

BC plays WATER POLO

BASIC RULES OF WATER POLO

Winning A Game

The object in Water Polo is to put the ball into the opponents net; resulting action is called a goal. One point is awarded for each goal. The team with the most goals, at the end of the game, wins.

Scoring a Goal

A goal is scored when the entire ball crosses the goal line between the post and under the crossbar. The ball is normally thrown into the goal, but any part of the body may be used to knock the ball into the goal, other than hitting the ball with a clenched fist. On rare occasions a goal will be scored by a header or with a deft kick.

Game Length

The game (on the Olympic level - age group competitions are shorter and varies) is separated into four eight-minute periods, with two minute break between quarters. Half-time lasts five minutes at which time teams switch ends of the pool. A game clock counts down the time left each quartet, and stops temporarily for fouls and after a goal is scored.

In Play

A team consists of seven players (six field players and a goal keeper). Teams also includes 6 additional substitute players. Play is started each quarter by a sprint (swim-off): each team lines up along its own goal line, and at the referee's whistle, sprints for a mid-pool, where the ball is floating (or dropped by the referee). Field players can only use one hand to touch the ball at any time, while the goal keeper may use both hands.

Shot Clock

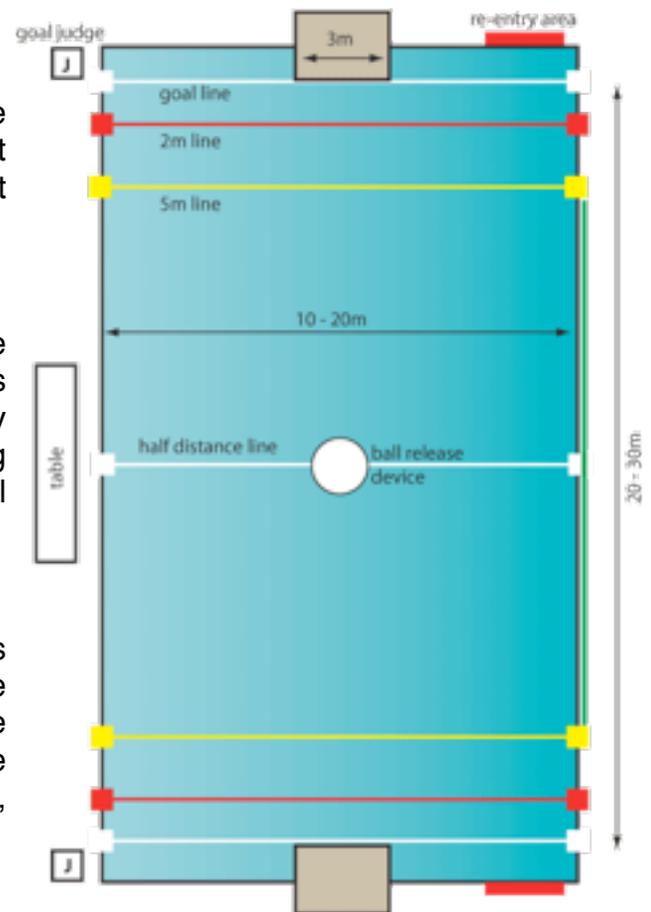
The second clock on the scoreboard is the shot clock, which indicates how much time remains for the offensive team to shoot the ball. A team is allowed 30 seconds to shoot the ball and if they fail to shoot (or score) before the clock runs out then the ball turns over to the other team.

Offside

The two meter line (red line in illustration above) marks offside violations. No offensive player may cross the two-meter line unless he or she is preceded by the ball. A two-meter (or offside) call results in a change of possession.

Substitutions

A team can substitute after a goal, between quarters, when one of its players has been excluded or injured, or when one of its player leaves the pool at the re-entry area nearest his or her own goal line. The substitute may enter the pool from the re-entry area as soon as the player leaving has risen to the surface in the re-entry area.



Fouls

There are two types of fouls: minor and major fouls. The most common minor foul is a player blocking the free movement of another player who does not have the ball. This is a standard defensive tactic.

Other minor fouls, include:

- Delaying too long before taking a free throw
- A field player touching the ball with two hands
- Failing to take a shot within 30 seconds
- Holding the ball underwater so that an opponent cannot play it
- Throwing the ball out of the field of play
- Pushing off the side or bottom of the pool

After a minor foul a member of the fouled team puts the ball into play by taking a free throw. If the foul is committed outside the 5 meter line (yellow line in illustration) then a player might take the free throw as a "direct shot" at the goal.

Major fouls are announced by the referee by blowing the whistle repeatedly (a few times). Play stops and the player who committed the foul is ejected from play for 20 seconds. The referee points at the player who committed the foul, indicates the cap number with hand signals and point to the ejection area. A player who commits three major fouls is ejected from the remainder of the game.

Examples of the major fouls are:

When an offensive player intentionally comes into contact with a defensive player



Holding on to an offensive player



Sinking a player



Pulling back on a player



Interfering with a free throw



Time outs

Each team is entitled to two timeouts in a game, plus a third that can only be requested in overtime. Timeouts are one minute in length and called by the coach of the team in possession of the ball. After the timeout, the ball is put into play at the half distance line.

Ties, Overtime and Penalty Shootout

During a competition, tie games are not extended into overtime during the preliminary rounds. In the final rounds a game may be extended into overtime. If, at the end of two periods of overtime the game still tied, then there is a one minute rest, and a penalty shootout to decide the winner.