

National Federation of State  
High School Associations



# Basketball

## Rules Book



2007-08

# RULES



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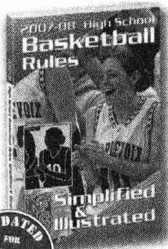
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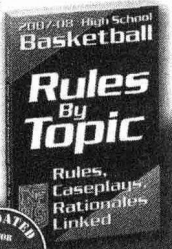
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2007-08 NFHS

# BASKETBALL RULES BOOK

**ROBERT F. KANABY, Publisher**  
**Mary E. Struckhoff, Editor**  
**NFHS Publications**

To maintain the sound traditions of this sport, encourage sportsmanship and minimize the inherent risk of injury, the National Federation of State High School Associations writes playing rules for varsity competition among student-athletes of high school age. High school coaches, officials and administrators who have knowledge and experience regarding this particular sport and age group volunteer their time to serve on the rules committee. Member associations of the NFHS independently make decisions regarding compliance with or modification of these playing rules for the student-athletes in their respective states.

NFHS rules are used by education-based and non-education-based organizations serving children of varying skill levels who are of high school age and younger. In order to make NFHS rules skill-level and age-level appropriate, the rules may be modified by any organization that chooses to use them. Except as may be specifically noted in this rules book, the NFHS makes no recommendation about the nature or extent of the modifications that may be appropriate for children who are younger or less skilled than high school varsity athletes.

Every individual using these rules is responsible for prudent judgment with respect to each contest, athlete and facility, and each athlete is responsible for exercising caution and good sportsmanship. These rules should be interpreted and applied so as to make reasonable accommodations for disabled athletes, coaches and officials.

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**Published by the NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS,**  
**PO Box 690, Indianapolis, Indiana 46206; Phone: 317-972-6900, Fax: 317.822.5700,**  
**www.nfhs.org. Cover photos courtesy of 20/20 Photographic, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan.**

## 2007-08 NFHS Basketball Rules Changes

- 2-12-4;** Changed the warning horn for a 30-second time-out to be  
**5-11-2** sounded with 15 seconds remaining.
- 2-12-5;** Changed the replacement interval for a disqualified or injured player  
**10-5-3** to 20 seconds, with a warning horn sounded with 15 seconds remaining.
- 4-15-4d;** Changed that a dribble ends when loss of control by the dribbler  
**9-5-2** is caused by the opponent touching, or being touched by, the ball, rather than an intentional batting of the ball.
- 4-42-5** Changed that a throw-in ends when the throw-in pass is "legally" touched by another player.
- Signal Chart** Added a signal (spreading of the arms) for when a defender is not in a closely-guarding position.

### 2007-08 Major Editorial Changes

- 3-4-6b New** Implementation date reached requiring the home team to wear white jerseys.
- 3-5-2 & New d** Added that guards, casts, braces and compression sleeves must be worn for medical reasons.
- 3-5-3d** Clarified that hard items worn on the head are prohibited.
- 4-38; 7-5-1** Clarified when the resumption-of-play procedure is in effect.
- 4-40-2d** Clarified the definition of a legal screen.
- 7-5-2 thru 7** Articles reordered for better understanding and application.
- 10-3-3** Clarified that a technical foul shall be called when a player purposely and/or deceitfully delays his/her return to the court after legally being out of bounds.
- 10-6** Section reorganized for better understanding and application.

### Points of Emphasis

1. Uniforms
2. Free Throws
3. Displacement
4. Ball Handler/Dribbler

Requests for basketball rules interpretations or explanations should be directed to the state association responsible for the high school basketball program in your state. The NFHS will assist in answering rules questions from state associations whenever called upon.

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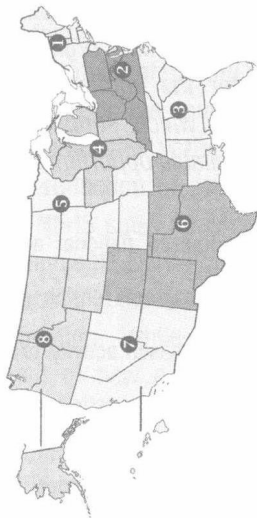
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# Mission Statement

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*The National Federation of State High School Associations serves its members, related professional organizations and students by providing leadership for the administration of education-based interscholastic activities, which support academic achievement, good citizenship and equitable opportunities.*

**We believe:**

- the NFHS is the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs.
- interscholastic activity programs enrich each student's educational experience.
- participation in education-based activity programs promotes student academic achievement.
- student participation in interscholastic activity programs is a privilege.
- interscholastic participation develops good citizenship and healthy lifestyles.
- interscholastic activity programs foster involvement of a diverse population.
- interscholastic activity programs promote positive school/community relations.
- the NFHS is the pre-eminent authority on competition rules for interscholastic activity programs.
- national competition rules promote fair play and minimize risks for student participants.
- cooperation among state associations advances their individual and collective well-being.
- properly trained administrators/coaches/directors promote the educational mission of the interscholastic experience.
- properly trained officials/judges enhance interscholastic competition.

