



2023-2024 London League rules - London Volleyball Association

1. ADMINISTRATION

1.1. Affiliation and Fees

- 1.1.1. All teams in competitions administered by the London Volleyball Association must be representatives of clubs who are members of the Association and affiliated to Volleyball England. Entry fees must be paid with the application form.
- 1.1.2. Each team of a club that is not affiliated with Volleyball England will start the season with a 10 points penalty. This can be reduced to 0 if the affiliation comes through before 31 December of the season, or 5 if they get affiliated by 30 April.
- 1.1.3. A goodwill deposit must be maintained at the level set by the London Executive.

1.2. Acceptance of Rules

- 1.2.1. Any application to participate in a competition organised by the London Volleyball Association will constitute acceptance of these rules and conditions.
- 1.2.2. All participants within the London League are expected to adhere to a code of Conduct, be the players, spectators, parents, coaches, or officials. The Codes of Conduct can be found on the LVA website.

1.3. Management

- 1.3.1. The League is run by a League Subcommittee of the London Volleyball Association which consists of all the Divisional Administrators and the League Secretary. The League Subcommittee is under the direction of the LVA Executive Committee. Each Division is run by a Divisional Administrator appointed by the LVA Executive Committee annually.

1.4. League Meeting

- 1.4.1. All teams should send a representative to the League meeting of the London Volleyball Association. A single representative can represent more than one team of a single club.
- 1.4.2. If a club fails to send a representative to the league meeting, their team / teams will be issued with a penalty point for the coming season.

1.5. Amendment to Rules

- 1.5.1. Amendments to these rules may be made by the Executive Committee of the London Volleyball Association at any time. However, in normal circumstances amendments applicable to a particular season would not be made after entries have been invited.



2. MATCH ORGANISATION

2.1. Setting dates

- 2.1.1. Teams will be provided with the draft fixtures well in advance. A minimum of 21 days before the first game of the season. At that time, teams may submit amendments to the proposed fixtures until a date set by the League Secretary.
- 2.1.2. Match dates and times published on League Republic are treated as confirmed. Any date change request must be made to the opposition and Divisional Administrator with at least two weeks' notice, if not, a penalty point may be issued at the divisional administrator's discretion.

2.2. Rescheduling requests

- 2.2.1. Teams must submit all rescheduling requests in writing to both the Div. Admin and the opposition at least two weeks before the originally scheduled game. NOTE: If it is not possible to give at least 2 weeks' notice, the Divisional Administrator can still allow the change if the reasons for the reschedule are beyond the club's control.
- 2.2.2. Rescheduling requests must include a valid reason for the request, such as: venue unavailability due to unforeseen circumstances, or extreme weather conditions that pose a safety risk. Div. Admins can ask for written confirmation from any third party such as the venue management as evidence.
- 2.2.3. If the request is within timelines set, and the reasons for rescheduling are valid, and deemed beyond the control of the team and their players, then the home team should suggest three (3) alternative dates which do not clash with known fixtures of the opposition. If dates are deemed suitable by the Divisional Administrator, the opposition should accept one of these proposed dates within a week of the notice. All responses should be in writing by email with the Divisional Administrator in copy.
- 2.2.4. The Divisional administrator may intervene when no resolution is found between the two teams. The Divisional Administrator will review and sanction the game changes.
- 2.2.5. If a new date is not agreed with opposition and noted with Divisional Administrator within two weeks of the rescheduling request, the match will be kept at the original date
- 2.2.6. Fees: In a case where the away team requests to reschedule with less than two weeks' notice, the away team will be liable for costs incurred by the home team.
- 2.2.7. If a game is rescheduled at the away team's request with at least two weeks' notice and costs have already been incurred by the home team, the away team will be liable to pay 50% of these costs.
- 2.2.8. However, if the game is claimed, referee costs only will be paid by the away team.



2.2.9. Penalties for unauthorised rescheduling. Teams attempting to reschedule games without following the approved procedures will be subject to penalties decided by the Divisional Administrator including forfeiture of game in question, or a penalty point.

2.2.10. Where there are two teams in the same pool from the same club, games between the two teams must not be played in the last 5 games of the season.

