

Sport Terminology

Terminologie du sport

As of WED 21 OCT 2026

Term	Definition
Attack	Any ball directed from above the height of the net towards the net and the opponent's side.
Block	An action close to the net to intercept the ball crossing the net by reaching above the net.
Dig	When a player keeps the ball in play following an opponent's attack.
Draws	Drawing of lots for the preliminary round is conducted by the FIVB no later than one week before the start of the competition. Brackets allocation for a final round is conducted by the tournament official. Seeded players (winners of the pools) are placed in the bracket according to FIVB regulations. Unseeded players (all second ranked teams and best two third ranked teams) are then drawn at random into the bracket. The draw for the remaining two positions (lucky loser winners) is made after the lucky loser matches. There are separate draws for the men's and women's final phases.
Error	Failure to perform a shot (can be by dig, set, attack, etc.) which causes a team to concede a point or sideout.
Event Director	The Event Director takes directions from the Beach Volleyball Commission. The primary duties of the Event Director are: • To ensure that the rules and direction of the FIVB are adhered to • To advise the organisers within the scope of their duties • To be the official representative of the FIVB in preparation for the Games • To be the official representative of the FIVB to the IOC regarding questions on the sport
First Referee	The first referee directs the match from the start until the end and has authority over all members of the refereeing corps and the teams. During the match the first referee's decisions are final. The first referee carries out his functions seated or standing on a referee's stand located at one end of the net.
FIVB Control Committee	The FIVB Control Committee decides on any correctly lodged protest.
Forfeit	When a team has withdrawn from the tournament through illness or injury or, (on rare occasions) is late reporting for the match, it will be described as having forfeited the match. The opposing team is awarded the win without playing the match.
Injury	A situation when a player is not able to continue the match due to a physical injury.
International Technical Official	The official holding an International FIVB licence, who is in charge of tournament play. The international technical official conducts the draw, schedules, matches, and upholds the rules of the competition.
Jury	The Jury decides on any correctly lodged protest.

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Line Judges	A team of four court officials who assist the referees during a match by ruling whether a ball is in or out. When an official is unsighted the referee makes the decision. An official's decision is final on all points of fact for which that official is responsible. The line judges perform their functions by using flags (30 x 30 cm): • Line judges signal the ball as "in" or "out" whenever the ball lands near their line(s) • Line judges signal the touches of "out" balls for the team receiving the ball • Line judges signal whenever the ball crosses the net outside the crossing space, touches the antenna, etc. It is primarily the line judge closest to the path of the ball that is responsible for the signal • Line judges in charge of the end lines signal foot faults of the server On the referee's first request, a line judge must repeat his/her signal.
Lucky Loser Round	The round in the preliminary phase in which the fourth to sixth placed 3rd ranked teams from the pool round compete for the last two places in the final phase.
Match	A contest between two teams comprising at least two sets. A team wins a set by scoring 21 points, with at least a two-point lead. If the teams are tied after two sets a third set is played to 15 points, with at least a two-point lead, to decide the match.
Match Duration	Total match time calculated from the starting time of the match until the end time.
National Technical Official	The National Technical Official holds a national federation licence and is in charge of tournament play. The national technical official assists in conducting the draw, scheduling matches and upholding the rules of the competition.
Opponent Error	Unsuccessful opponent actions, which result in the scoring of a point.
Pass	Technique of playing the ball underhand using the forearms, with both hands together to direct the ball to the other team member.
Penalties	DELAYS TO THE GAME - an improper action of a team that delays the resumption of the game. • The first delay by a team in a set is sanctioned with a DELAY WARNING. • The second and subsequent delay of any type by the same team in the same set constitutes an error, and is sanctioned with a DELAY PENALTY: loss of a rally. MISCONDUCT - Improper conduct by a team member towards officials, opponents, their team mate or spectators is classified in four categories according to the degree of the offence as follows: • MISCONDUCT WARNING: for unsportsmanlike conduct, no sanction is given but the team member concerned is warned against repetition in the same set • MISCONDUCT PENALTY: for rude conduct or repeated unsportsmanlike conduct, the team is sanctioned with the loss of a rally • EXPULSION: repeated rude or offensive conduct is sanctioned by expulsion. The team member who is sanctioned with expulsion must leave the playing area and the team is declared incomplete for the set • DISQUALIFICATION: for aggression, the player must leave the playing area and the team is declared incomplete for the match