# Equipment Guidelines



1. Each NFHS sports rules committee is responsible for recommending the official playing rules to the NFHS Board of Directors for adoption. The committee is not responsible for testing or approving playing equipment for use in interscholastic sports. Equipment manufacturers have undertaken the responsibility for the development of playing equipment that meets the specifications established by the committee. The NFHS urges manufacturers to work with the various independent testing agencies to ensure the production of safe products. Neither the NFHS nor the applicable NFHS sport rules committee certifies the safety of any sport equipment. Only equipment that meets the dimensions and specifications in the NFHS sport rules may be used in interscholastic competition. While the committee does not regulate the development of new equipment and does not set technical or scientific standards for testing equipment, the committee may, from time to time, provide manufacturers with guidance as to the equipment-performance levels it considers consistent with the integrity of the game. The committee reserves the right to intercede to protect and maintain that integrity.

2. Each NFHS sport rules committee suggests that manufacturers planning innovative changes in sports equipment submit the equipment to the applicable NFHS sport rules committee for review before production.



# COMMUNICABLE DISEASE AND SKIN INFECTION PROCEDURES

While the risk for blood-borne infectious diseases, such as HIV/Hepatitis B, remains low in sports, proper precautions are needed to reduce the risk of spreading diseases. Along with these issues are skin infections that occur due to skin contact with competitors and equipment.

## **Universal Hygiene Protocol for All Sports**

- Shower immediately after all competition and practice
- Wash all workout clothing after practice
- Wash personal gear, such as knee pads, periodically
- Don't share towels or personal hygiene products with others
- Refrain from (full body) cosmetic shaving

## **Infectious Skin Diseases**

Means of reducing the potential exposure to these agents include:

- Notify guardian, athletic trainer and coach of any lesion before competition or practice. Athlete must have a health-care provider evaluate lesion before returning to competition.
- If an outbreak occurs on a team, especially in a contact sport, consider evaluating other team members for potential spread of the infectious agent.
- Follow NFHS or state/local guidelines on "time until return to competition." Allowance of participation with a covered lesion can occur if approved by health-care provider and in accordance with NFHS, state or local guidelines.

## **Blood-Borne Infectious Diseases**

Means of reducing the potential exposure to these agents include:

- Bleeding must be stopped immediately and all wounds covered. All blood-soaked clothing must be removed before continuing competition or practice. Contaminated clothing must be cleaned before using again.
- Athletic trainers or caregivers need to wear gloves and take other precautions to prevent blood-splash from contaminating themselves or others.
- Immediately wash contaminated skin or mucous membranes with soap and water.
- Clean all contaminated surfaces and equipment with disinfectant before returning to competition. Be sure to use gloves with cleaning.
- Any blood exposure or bites to the skin that break the surface must be reported and evaluated by a medical provider immediately.

