

MBF Rules for Open Play

I. Court Regulations

- Only soft-soled shoes are allowed on the courts (no high heels).
- Shirts and/or tops must be worn by players and spectators.
- No food or drink may be carried onto the courts at any time.
- No hard liquor in any form is allowed on MBF premises. Moderate consumption of beer and wine is permitted.
- Unless eligible under ADA guidelines, no dogs are allowed on MBF premises.
- The minimum age for players is 18.
- Standing on the median strip during play is not allowed.
- If using one's own bocce balls, they must be approved by management.
- For safety, only MBF steel pallinos will be used.
- See also: Marin Bocce Federation Code of Conduct.

II. Teams

- Teams are expected to show for every league game unless unforeseeable circumstances prevent them from doing so. If a team forfeits any three matches in a session, it can be dropped from the league roster and/or lose preference for a slot in the next session.
- No-Show Notification:
 - Morning League: Before 3:30 P.M. on day before a scheduled game.
 - Night League: Before 10:00 A.M. on game day.
- Teams will consist of four players, two from each team stationed at opposite ends of the court.
- If one team has only 3 players:
 - It will use 3 balls only
 - One player will be stationed throughout a game at each end of the court and a third, a "floater," will move from one end to the other with each frame.
 - The floater and stationary players will change with each game, i.e., all 3 players will float.
 - A team with 3 players must start at the appointed time. A team not present within:
 - 15 minutes of scheduled starting time forfeits game 1
 - 20 minutes of scheduled starting time forfeits game 2
 - 30 minutes of scheduled starting time forfeits game 3
- Substitutions: unlimited substitutions are allowed, but once a player has been replaced, he/she may not reenter the same game. The opposing team's Captain must be informed of substitutions and they must be entered on the score sheet.

III. Players

- Players may remain on court when their team is rolling; they should be off the court when the opposing team is rolling.
- Players may step on the foot-fault line when releasing a ball. When shooting, players may step on the line prior to releasing the ball.
- When lagging or shooting, a player must release the ball before his/her foot touches completely beyond the line.
- Both feet must be inside the court when releasing.
- Players should not hold balls until their turn; balls must be visible to others at all times. Players may not cross the foot-fault line with a ball in hand.
- Teammates may choose to take consecutive turns or alternate turns.
- Players may use the sideboards at any time.
- Players may not play at the same end of the court for two consecutive games.

IV. Basic Play

- One team is chosen to start the game by a coin toss. Winner of the toss has a choice of the pallino or ball color.
- To start the game the team with the pallino tosses it anywhere past the centerline and before the white endline. If the pallino is touching either line it is not valid. On indoor courts, a valid throw is beyond the centerline and not touching the backboard.
- If the initial toss is faulty, it becomes the opposing team's turn to put the pallino in play. If this toss also fails, the original team retries. And so on, until the pallino toss is valid. The original team throws the first ball.
- The opposing team then rolls, trying to get a ball closer to the pallino. It continues until it succeeds or runs out of balls. If it does get closer, the first team rolls again, and so on.
- Teams take turns rolling until all balls are used, each player throwing 2 balls in any order.
- When all balls have been played, the frame ends, points are recorded and play moves to the opposite end of the court.
- **SHOOTING:** Players must announce to others on their court and neighboring courts, as well as to spectators, when they are about to shoot. Lofting ("Volo") beyond the centerline is prohibited.
- **TAKING THE POINT:** When a team chooses to take the point rather than risking a roll, it must notify the opposing team and receive confirmation.
- **BACK BOARD LIVE:** If a ball hits the backboard without first touching another ball or the pallino, it is a dead ball and removed from the court. If it does touch another ball or the pallino before hitting the backboard, it is in play and remains where it comes to rest.

V. Measuring

- Only Captains or their designees may measure and must agree on a point before the other team takes its turn or the frame ends. During a measurement, others must be off the court.
- Once a measurement is made, it will not be redone for the same balls unless one or more of them is moved. However, if the original call was made without measurement (i.e., was made visually), and it proves to have been mistaken, the balls will be scored as they lie.
- Measurements are made from the inside edge of a ball to the inside edge of the pallino.
- Do not touch balls when measuring.
- If a measurement results in a tie, the last team to roll a ball must roll again, until the tie is broken. If all balls are played and there is still a tie, no points are awarded and play resumes at the opposite end of the court with the last team to score tossing the pallino.

VI. Counting Points

- A point is awarded for every ball that is closer to the pallino than the closest ball of an opposing team. Only one team scores points in a frame.
- At the end of a frame, points are posted on the score sheet and board.
- Games are played until one team has 10 points (Day League) or 12 points (Night League).

VII. Accidental Movement of Balls

- If a ball is moved accidentally, it should be replaced as close as possible to its original position.
- If many balls are moved accidentally, or their original positions can't be determined, the frame ends, and no points are awarded. Play is resumed at the opposite end of the court with the same team having the pallino.
- If a ball is moved before the end of a frame by a player thinking play is over, and the ball(s) can't be accurately replaced,
 - Remaining non-thrown balls of the non-offending team are counted as points.
 - If the offense is committed by the playing team, all of its non-thrown balls are voided, and the frame is over.
- If the pallino is knocked out of the court, or it bounces back in front of the centerline, no points are awarded, the frame ends and play resumes at the other end with the same team having the pallino.
- If the pallino slips under the swingboard, it is to be removed from behind the board and placed on the court in front of the board. It is still in play.

VIII. Throwing Errors

- Player throws 3 balls: the third is dead and removed from court.
- Player throws wrong color: once ball has stopped, it is replaced with the correct ball.
- Player rolls out of turn (e.g., when it is the other team's turn): at the option of the opposing captain:
 - ball is dead and removed from the court
 - ball is returned to be replayed, all moved balls being returned as near as possible to their original positions.

IX. Disputes

- Teams will referee their own games
- If an irresolvable dispute occurs, pause the game and consult a member of the staff.
- Formal protests may be filed:
 - By notifying the opposing Captain before the next frame
 - Indicating on the score sheet that the game is proceeding under protest
 - Completing a complaint form before leaving the courts at the end of the match in question and submitting it to a member of the staff.

X. Captains

- A Captain or his/her designee represents a team during a match.
- A Captain or his/her designee must be an active team player.
- Captains are responsible for knowing the MBF Rules for Open Play and for implementing them during league play.
- Captains should keep their teams informed of all information relevant to Marin Bocce as it comes to their attention.
- A Captain may appoint one designee to measure.

XI. Rosters

- All completed rosters will be submitted to the office by the announced deadline.
- Changes to the rosters may be made during the first 3 weeks of league play. Exceptions require approval of the Rules Committee.
- Teams will consist of 4 or more players. In forming teams, Captains should consider the possible need to cover for absences.
- If a team fields a player not on its roster, that game is forfeit.
- Players on multiple teams:
 - Two players on a team may play together on as many other teams as they wish.
 - Three players are limited to two other teams.
 - Four players may play on only one team.

XII. Marin Bocce Federation Code of Conduct

- Players are expected to conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner and to abide by MBF rules and regulations.
- Players will treat other players, staff and guests with respect.
- Players will limit their use of inappropriate language.
- Physical or verbal abuse by a player toward another player, staff or guest will not be allowed.
- Violation of the MBF Code of Conduct may be grounds for suspension or expulsion from league play.