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Playing time	Total match duration excluding the intervals, plus any medical time-outs, protest protocols and other exceptional interruptions.
Point	A point or sideout is awarded when a ball is blocked onto the ground in the opponent's court or, after being touched by the opposing team, is not kept in play. When a ball is blocked onto the ground in the opponent's court, or if touched by the opponent team is not kept in play.
Pool	Preliminary group playing a pool round. It will consist of six pools of four teams each.
Position	Position of player on the field of play (right or left).
Protest	During the match, both players are authorised to speak to the referees while the ball is out of play. If either player has previously requested a Protest Protocol from the first referee, the player has the right to confirm it as a protest, and it will then be recorded on the score sheet.
Rally	The sequence of playing actions from the moment of the service hit by the server until the ball is out of play.
Rally Point Ratio	The total number of points won divided by the total number of points lost.
Rally Point System (RPS)	The team winning a rally scores a point. When the receiving team wins a rally, it gains a point and the right to serve.
Referee	The official responsible for the conduct of the competition in accordance with the official FIVB rules and for maintaining discipline and order on the playing field during the competition.
Reserve Referee	A third referee may be appointed under the competition rules and officiates if any of the two match officials is unable to continue, unless a reserve referee is appointed. He assists the referee at all times.
Role	Position within a team: Right/Left Blocker/Defender
Sanction	Depending on the severity of the sanctioned conduct, according to the judgment of the first referee, the possible sanctions to be applied are (they must be recorded on the score sheet): • Misconduct warning • Misconduct penalty • Expulsion • Disqualification
Scorer	The FIVB shall appoint an official scorer, who shall have sole authority to make all decisions involving judgment regarding scoring. The official scorer shall communicate such decisions to the press box, the broadcasting booths and the public address announcer.
Second Referee	The second referee assists the first referee, but also has his own range of jurisdiction. Should the first referee be unable to continue his work, the second referee may replace him. The second referee controls the work of the scorer(s) and performs his functions standing outside the playing court near the post, on the opposite side from the first referee.
Serve	The action of putting the ball into play.
Set (1)	The action of setting the ball for a teammate to attack from.

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Set (2)	Each match is broken into two or three sets. The first two sets are won by the team that first scores 21 points with a minimum lead of two points. If necessary the third, deciding set, is won by the team that first scores 15 points with a minimum lead of two points.
Sideout	Occurs when the receiving team effectively puts the ball away against the serving team; or when the serving team commits an unforced error and, as a result, the receiving team gains the right to serve.
Spectacular Play	The FIVB has a focus of identifying and celebrating spectacular moments or actions of each match. These moments or actions are generally referred to as a "spectacular play or moment". The following is an outline of these spectacular moments: • Monster block: The action of blocking that sees the ball landing inside the 3m zone of the attacker's court terminating the rally. This occurs after an attacker has hit the ball at high velocity into a block, the block sends the ball fast down into the opponent's court without any possibility of keeping the ball in play, leading to the rally terminating. • Super spike: The action of an attacker hitting the ball at high velocity into the opponent's court terminating the rally. • Ace The action of a serve where the ball has touched some part of the opponent's court, or the receiver of the serve has mishit the ball causing the ball to be unplayable, leading to the rally terminating. • Mega rally: The action of a long rally involving multiple phases of attack and defence where the ball has crossed the net at least four times. During the Mega rally, there may be moments of great defensive actions that keep the ball flying and return the ball back to the other side of the court.
Standings	Placement in order of achievement of the teams by matches won.
Statistics	Statistics evaluate the performance of the teams and players.

Note:
For further information please consult: www.fivb.com