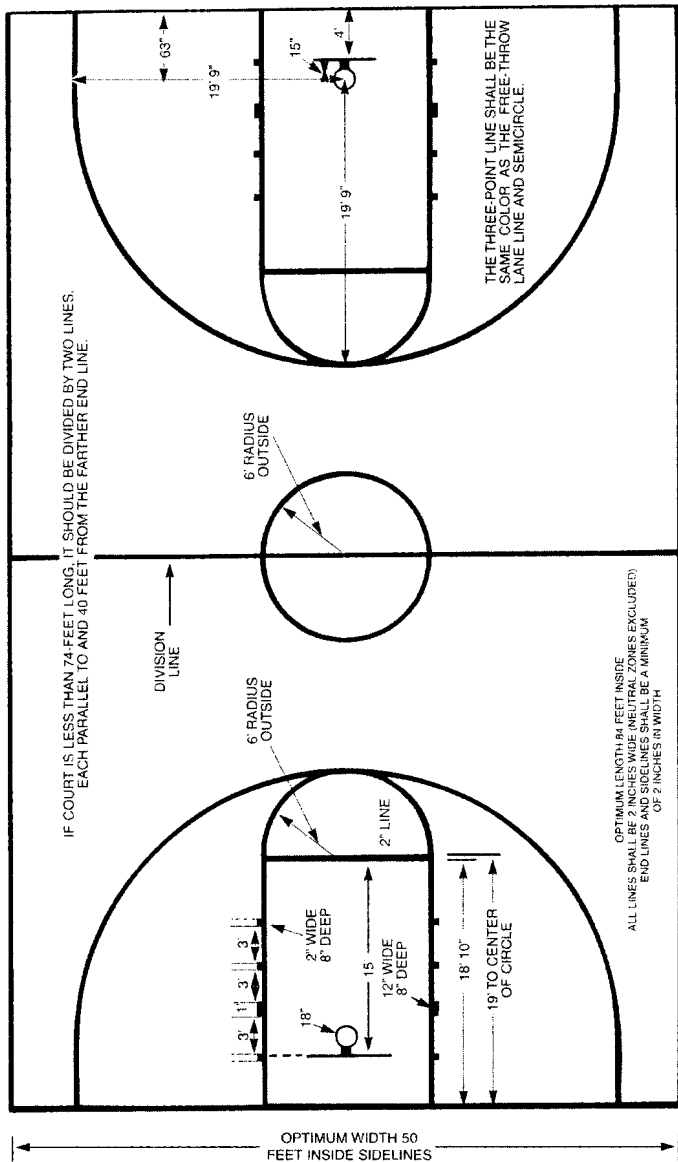
Further information can be obtained through your state high school association and the NFHS.

**Revised August 2005**



# BASKETBALL COURT DIAGRAM

(See Rule 1-13 for location and size of optional coaching box)



## MINIMUM OF 3 FEET

Preferably 10 feet of unobstructed space outside. If impossible to provide 3 feet, a narrow broken 1-inch line should be marked inside the court parallel with and 3 feet inside the boundary.

Left End Shows Rectangular Backboard 72-inches Wide

Right End Shows Fan Backboard 54-inches Wide

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## SUPPLEMENT TO COURT DIAGRAM

### Court Specifications:

1. If possible, building plans should provide for a court with ideal measurements as stated in Rule 1-1, ample out-of-bounds area and necessary seating space. A long court permits use of two crosswise courts for practice and informal games.
2. The ceiling should be at least 25 feet or higher if possible.
3. Instead of the 2-inch minimum boundaries, it is legal to use contrasting-colored floor areas by painting the out-of-bounds area, the center restraining circle, and the restricted parts of the free-throw lanes so that the mathematical line between the two colors is the boundary. If such contrasting colored out-of-bounds belt is used, it should be at least 8 inches wide.
4. It is recommended that a belt 8 inches wide or more in width be used to mark the boundaries on all courts which have at least 10 feet of open space between the boundary lines and the seating. This plan is urged for all new construction and for other similar courts when the boundaries are remarked.
5. It is recommended that there be a 2-inch wide broken line consisting of 12-inch segments, 12 inches apart, of a color different from that of the boundary, at a minimum of 6 feet outside the court extending from sideline to sideline and parallel to the end line.
6. Optional coaching box – tableside. Bounded by a line 28 feet from end line, the sideline, a line no more than 14 feet from the 28-foot line, and the team bench. Located off the court and 2 inches wide.  
NOTE: State associations may, on an individual basis, allow alternating bench locations.
7. The court should be uniformly and adequately lighted. Lighting engineers should be placed in charge of this important factor when planning any new installations. For information on recommended specifications for lighting, you may contact: Illuminating Engineering Society of North America, 120 Wall St., 17th Floor, New York, NY 10005, 212-248-5000.

**THE INTENT AND PURPOSE OF THE RULES**

The restrictions which the rules place upon the players are intended to create a balance of play; to provide equal opportunity between the offense and the defense; to provide equal opportunity between the small player and tall player; to provide reasonable safety and protection; to create an atmosphere of sporting behavior and fair play; and to emphasize cleverness and skill without unduly limiting freedom of action of individual or team play on either offense or defense.

Therefore, it is important to know the intent and purpose of a rule so that it may be intelligently applied in each play situation. A player or a team should not be permitted an advantage which is not intended by a rule. Neither should play be permitted to develop which may lead to placing a player at a disadvantage not intended by a rule.

