



Marin Bocce Federation Official League Rules 2026

I. Court Regulations

- Only soft-soled shoes are allowed (no high heels, boots, or wedges). No bare feet permitted.
- Shirts and/or tops must be worn by players and spectators.
- No food or drinks are allowed on the courts.
- No hard liquor is allowed on MBF premises. Moderate consumption of beer and wine is permitted.
- Vaping and the use of illegal drugs are strictly prohibited.
- 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.
- Personal bocce balls must be pre-approved by office staff and meet USBF size and weight regulations before used in MBF league play or tournaments. For safety, only MBF steel pallinos will be used.
- See also: Marin Bocce Federation Code of Conduct.

II. Teams

- Teams must attend every league game unless unavoidable circumstances prevent them.
- If a team forfeits 3 matches in a season, they may be removed from the league and lose priority for future participation.
- **No-show notification:** Call the MBF main office phone [415-485-5583] or email [mbf@marinbocce.org].
 - Morning League: Notify before 3:30 PM the day before.
 - Night League: Notify before 11:00 AM on game day.
- Teams consist of 4 players, with 2 stationed at each end of the court.
- **Teams with 3 players:**
 - Use 3 balls only.
 - One player will rotate ends after each frame, rolling 1 ball per frame.
 - Rotations must change each game.
 - Matches must start on time. Delays result in forfeits:
 - 15 minutes late: Game 1 forfeited.
 - 20 minutes late: Game 2 forfeited.
 - 25 minutes late: Game 3 forfeited.

- **Substitutions:**

- Teams may substitute up to 2 players per game.
- Teams with rosters of more than 6 players may substitute up to 3 players per game.
- Substitution may only occur between frames.
- Once a player is substituted out, they may not re-enter that game.
- The opposing captain must be informed of substitutions, which must also be recorded on the score sheet.

III. Players

- Players may remain on the court while their team is rolling.
- When a team is rolling, opposing players should step off the court unless the rolling player is unaffected. If the rolling player asks an opposing player to move, the player must adjust their position.
- Players with physical disabilities (i.e. those using walkers or who are unsteady on their feet,) may remain on the court during their frame of play, provided they stay out of the way, for safety reasons.
- Players may step on the foot fault line when releasing.
- The ball must be released before any part of the player's foot crosses completely beyond the foul (aka foot-fault) line.
- Both feet must be inside the court when releasing the ball.
- Players should keep balls visible and not hold them until their turn.
- If elevated ball holders are provided, please use them for unplayed balls and any balls that are out of play. Do not leave balls on the court, as this poses a safety hazard.
- Players may not step past the foot-fault line while holding a ball.
- Consecutive or alternating throws are at the players' discretion.
- Players may use sideboards at any time.
- Players must alternate court ends between games.

IV. Basic Play

- A coin toss determines which team starts. The winner selects either the pallino or ball color.
- The pallino must be thrown past the centerline and not touch the backboard.
Indoor courts require a valid throw beyond the second centerline.
- If the initial toss is faulty, the opposing team throws the pallino. If both teams fail, the process repeats until valid.

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- After the pallino is set, thrown balls must cross the foul line but do not need to pass the centerline.
- The opposing team rolls until it is closer to the pallino or runs out of balls.
- Teams continue rolling alternately as described until all balls are used.
- At the end of a frame, points are recorded and play moves to the opposite end of the court.
- **Morning League:** Teams will play 3 games to 10 points.
- **Night League:** Teams will play 3 games to 12 points.
- ***No exceptions*** All games must adhere to these point limits.

Backboard and Ball Rules

- A ball that hits the backboard without touching another ball or pallino is removed from play. If a ball touches another ball or the pallino, it remains in play.
- If the pallino is knocked out of the court, the frame ends and is restarted from the same end.
- If the pallino is struck by a ball and rolls back past the centerline toward the foul line from which the frame began, the frame ends and is restarted from the same end.
- If the pallino slips under the backboard, it is placed back in front of the backboard and remains in play.
- If the pallino lands back on the court after hitting the sideboard, it is in play.
- If the pallino hits the concrete or metal fencing and returns onto the court, it is out of play, and the frame is restarted as a "do-over."
- A bocce ball that hits the concrete or metal fence or flies off the court is out of play and removed for the remainder of the frame.

