

2026-27 Indoor Volleyball

Rules, Application & Interpretation

Clear summary of the Volleyball Canada updates

AT A GLANCE

2x

Internal Pass / Double Contact

Second-contact overhand finger doubles is not a fault when made during one action and the ball stays on the same side.



Ceiling Contact

First or second team contact may remain playable (on the same side of the court) after contacting the ceiling / attached overhead infrastructure above the field of play.

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Ball-Handling Interpretations

VC clarifies what makes a one-handed tip legal: also, clarifies how two-handed actions over the net are judged.

Libero

15U and 18U Libero Updates

VA updates include 18U two-Libero use and a 15U Libero pilot for the 2027 season.

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How to use this guide:

Each topic shows the official VC position first, then a plain-language on-court explanation. The Volleyball Canada rulebook and published change summary remain the governing sources.

2x

Internal Pass / Double Contact

Rule text is unchanged; the application for the second team contact is clarified.

Volleyball Canada Application and Interpretation:

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During internal passes (second contact), double contacts made with an overhand finger action will not be punished, if made during one action and the ball remains on the same side of the court.

However, double contacts made during completed attack hits (completely crossing the plane of the net or contacting the opponent block) will be called as faults.

VC: Rule text specific to double contact is unchanged.

WHAT THIS MEANS ON COURT



First team contact

Existing first-contact rules remain unchanged.



Second team contact

An overhand finger double contact during one action is allowed when the ball remains on the same team's side.



Completed attack hit

An overhand finger double-contacted ball completely crosses the net plane or contacts the opponent block, it is a fault.



PLAY CONTINUES

- Second team contact.
- One playing action.
- Ball remains on the same side.



WHISTLE A FAULT

- Second-contact double becomes a completed attack hit.
- Ball completely crosses the net plane, or
- Ball contacts the opponent block.



Key distinction

The change is not that double contacts have disappeared. VC has clarified when a second-contact overhand finger double is not a fault, and when that same action becomes a fault.



Ceiling Contact

The rule text changed, and VC now provides a full application / interpretation.

WHAT CHANGED IN RULE 8.4.2?

2025

8.4.2 included "the ceiling" as an automatic ball-out contact.

2026

8.4.2 removes "the ceiling" from the list of automatic ball-out contacts.

VOLLEYBALL CANADA WORDAGE

Ball Contacting the Ceiling

If the first or second hit of the team contacts / touches the ceiling or venue infrastructure directly attached to the ceiling (E.g. rafters, ceiling joists, etc.) above the field of play and remains available for continuation of the rally (**on the same side of the court**) allowing a second or third contact for the same team, the rally is legal, and the play is permitted to continue.

In the case where the ball contacts / touches the ceiling or venue infrastructure directly attached to the ceiling (E.g. rafters, ceiling joists, etc.) above the field of play and rebounds into the opponent's court this is ruled a fault.

HOW TO APPLY IT

PLAY CONTINUES

First or second team hit contacts the ceiling or infrastructure directly attached to the ceiling above the Playing Area, and the ball remains available for the same team's next contact (**on the same side of the court**).

OUT - OPPONENT COURT

After contacting the ceiling / directly ceiling-attached infrastructure above the Playing Area, the ball rebounds into the opponent's court **or into the opponents free zone**.

OUT - OUTSIDE PLAYING AREA

The ball contacts the ceiling / ceiling-attached infrastructure at a point that is not vertically above the Playing Area.

OUT - WALL / WALL-MOUNTED

The VC ceiling exception applies to the ceiling and infrastructure directly attached to it. For this guide, contact with a wall or wall-mounted structure is treated as out.

SCHOOL-GYM EXAMPLE

A basketball backboard / support mounted to a wall remains a wall-mounted object, even if the structure raises upward close to the ceiling. BUT if it is attached to the ceiling above the Playing Area, then it is considered in play.

Ball-Handling Interpretations

VC provides the application and interpretations for tip attacks and two-handed actions.

'PUSH-CARRY-CATCH-THROW' TIP

TIP

Rule 9.2.2

The ball must not be caught and/or thrown. It can rebound in any direction.

A legal tip is a one-handed attack where the ball is not caught or thrown, the direction of the ball changes only once during the action, and contact is short in time and distance.

NO

Push / Carry / Catch / Throw

1

ONE HAND

SHORT

SHORT CONTACT

LINE

STRAIGHT LINE

Fault indicators: the ball does not instantly rebound; the hand accompanies the ball; the ball is thrown from the palm; or its direction changes more than once.

TWO HANDED ATTACKS

2H

THE KEY QUESTION: WHERE DID THE BALL COME FROM?

This distinction determines whether the action may be judged as a legal block or as an attack hit.

FROM THE OPPONENT'S SIDE

A ball coming from the opponent's side may be legally blocked.
This includes a ball rebounding off the opponent's block.

FROM YOUR TEAM'S OWN SIDE

A ball coming from a team's own side - including a rebound off its own block - is considered an attack hit when directed toward the opponent's court.

Rule 14.1.1 - Blocking

"Blocking is the action of players close to the net to intercept the ball coming from the opponent by reaching higher than the top of the net..."

Plain-language takeaway: A legal blocking action requires the ball to be coming from the opponent. A ball from your own team's side directed toward the opponent's court is an attack hit - not a block.

SEPARATE TWO-HANDED SETTING ACTION

A deliberate two-handed attack hit is a fault. A two-handed overhead pass (setting action) sent over the net may be legal; a fault depends on the quality of the contact.

Libero Updates

VC update for 18U and 15U competition

18U AGE CLASS

18U

Up to two (2) Liberos per set

Teams competing in the 18U age classification may use up to two (2) Liberos per set at VA Premiers, Provincials and VC Nationals.

- The Libero(s) may be re-designated after each set.
- The number of the Libero(s) must be on the line-up sheet for each set.
- If the coach re-designates the Libero(s) between sets, the new Libero(s) may be any player registered on the scoresheet.
- The re-designated Libero(s) keep the same uniform number recorded on the scoresheet.
- A replaced Libero may act as a regular player if wearing the correct uniform.
- Only one Libero may be on the court at a time during play.



Premier 1 / Premier 2 note:

In combined 17/18U Boys divisions, the two-Libero rule applies only to 18U Boys teams. 17U Boys teams do not receive a second Libero simply because they are competing in a combined division.

15U AGE CLASS

15U

2027 Libero Pilot

VC has introduced a 15U Libero pilot for the 2027 National Championships. Volleyball Alberta will align with that direction and permit a Libero in 15U throughout the 2027 VA Premiers and Provincial Events.

- Only one (1) Libero is permitted.
- Six limited substitutions will be used.
- Applies to both boys and girls.
- Developmental Substitution rules apply.



VA application:

The 15U Libero will be used throughout the 2027 VA season while aligning with the 2027 National Championships pilot.