It is the policy of the NFHS Basketball Rules Committee that there be no deviation from the rules unless experimental approval has been granted by the NFHS liaison to the rules committee.

**THE GAME** – Basketball is played by two teams of five players each. The purpose of each team is to throw the ball into its own basket and to prevent the other team from scoring. The ball may be thrown, batted, rolled or dribbled in any direction, subject to restrictions laid down in the following rules.

# Rule **1** *Court and Equipment*

The NFHS does not perform scientific tests on any specific items of equipment to determine if the equipment poses undue risks to student-athletes, coaches, officials or spectators. Such determinations are the responsibility of equipment manufacturers.

## **SECTION 1 PLAYING COURT DIMENSIONS**

The playing court shall be a rectangular surface free from obstructions and with dimensions not greater than 94 feet in length by 50 feet in width. **IDEAL MEASUREMENTS ARE:** High School Age – 84 by 50 feet. These are the dimensions for the playing court only. Suggestions about construction and lighting are in the “Supplement to Court Diagram.”

## **SECTION 2 SIDELINES, END LINES**

**ART. 1 . . .** The playing court shall be marked with sidelines, end lines and other lines as shown on the appended court diagram. There shall be at least 3 feet (and preferably 10 feet) of unobstructed space outside boundaries. The sidelines and end lines shall be a minimum of 2 inches in width. If it is desirable to use

contrasting colored-floor areas instead of the lines, see the "Supplement to Court Diagram."

**ART. 2 . . .** If, on an unofficial court, there is less than 3 feet of unobstructed space outside any sideline or end line, a narrow broken line shall be marked on the court parallel with and 3 feet inside that boundary. This restraining line becomes the boundary line during a throw-in on that side or end, as in 7-6. It continues to be the boundary until the ball crosses the line.

### **SECTION 3 CENTER RESTRAINING CIRCLE, DIVIDING LINE**

**ART. 1 . . .** A 2-inch wide restraining circle shall be drawn at the center of the court with a radius of 6 feet measured to the outside. Spaces for nonjumpers around the center restraining circle are 36 inches deep.

**ART. 2 . . .** A division line 2 inches wide, shall divide the court into two equal parts. If the court is less than 74 feet long, it should be divided by two lines, each parallel to and 40 feet from the farther end line.

**NOTE:** A solid or shadow-bordered 2-inch wide line is permissible. A shadow line is a line that designates the required 2-inch width by use of border or outline lines at least ¼-inch wide, which shall lie within the 2-inch width. Border lines that are the natural color of the court are permissible. The area within these lines need not be one color, but the continuous 2-inch wide outline must be clearly visible to the officials. If the floor has a logo in the center of the court, that logo should not distract from the visibility of the center line or center circle.

### **SECTION 4 THREE-POINT LINE**

**ART. 1 . . .** A three-point field-goal line, 2 inches wide in the form of a semicircle, shall be drawn at each end of the court as shown on the appended court diagram. The semicircle has a radius of 19 feet 9 inches from a point in the middle of the free-throw lane directly below the center of the basket to the outside edge of the line. The semicircle shall be extended with a 2-inch wide line perpendicular to the end line, the length of which shall be 63 inches from the inside edge of the end line.

**ART. 2 . . .** The three-point field-goal line shall be the same color as the free-throw lane boundary lines and free-throw semicircle.

### **SECTION 5 FREE-THROW LANE**

**ART. 1 . . .** A free-throw lane, 12 feet wide measured to the outside of each lane boundary, and the semicircle with the free-throw line as a diameter, shall be marked at each end of the court with dimensions and markings as shown on the appended court diagram. All lines designating the free-throw lane, but not lane-space marks and neutral-zone marks, are part of the lane.

**ART. 2 . . .** The lane-space marks (2 inches by 8 inches) and neutral-zone marks (12 inches by 8 inches) identify areas which extend 36 inches from the outer edge of the lane lines toward the sidelines. There are three lane spaces on

each lane boundary line.

