fouls will be called under NFHS basketball sports rules.

iii. Fouls – In the last minute of the game, an intentional foul will be an automatic one-in-one.

iv. Three-Second Lane
   a. A 3-second lane violation will only be called if the referee determines the player has gained an unfair advantage.
   b. The referee will warn the offending player(s) and coach, after which a violation (change of possession) will be called.

v. Backcourt Pressure
   a. Backcourt pressure is allowed during the last 2 minutes of the second and fourth quarters in Division II.
   b. Backcourt pressure will be allowed the whole game in Division I.
   c. **TEN SECOND RULE**
      - A team cannot continuously control the ball in its designated backcourt for over 10 seconds.
      - If a team commits a 10-second violation, possession will be awarded to the opposing team for a throw-in from the designated out-of-bounds spot nearest the violation.

C. Fouls
   i. There are no adaptations to fouls. All fouls will be called in all divisions.
   ii. When a foul occurs, there will be free-throw attempts.
      a. Two free throws will be awarded for a shooting foul.
      b. One free throw will be awarded for a shooting foul if the basket is made.
      c. The clock will continue to run during free throws.
   iii. Personal Fouls
      a. Players are allowed a maximum of 5 personal fouls before being ejected.
      b. Fouls for incidental/unintentional contact will only be called if:
         - An advantage was gained toward ball possession or court position (official's discretion)
         - An egregious violation is committed (e.g., overly aggressive pushing, reaching in, etc.)
   iv. Technical Fouls
      a. Technical fouls will be assessed for unsportsmanlike conduct by any coach, player, team attendant, or follower, and any third warning (per half) for backcourt pressing.
      b. Technical fouls shall result in ball possession for the offended team.
      c. If the foul is fragrant (violent, vulgar, abusive), the offender is also ejected from the game.
   v. Bonus
      a. After a team commits its 7th foul in each half, a bonus will be awarded.
      b. The bonus will ALWAYS result in the opposing team earning one point and gaining possession of the ball.
      c. c. After a team commits its 10th foul in each half, it will be in the double bonus. The double bonus ALWAYS results in the opposing team earning two points and gaining possession of the ball.

D. Player Domination
   i. ***To ensure meaningful involvement, the following rule modifications may be enforced to prevent player domination –***
      a. Unified Partners can score a maximum of 12 points for each partner.
      b. If Unified Partners score more than 12 points, the team will be DQ.
      c. Unified Partners may not block shots made by Unified Athletes but may raise their hands during a fast break.

d. Unified Partners may not steal the ball from Unified Athletes
e. Unified Partners may not over-intimidate or be overly aggressive when defending a Unified Athlete, bringing the ball up the court, performing a pass, or attempting to score.

ii. Protocol
a. If a coach feels that an opposing team's Unified Partner is dominating play, the coach can call a time-out (uncharged) to discuss with the opposing team's coach.
b. If the coaches cannot agree on whether the Unified Partner dominates the play, the official will decide.
c. If the Unified Partner is deemed to dominate play, the official shall sanction the player and coach. Sanctions will include issuing a team warning for player domination, citing the Unified Partner and coach with unsportsmanlike conduct, or removing the Unified Partner and coach from the game if the violation is egregious.

iii. Teams are allowed a maximum of two warnings for player domination. Upon the third violation of player domination, the offending team will forfeit the game.

III. Divisions

To ensure the safety of all players, the following divisions have been established to accommodate teams of varying skill and ability levels –

A. ***DIVISION I***
i. Adequate understanding of rules
ii. Lineup includes at least 5 top players
iii. ***Advanced Playing Skills***
a. Dribbling – the ability to change directions; successfully dribbles with either hand regularly
b. Passing –completes various passes to open teammates
c. Movement – good court coverage with reasonably aggressive anticipation
d. Game Awareness – moderate to advanced understanding of the game; knowledgeable of basketball fundamentals
e. Shooting – making most mid-range jump shots; attempts shots beyond 15 feet or from all ranges on the court
f. Rebounding – Aggressively goes after rebounds; often successful in getting the ball

B. ***DIVISION II***
i. Basic understanding of the rules
ii. Lineup typically includes 2-3 top players
iii. ***Novice Playing Skills***
a. Dribbling – handles ball with dominant hand only; has difficulty changing directions
b. Passing – has difficulty completing passes when not looking directly at teammate
c. Movement – maintains stationary position often or moves toward the ball with slow reaction, limited coverage of the court
d. Game Awareness – limited understanding of the game; can run some offensive and defensive sets when prompted by coach
e. Shooting – periodically makes uncontested layups; can make shots inside lane
f. Rebounding – limited understanding of rebounding positions or principles