

1. League Overview

The YMCA Youth Basketball League emphasizes skill development, teamwork, and sportsmanship. This non-competitive program is designed to foster a love for the game and provide a supportive environment where young players can learn basketball fundamentals. Our focus is on education, enjoyment, and growth rather than competition.

- Game Day: Saturdays at the Fercho YMCA (400 1st Ave S, Fargo)
- Practice Information: Times and locations are chosen during registration. Check your receipt for details.
- Basketball Sizes and Heights:
 - K & 1st Grade: Size 5 (27.5"), Basket Height: 8 feet
 - 2nd-4th Grade: Size 6 (28.5"), Basket Height: 9-10 feet

2. Registration & Fees

All players must be registered with fees paid in full to participate. Practice details, rosters, and jerseys will be provided prior to the first game.

3. Game and Practice Conduct

For Players:

- Wear dry tennis shoes and game jerseys (distributed by the 4th practice).
- Avoid jewelry or accessories that could cause injury.
- Bring a water bottle and a basketball appropriate for your age group.

For Parents:

- Parents must remain in the building for children 8 years old or younger.
- Parent volunteers may assist during games; non-volunteer parents must observe from designated areas.
- Communicate absences to the coach ahead of time.

For Coaches:

- Set a positive example by maintaining calm, supportive conduct.
- Be prepared to referee and coach during games if volunteers are unavailable.

4. Game Day Guidelines

- Arrive 15 minutes before game time for warm-up.
- Children will be called to the court via microphone at game start.
- Teams are given 15 minutes to warm up before each game.
- Seating is not provided; bring your own chair if needed.

5. Coaching and Refereeing Guidelines

Our Youth Basketball League is a non-competitive program dedicated to fostering a love for the game and providing a supportive environment where young players can learn the fundamentals of basketball. This league is designed to be educational and enjoyable, emphasizing growth over competition.

Coaching and Refereeing Responsibilities

- **Volunteer Coaches:**
Each team will aim to secure two parent volunteer coaches, who will share the following responsibilities:
 - Bench Coach: Coaches players from the bench, manages substitutions, and supports the team's progress.
 - On-Court Coach/Referee: Coaches on the court while also refereeing and making impartial calls for both teams.
 - These duties can be rotated among the coaches, as decided by the volunteers themselves.
- **Rotational Duties (if no volunteers):**
If no parent volunteers step forward before the start of the league, parents will be responsible for coordinating and rotating coaching and refereeing duties themselves. A roster with parent contact information will be provided one week prior to the start of the league to assist with coordination. These rotations will not be managed or organized by the YMCA.
- **Volunteer Requirements:**
All parent volunteers must complete a background check and submit required paperwork through VolunteerMatters before the league begins.
- **Referee Expectations:**
On-court coaches/referees are expected to uphold fairness and model positive sportsmanship.

6. Policy on Rule Violations

The YMCA Youth Basketball League encourages players to learn through participation while building confidence and understanding of the game. Coaches will address fouls and rule violations as teaching moments, easing enforcement during the first few weeks and gradually becoming stricter as players gain experience.

Gameplay Guidelines

1. **Stealing:** Stealing the ball directly from a player's hands is not permitted. Players may only attempt to intercept passes. This helps foster skill development and confidence in ball handling without fear of aggressive challenges. Coaches will guide players on timing and fair play when improper steals occur.
2. **Blocking:** Blocking must be gentle and safe. Aggressive or excessive blocking will not be tolerated. Coaches will use such instances to teach players effective and safe defensive techniques.
3. **Double Dribble:** Double dribbling is common for new players. Coaches will initially point out double dribbles to educate players, gradually enforcing this rule more strictly as they progress.
4. **Traveling:** Players will learn correct footwork and pivoting as the season begins. Coaches will allow flexibility early on but will tighten enforcement as players grow more confident.

Progressive Rule Enforcement

- **First Few Weeks:** Coaches will only call violations that are excessive or disruptive to ensure players feel comfortable learning the game.
- **Mid to Late Season:** As players gain confidence and understanding, coaches will become stricter with rule enforcement to promote growth and respect for the rules.

This approach ensures that players develop basketball fundamentals in a positive, encouraging environment while fostering a love for the game.

7. Equipment & Uniforms

- Game Jerseys: Jerseys are black and white reversible and cost \$15. Players may use a jersey from a previous season if they already own one; this cost is not included in the registration fee. Jerseys will be distributed by the 4th practice for players who purchase them during registration.
- Game Equipment: The YMCA will provide basketballs for games, but players are encouraged to bring their own basketballs for practices.
- What to Bring:
 - Dry tennis shoes
 - Water bottle
 - Basketball appropriate for your age group:
 - K & 1st Grade: Size 5 (27.5")
 - 2nd-4th Grade: Size 6 (28.5")

8. Attendance & Communication

- Inform coaches of absences ahead of time. Regular attendance is crucial for team success.
- Concerns or feedback can be addressed to the Site Lead before or after games.

9. Gym Rules

- No food is allowed. Drinks must be in secure containers.
- Parents and spectators must remain in designated areas during practice and games.