### SECTION 6 FREE-THROW LINE

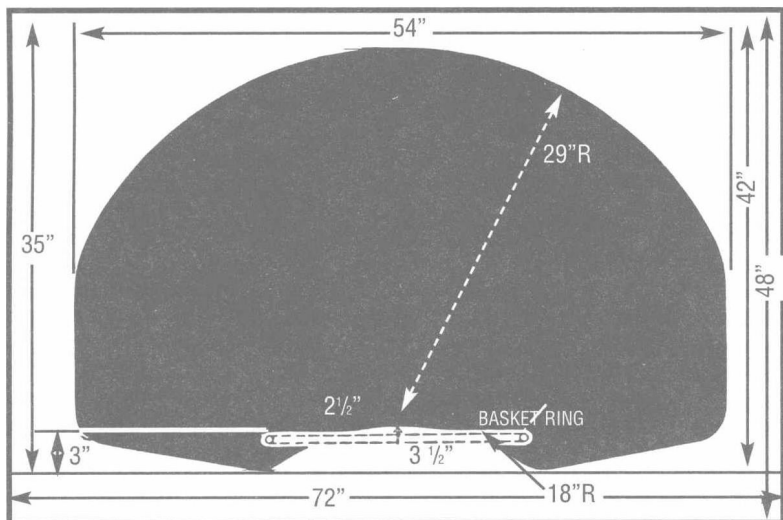
A free-throw line, 2 inches wide, shall be drawn across both circles, which have an outside radius of 6 feet as shown on the appended court diagram. It shall be parallel to the end line and shall have its farthest edge 15 feet from the plane of the face of the backboard.

### SECTION 7 BACKBOARDS

**ART. 1 . . .** The backboards shall be the same size at both ends of the court. The backboard shall be one of three types: (1) a rectangle 6 feet horizontally and 4 feet vertically; or (2) a rectangle 6 feet horizontally and 3½ feet vertically; or (3) a fan-shaped backboard, 54-inches wide and with dimensions as shown on the diagram.

**NOTE:** The 6-foot horizontal and 3½-foot vertical dimensions are recommended for replacement backboards or new installations.

**ART. 2 . . .** Each of the backboards shall be of any rigid material. The front surface shall be flat and, unless it is transparent, it shall be white. Tinted glass backboards are prohibited beginning with those manufactured after January 1, 1995.



The diagram above gives specifications for the three types of backboards. See Rule 1, Sections 7, 8, 9. It is not legal to paint a fan-shaped board on a rectangular backboard.

**NOTE:** For the fan-shaped backboard in transparent material, the recurved cut-out at the bottom may be filled in and the ring attached to the front of the backboard.

**ART. 3 . . .** If the backboard is transparent, it shall be marked as follows: A rectangle shall be centered behind the ring and marked by a 2-inch white line. The rectangle shall have outside dimensions of 24 inches horizontally and 18 inches vertically. For the rectangular backboard, the top edge of the backboard shall be level with the ring. For the fan-shaped backboard, the baseline shall be omitted, and the two vertical lines shall be extended to the bottom of the backboard. The rectangular target in a bright orange or black color may be used on a nontransparent backboard. The border of the backboard shall be marked with a white line. The border shall be 3 inches or less in width.

**ART. 4 . . .** Either type backboard may be transparent or nontransparent. No logo, marking, lettering, etc., is permitted on the backboard, backboard padding, or basket.

### **SECTION 8 BACKBOARD POSITION**

**ART. 1 . . .** Each backboard shall be midway between the sidelines, with the plane of its front face perpendicular to the floor, parallel to the end line, and 4 feet from it.

**ART. 2 . . .** The upper edge of the backboard shall be 13 feet above the floor for the rectangular, and 12 feet 8 inches for the fan-shaped. The backboard shall be protected from spectators to a distance of at least 3 feet at each end.

### **SECTION 9 BACKBOARD PADDING, SUPPORT SYSTEMS**

**ART. 1 . . .** The bottom and each side of the all-rectangular backboards shall be padded with a poly high-carb vinyl-type material that meets the Bashor resilience test with a range of 20-30. The padding must cover the bottom surface of the board and the side surface to a distance of 15 inches up from the bottom. The front and back surfaces must be covered to a minimum distance of 3/4 inch from the bottom of the backboard. The padding shall be 1 inch thick from the front and back surfaces of the backboard. The material shall be 2 inches from the bottom edge of the backboard. It is recommended that the padding be mounted on the backboard by adhesive or material such as Velcro, channel, etc. The padding shall be a single, solid color and shall be the same color on both backboards.

**ART. 2 . . .** Any backboard support behind the backboard and at a height of less than 9 feet above the floor shall be padded on the bottom surface to a distance of 2 feet from the face of the backboard. All portable backstops must have the bases padded to a height of 7 feet on the court-side surface.