2.3. Match invitation

2.3.1. The home team is responsible for sending match confirmations by email to the away team secretary, with the Divisional Administrator copied in. This correspondence must be received at least two weeks but no more than 4 weeks before the proposed date. If no match invitation is received, League Republic published match dates/start times should be treated as confirmed. If no invitation is sent, home teams will receive a warning. After a warning, home teams will receive a penalty point for each time match invitations are not sent

2.3.2. The match confirmation/invitation should include the venue, start time of the warm-up and time of the first service. There must be at least twenty minutes between these times. If there is a hard finishing time imposed by the venue, or if basic facilities such as showers are not provided, these details should be noted in the invitation as well.

2.3.3. The visiting team must confirm attendance by email within one week of receiving the offer, or at least 7 days before the fixture. If no invitation is sent, the fixture is treated as confirmed (see 2.2.1).

2.3.4. All correspondence must be retained until the end of the season in case of a dispute arising.

2.3.5. Any team who cannot make the confirmed match date and has not submitted a valid request for rescheduling within timelines will default the match. This means the team loses the match by 0-21 0-21 0-21 and does not get any league points from the match.

2.4. Match day

2.4.1. Matches shall be played with first service between 7.20pm and 9pm on a Monday-Friday evening, or between 10am and 8pm at weekends, or at other times with the agreement of both teams.

2.4.2. At least two hours of court time must be booked per match.

2.4.3. Should a fixture not be played then the Divisional Administrator shall consider the available evidence and rule as to whether the match should be replayed, forfeited, declared null and void and any sanctions applicable



2.5. Team arrival

- 2.5.1. Where a problem arises on match day or on the way to the match, the team must make every effort to contact the opposition and Divisional Administrator to explain and resolve the problem.
- 2.5.2. Where a team is delayed by factors that are wholly out of a team's control (e.g., public transport breakdown on the day) and can be backed up by professional and independent reports of confirmation (e.g., public transport company, Police, Motoring organisation, MET Office) indicating driving conditions and advice, this can be considered by the Divisional Administrator as an extenuating circumstance. However, every attempt must be made to travel and play matches as scheduled. Additional travel time requirements would not be a reason not to play, and teams cannot “postpone” matches without the approval of the Divisional Administrator. Delays such as traffic problems, vehicle breakdowns (unless by public transport) are not normally considered as factors outside of a team's control. Teams are expected to inform the Divisional Administrator, the home team, and the Referees of the delay as soon as possible.

2.6. Late arrival penalties

- 2.6.1. Providing the court is available, and one team is ready to commence play:
 - Any team failing to appear on court, ready to commence play, within 15 minutes of the scheduled start time shall forfeit the first set. The set shall be lost 21-0.
 - The second set shall commence 15 minutes later, i.e. 30 minutes after the published start time. A team arriving between the start times of the 2 sets shall be able to use the available time for warm-up. If a team is not on court ready to play 15 minutes after the published start time, then they shall lose the second set 21-0.
 - The third set shall commence 15 minutes later, i.e. 45 minutes after the published start time. A team not on court ready to play at that time shall lose the third set 21-0, and thus loses the match 3-0.
 - Note: If a team arrives (ready to play) 14 minutes after the official match start time, they are still entitled to play the first set, but they forgo their warm-up, if however, the team arrives (ready to play) 15 minutes or later, after the official match time that team loses the first set 21-0. The late team could use the remaining minutes as warm-up before starting the second set if play commences within the 30 minutes of the scheduled match start time.
 - The defaulting team may forfeit the match, be fined, and lose league points consequently.



- 2.6.2. Any reason for the late start of a fixture must be recorded on the scoresheet, prior to the first service. Teams must check this is recorded on the scoresheet before signing at the end of the match. If the delay to the match is within the control of either of the competing teams and does not allow for the completion of the match, penalty points may be given at the discretion of the Divisional Administrator, taking into consideration all elements listed above.
- 2.6.3. If a player arrives after the start of a set, they won't be eligible to play in the match until the next set.

2.7. Match end

- 2.7.1. A decision is made at the start of the match regarding an extension to the match booking. If the match runs over scheduled time, the referee should follow the pre match agreement.
- 2.7.2. If there is a hard stop to the match booking time (i.e. no possible extension, see 2.4.1.) and if there are 5 minutes or less of this booking time remaining, the referee should not start a new set.
- 2.7.3. An incomplete match would be given to the team with the most sets won. For this purpose, an incomplete set is counted as a win for the team with a lead of 2 or more points, otherwise that set doesn't count. If set scores are tied, the winner is the team with a 'points total' of at least two more than their opponents. If teams are still tied, then the two teams each get 2 league points.
- 2.7.4. In case of an incomplete match ending up in a tie, the home team is responsible for sending the score sheet.