Shooting & Taking the Point

- Players must announce before shooting.
- The opposing team players, as well as players on the adjacent court, are responsible for observing and acknowledging the signals or indications of a player at the foul line, especially with a shooting attempt.
- Lofting beyond the centerline is prohibited.
- If a thrown ball does not hit the playing surface before the centerline and strikes a ball or pallino, it is an invalid shot. All affected balls return to their original positions, and the thrown ball is removed from play.
- A team choosing to take the point instead of rolling must notify the opposing team and receive confirmation from the opposing team captain.

V. Measuring and Scoring

- Captains may appoint a designee for measurement, and their name must be recorded on the score sheet.
- Only captains (or their designees) may measure and must agree on a point before the next throw or the end of the frame.
- Measuring device used during play must be agreed upon by both captains (or their designees) before play starts. The same measuring device should be used throughout the match. Approved devices include:
 - the measuring tape provided by MBF (default if captains don't agree);
 - a personal measuring tape brought by the captain or designee; or
 - a digital laser measuring device brought by captain or designee.
- Other players must step off the court or stay well clear of the measurement process.
- Balls should only be measured when the point is unclear.
- Measurements are made from the inside edge of the ball to the inside edge of the pallino.
- If a measurement results in a tie (i.e. which ball is closest to the pallino), the last team to roll must roll again until the tie is broken.
- If there is a discrepancy between captains regarding the measurement, they should call the staff person on duty for a final decision.
- If all balls are played and a tie remains, no points are awarded and play resumes from the opposite end with the last team to score tossing the pallino.
- **Measurement discrepancies:** If a measurement taken at the end of a frame contradicts a prior measurement, the original measurement stands. ***Teams are responsible for requesting a measurement when uncertain, and once play continues, they cannot challenge or overturn an earlier measurement.*** However, if neither team previously requested a measurement because the point was obvious, and a dispute arises at the end of the frame, a final measurement will determine the result.

VI. Accidental Movement of Balls

- If a ball is moved accidentally, it shall be replaced as close as possible to its original position. Both captains must agree on the placement before play continues to ensure fairness.

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- If a ball is accidentally moved before the end of a frame and cannot be accurately replaced (i.e., captains do not agree on placement):
 - Remaining non-thrown balls of the non-offending team are counted as points.
 - The offending team's non-thrown balls are voided, and the frame is over.
- If multiple balls are accidentally moved or their original positions cannot be determined, the frame ends, no points are awarded and play resumes from the same end with the same team having the pallino.
- At the end of a frame, no ball should be moved or picked up without the consent of the opposing team. This ensures that both teams can request a measurement before any balls are disturbed.

VII. Throwing Errors

- **Throwing 3 balls:** If a player throws 3 balls, the third ball is dead and removed from play.
- **Throwing the wrong color:** Once the ball has stopped, it is replaced with the correct color.
- **Throwing out of turn:** If a player rolls when it is not their turn (e.g., when the opposing team should roll), the ball is returned to be replayed. Any moved balls must be placed back as close as possible to their original positions.

VIII. Disputes

- Teams will referee their own games.
- In the event of an irresolvable dispute, pause the game and seek assistance from the attending staff member.
- Formal protest may be filed by:
 - Notifying the opposing captain before the next frame;
 - Indicating on the score sheet that the game is proceeding under protest; and
 - Completing a complaint form (in MBF office) before leaving the courts and submitting it to the staff member in attendance who will pass it to the official Rules Committee for final resolution.

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IX. Captains

- Captains may appoint designees to represent their team for measurement or captaining; their names must be recorded on the score sheet for that match.
- Captains must be active players.
- Captains are responsible for knowing and upholding MBF league rules.
- Captains should keep their teams informed of relevant information, eg. any scheduling changes or weather conditions that affect play.

X. Rosters and Waivers

- All team members, including substitutes, must submit signed rosters and waivers by the imposed deadline. Any player who has not signed the MBF waiver is ineligible to play.
- Roster changes may be made within the first 3 weeks of league play.
- If a player quits or is removed after 3 weeks, they may not join another team for the remainder of the season. Captains should consider how many additional players they may need on their roster to ensure adequate player coverage.
- If a team fields a player not on its roster, games they played are forfeited.
- Players on multiple teams:
 - A maximum of **2 players** from the same team may play together on an **unlimited** number of other teams.
 - **3 players** from the same team may play together on only **2** teams.
 - **4 players** from the same team may play together on only **1** team.