**ART. 3 . . .** Clearances – As below and behind backboards, all support systems should be at least 8 feet behind the plane of the backboard face and at a height of 7 feet or more above the floor.

**ART. 4 . . .** Any backboard support, all of which is not directly behind the

backboard, should be at least 6 inches behind it if the support extends above the top and at least 2 feet behind it if the support extends beyond the side. Any overhead backboard support structure which must be forward-braced due to space limitations, architectural or structural restraints, shall meet the following requirements: A front, diagonal-brace system must be located above a line extending upward and into the playing court at a maximum 45-degree angle from a point on a vertical line located a minimum of 6 inches behind the front side of the backboard at a minimum height of 4 feet 6 inches above the basket ring.

**ART. 5 . . .** Warning on misuse of portable backstops – Manufacturers and administrators should be aware of an “extreme-caution” warning relative to the misuse of portable backstops. A high degree of injury potential and a severe liability problem exists when players or spectators are allowed to hang, sit or stand on the basket ring or backboard. Administrators must see that this practice is eliminated or that the portable units are lowered at the completion of the game. There is a high risk of severe injury, even death, if this practice continues. A recommended warning or inscription such as “Danger – please do not get on the rim/backboard” is desirable.

### **SECTION 10 BASKET SIZE, MATERIAL**

**ART. 1 . . .** Each basket shall consist of a single metal ring, 18 inches in inside diameter, its flange and braces, and a white-cord 12-mesh net, 15 to 18 inches in length, suspended from beneath the ring.

**ART. 2 . . .** Each ring shall not be more than 5/8 inch in diameter, with the possible addition of small-gauge loops on the bottom edge for attaching a 12-mesh net. The ring and its attaching flange and braces shall be bright orange in color.

**ART. 3 . . .** The cord of the net shall be not less than 120-thread nor more than 144-thread twine, or plastic material of comparable dimensions with no additional extensions. It shall be constructed to momentarily check the ball as it passes through.

### **SECTION 11 BASKET RING**

**ART. 1 . . .** Each basket ring shall be securely attached to the backboard/support system with a ring-restraining device. Such a device shall ensure that the basket stays attached in the event a glass backboard breaks. Each basket ring shall have its upper edge 10 feet above and parallel to the floor and shall be equidistant from the vertical edges of the backboard. The nearest point of the inside edge of the ring shall be 6 inches from the plane of the face of the backboard.

**ART. 2 . . .** Movable and nonmovable rings are legal. Movable basket rings shall have rebound characteristics similar to those of nonmovable rings. The pressure-release mechanism should ensure these characteristics, as well as



protect both the ring and backboard. The design of the ring and its construction should ensure player safety.

**ART. 3 . . .** For those rings with a lock/release mechanism, the pressure-release mechanism must not disengage until a static load of 230 pounds has been applied to the top of the ring at the most distant point from the backboard. The pressure-release mechanism must be preset by the manufacturer at the required static-load setting and may be sealed or field adjustable. When released, the ring shall not rotate more than 30 degrees below the original horizontal position. After release and with the load no longer applied, the ring shall return automatically and instantaneously to the original position.

## SECTION 12 BALL

**ART. 1 . . .** The ball shall meet the following specifications:

- a. Its solid color shall be the approved orange shade or natural color.
- b. It shall be spherical.
- c. It shall have a deeply-pebbled cover with horizontally shaped panels bonded tightly to the rubber carcass.
- d. The circumference shall be:
  1. Within a minimum of 29½ inches to a maximum of 30 inches for high school boys competition.
  2. Within a minimum of 28½ inches to a maximum of 29 inches for high school girls competition.
- e. The weight shall be:
  1. Within a minimum of 20 ounces to a maximum of 22 ounces for high school boys competition.
  2. Within a minimum of 18 ounces to a maximum of 20 ounces for high school girls competition.
- f. The black rubber rib separating the panels shall not exceed ¼ inch in width.
- g. The ball shall include the NFHS Authenticating Mark. The mark can be displayed in either format:



A current list of NFHS authenticated products can be found on the Web site, [nfhs.org](http://nfhs.org).

**NOTE:** By state association adoption, either legal-size ball may be used for boys junior high school competition.

**ART. 2 . . .** The ball shall be inflated to an air pressure such that when it is dropped to the playing surface from a height of 6 feet, measured to the bottom of the ball, it shall rebound to a height, measured to the top of the ball, of not less