3. THE MATCH

3.1. Rules

- 3.1.1. Matches will be played to FIVB rules as published by Volleyball England (With the exception of scoring: see 3.1.2, time outs: see 3.1.3, crossover time: see 3.1.4). Matches will be played to the best of 5 sets, unless mutual agreement obtained in advance, is reached.
- 3.1.2. In all divisions, sets 1 to 4 will be played to 21 points with a 2 points margin and the final set to 15 points with a 2 points margin.
- 3.1.3. In the 5th set, only one time out is allowed.
- 3.1.4. In the London League, the crossover time between sets will be 2 minutes (instead of 3).



3.2. Scoresheets

- 3.2.1. The home team must provide a visual scoreboard. Official scoresheets must be used for all fixtures, the responsibility for which will lie with the home club, and all sections must be completed. The winning team will be responsible for sending the top copy of the scoresheet to the Divisional Administrator, sent within seven days of the fixture. If a scoresheet is late, the team responsible for sending the scoresheet will be issued a warning, if it happens again, the team responsible for sending the scoresheet will be issued a penalty point. This will happen for every delay after the first warning has been issued.
- 3.2.2. Where the Official(s) is/are qualified then any protest will be dealt with by the Divisional Administrators. Comments relating in any way to the competence of the match Referees must not be recorded on the scoresheet. Any comments should be sent to the Referee Coordinator and Divisional Administrator.
- 3.2.3. Submission of a clear electronic copy (photo or scan) of the complete top (white) copy of the scoresheet can be acceptable for this purpose.

3.3. Venue

- 3.3.1. A venue should have: VE standard volleyball posts, match net, antennae, standard court size/markings, safe referee stand, at least 2-3 metres behind the service line, minimum 7.5m ceiling height. Any exceptions should be referred to the league subcommittee BEFORE the start of the season for approval.
- 3.3.2. Ordinarily, a valid fixture must take place inside the London Region. If a team intends to play a London League fixture outside of the region more than twice in one season permission must be sought from the Divisional Administrator to validate the fixtures, having first obtained the agreement of the opposition. If less than three times in one season, the team need only seek the agreement from the opposition in advance. The 'London region' comprises of the 32 recognised boroughs of London and the City of London.
- 3.3.3. The Home team is responsible for ensuring that net is set up correctly before the match start

4. PLAYERS

4.1. Eligibility

- 4.1.1. All divisions of the London League constitute one single competition.
- 4.1.2. A player can only represent one club in the competition.
- 4.1.3. The player registration (see 4.2) associates the player with a team. When a player's club has more than one team, the player may represent other teams from the same club which are in higher divisions for maximum of three matches. If a player plays at any point on or after first service in a match, they will be considered as having played 1 match.



Once a player has played up for 3 matches, they will be automatically transferred to the team in the higher division.

- 4.1.4. If a club has 2 or more teams in the same division, a player can only play for the team with which they are registered in that division (this does not prevent them from playing up for their club's team in a higher division, see 4.1.3)
- 4.1.5. Players, who are registered as U18 juniors with the Divisional Administrator by submission of their Date of Birth with registration, may play up any number of times per season for a team of the same club. Age is taken at 1st Sept of the start of season.
- 4.1.6. A player playing up from a lower division MUST provide their registration card or ID on the day and it must be noted on the score sheet. Otherwise, they cannot play on the day.
- 4.1.7. Men cannot play in the Women's section of the Competition, and neither can women play in the Men's Section.
- 4.1.8. Transgender issues will be decided on a case-by-case basis.
- 4.1.9. All players must have uniform shirts each distinctly numbered front and back between 1 and 99. No taped numbers are allowed and there should be contrasting colours between player kit and libero kit. The normal penalty for failure to adhere to this rule shall be the deduction of one league point.
- 4.1.10. Teams can have up to 14 players (12 players + 2 liberos) on the scoresheet for London League matches
- 4.1.11. Banned members are deemed ineligible until the ban is served.

4.2. Registration

- 4.2.1. All Clubs must get the agreement of each player to be registered with them for the current season and are responsible for making sure that players are aware they been registered.
- 4.2.2. All players shall have a signed registration card, which teams must present at each match. Teams failing to present signed registration cards at a match will be issued a warning by their divisional admin for the first offence and a penalty point on any further occasions. Club are responsible for ensuring that registration numbers are recorded against the player, and their shirt number, on the scoresheet. Clubs entering more than one team must specify for which team each player is registered. Cards can be presented on paper or digitally.
- 4.2.3. Existing registrations can be renewed before league starts, and new registrations can be registered on the match day, where his/her card is to be sent to the Divisional Administrator following the match by the registering team.
- 4.2.4. Only in exceptional circumstances registrations will be accepted after the 28th/29th February
- 4.2.5. A minimum number of 8 players per team must be registered for each team entering the league before the first match (including on the day registrations).



- 4.2.6. If a player is “registered on the day” of a match, their signed registration card must be sent to the Divisional Administrator within 7 days of the match being played. Failure to do so means the team will be issued a penalty point.

4.3. Transfers

- 4.3.1. Players may transfer between teams once per season providing the following:
- The current team is not left with less than 6 players
 - No money, kit, etc. is owed to the current club
 - The transfer is completed before 1st April
- 4.3.2. A current club refusing to release a player on either of the above grounds must provide written proof to support their claim, within 7 days of receipt of the transfer request. If not received, the transfer will be authorised.
- 4.3.3. The player or either club can apply to the Divisional Administrator for the transfer process to be started by completing and submitting the transfer request form. This form can be found on the LVA Website.
- 4.3.4. A fully signed transfer form and the player's card shall be with the Divisional Administrator, whose approval is required before the player can play for the new club.
- 4.3.5. In the event of a dispute, the Divisional Administrator's decision will be final.
- 4.3.6. Any player transferring within a club forfeits any remaining entitlement to playing up or down.

5. OFFICIALS

- 5.1. The home team must appoint match officials and a competent scorer, as detailed below, except where officials are appointed by the Divisional Administrator.

Division	First Referee	Second Referee	Scorer
Premier	Registered and Independent	Registered and Independent	Present
Division 1	Registered and Independent	Registered	Present
Below Division 1	Registered and Independent	Present	Present



- 5.2. The first referee must be independent of both teams (independent = not a player or member of either club). Referees must be registered with Volleyball England as an over 18, full indoor referee and their current registration number must be recorded on the scoresheet. Where a club fails to pay a referee his/her agreed fee on the day without agreement, the League Secretary will be notified and the fee plus £5 will be taken from the club deposit to cover the referee fee.
- 5.3. When seeking a match official from the LVA panel, the team shall make application to the LVA Referee Administrator not less than 72 hours before the start time for the match.
- 5.4. All teams must go through the LVA Ref Admin to appoint all 'registered and independent' officials.
- 5.5. All teams must inform opponents and their divisional administrator 24-48hr before a match if officials have not been allocated to discuss and agree their options. Failure to do this means teams will be issued a penalty point.

6. DISCIPLINARY ISSUES

6.1. Penalties and Fines

- 6.1.1. League penalty points and fines may be levied at the discretion of the Divisional Administrator for breaches of the rules. The maximum financial penalty will be to the level of a team's deposit. Serious and repeat offences may lead to teams being barred from further participation in the competition.
- 6.1.2. Penalties and fines can be issued for failure to adhere to rules regarding:
 - Fixture Dates and Timing
 - Venue and venue equipment.
 - Player registration
 - Team kit
 - Match officials
 - Persistent late arrival of teams
 - Late arrival of scoresheets



6.1.3. The following suspensions shall be levied against players / coaches receiving sanctions from a referee. Bans should be served in the next match after the penalty/ruling:

- Two penalties - written warning (to the Club)
- Three penalties - 1 match ban
- One expulsion - 1 match ban
- One disqualification - 2 match ban

6.1.4. Any physical aggression shall be dealt with by the League Subcommittee (composed of Divisional Admins and League Secretary), where the severity of punishment will be decided upon.

6.1.5. A player issued with a match ban penalty is ineligible to play for any team in the competition.

6.1.6. Coaches serve their bans with the team who they were coaching at the time of the sanction.

6.2. Disputes

6.2.1. In the event of a dispute in the London League, that dispute should be referred to the Divisional Administrator for judgement in settlement.

6.3. Appeals

6.3.1. Any appeals against the decision made by a Divisional Administrator will be sent to the League Subcommittee and must be submitted in writing within 2 weeks of the decision being communicated. A deposit of £100 shall be lodged with any appeal; such deposit shall be returned if the appeal is deemed by the League Subcommittee as non-frivolous.

6.3.2. Teams can appeal against the League Subcommittee's ruling and will have their case considered by the LVA Executive.

7. END OF SEASON - SCORING SYSTEM

7.1. The winning team in each fixture will receive three points, the losing team one point and in the case of a tie when time runs out two points each. Teams that default will receive no points. The final order of each division will be decided by the number of League points won by each team before a date fixed as the end of the season by the Divisional Administrator. In the event of a tie for league points, position will be decided by the following criteria, in order of descending importance:

7.1.1. Sets difference

7.1.2. Match Points difference



- 7.2. For teams who do not play at least 60% of their league fixtures, matches will not count at the end of the season. All league points earned in these fixtures will be cancelled before the end of season league table is finalised.
- 7.3. In exceptional circumstances, the LVA Executive may instruct a variation in rules relating to ending the season.

8. PROMOTION AND RELEGATION

- 8.1. Automatic relegation: A team not playing at least 60% of its matches will lose their deposit and be relegated.
- 8.2. Where two divisions promote into one, the following rules apply:
 - 8.2.1. As of league table positions at the end of the season, the bottom two teams from the higher division will be relegated and the winners in the two lower divisions will be promoted.
 - 8.2.2. The runners-up in each of the lower divisions then play each other in a one match play-off (P1) for the right to play the 3rd from bottom placed team in the higher division in a second one match play-off (P2). The winner of P2 takes a place in next season's higher division and the loser a place in a lower division.
 - 8.2.3. The League would endeavour to arrange a one-day playoff for both legs on the same day in May. This would be communicated in due course. Failing that, the remainder of this section applies.
 - 8.2.4. The Administrator (Admin) for both matches will be the Divisional Administrator for the first named lower division in the handbook. The costs of each match will be shared equally by the teams playing.
 - 8.2.5. The Admin will choose by random (coin toss) which team will host the P1 match and inform both teams on the second Tuesday of May. The match will be played under the rules pertaining to the lower and between 3rd Monday and 4th Sunday in May. The host must give the opposition at least 7 days' notice.
 - 8.2.6. The P2 match will be played under rules pertaining to the higher division and hosted by the higher division team in the first week of June. The arrangements for this match must be announced to the Admin and both participants of P1 3rd Monday in May.
 - 8.2.7. Both P1 and P2 can be played earlier than specified above, and/or the host changed only if both participating teams agree and tell the Admin.
- 8.3. Where three divisions promote into two:
 - 8.3.1. As of league table positions on 1st May, the bottom two teams from the higher division will be relegated and the winners of the three lower divisions will be promoted.
 - 8.3.2. As of league table positions on 1st May, the two teams next to bottom from the higher division will be relegated.



- 8.3.3. The runners-up in each of the lower division then play each other in a triangular match play-off P3 and the winner will be promoted.
 - 8.3.4. The League would endeavour to arrange a one-day playoff. Failing that the following will apply.
 - 8.3.5. The Administrator (Admin) will be the Divisional Administrator for the first named division in the handbook. The costs of each match will be shared equally by the teams playing.
 - 8.3.6. The Admin will choose by random (coin toss) which team will host the P3 match and inform both teams on second Tuesday of May. The match will be played under the rules pertaining to the lower and between 3rd Monday and 4th Sunday in May. The host must give the opposition at least 7 days' notice.
 - 8.3.7. The play-offs can be played earlier than specified above, and/or the host changed only if all participating teams agree and tell the Admin.
- 8.4. Between all other Divisions
- 8.4.1. We aim to promote 2 teams and relegate 2 teams from each division when balance of division sizes allows.
- 8.5. Divisional Structure. When the number of entries to the league is known, a decision will be taken on the number of divisions and the number of teams in each. Other than the promoted and relegated teams, teams will be allocated to divisions working from the top downwards, filling the divisions.

History

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