

ATHLIMA

BASKETBALL RULE BOOK

FIBA-BASED COMPETITION RULES

Simple • Professional • Player-Friendly

Tournament Edition • 2026

1. PURPOSE & AUTHORITY

This rule book provides simple competition rules for ATHLIMA basketball events. It is based on the FIBA Official Basketball Rules. Where this ATHLIMA rule book does not specifically change a competition procedure, the applicable FIBA rules and official interpretations shall apply.

FIBA publishes the internationally recognized Official Basketball Rules. The current FIBA download centre lists the 2026 rules as applicable from 1 October 2026; this ATHLIMA guide is therefore intended as a practical tournament summary, not a replacement for the complete FIBA rule book.

2. GAME FORMAT

- A basketball game is played between two teams of five players on court.
- A team may have substitutes listed according to the competition regulations.
- The game is divided into four quarters. Standard FIBA competition uses 10-minute quarters.
- If the score is tied after the fourth quarter, overtime periods are played until there is a winner.
- The official game clock and shot clock, where provided, are controlled by the table officials.

3. SCORING

- Free throw = 1 point.
- Field goal inside the 3-point area = 2 points.
- Field goal from behind the 3-point line = 3 points.
- The team with the higher score at the end of the game wins.

4. START OF THE GAME & POSSESSION

- The game begins with a jump ball at centre court.
- After the opening jump ball, most alternating-possession situations are handled using the possession arrow.
- The referees decide when the ball is live, dead, in or out of bounds, and which team has possession.

5. BASIC PLAYER & TEAM RULES

- Players must wear the team's approved uniform and proper basketball footwear.
- Players must not wear equipment that can injure another player.
- Only eligible players may participate.
- Substitutions are made only when permitted by the officials and table procedure.
- Players and coaches must respect referees, opponents, table officials and spectators.

6. SUBSTITUTIONS

A substitute may enter when the rules permit a substitution and the official authorizes the change. A player who has committed five personal fouls must leave the game and may not return.

7. TIME-OUTS

Teams may request time-outs according to FIBA procedures. A time-out lasts one minute. The exact number available depends on the period and competition level. ATHLIMA may publish a competition-specific time-out limit before the tournament.

8. FOULS

A foul is illegal physical contact or other illegal conduct under the rules.

Personal foul: Illegal contact such as holding, pushing, blocking, charging, tripping or illegal hand/body contact.

Team foul: Personal and technical fouls charged to a team count toward team-foul penalties as specified by FIBA.

Technical foul: Non-contact misconduct, disrespectful behaviour, delaying the game or other unsportsmanlike actions listed in the rules.

Unsportsmanlike foul: Serious illegal contact that does not represent a legitimate attempt to play the ball within the rules.

Disqualifying foul: Particularly serious unsportsmanlike behaviour.

9. FREE THROWS

A free throw is an uncontested one-point scoring opportunity from the free-throw line. Players must occupy the correct lane spaces and follow the referee's instructions. The shooter must release the ball within the permitted time and may not step over the free-throw line before the ball contacts the ring or enters the basket.

10. COMMON VIOLATIONS

Violations normally result in the opposing team receiving the ball for a throw-in unless another penalty is specified.

Violation	Simple meaning
Traveling	Moving illegally with the ball without dribbling.
Double dribble	Stopping a dribble and then starting another dribble, or dribbling with both hands at the same time, subject to the rules
Carrying	Putting the hand under the ball or otherwise illegally controlling it while dribbling.
3 seconds	An offensive player remains illegally in the opponent's restricted area for more than three seconds while the team con
5 seconds	Failing to pass, shoot or dribble within five seconds when closely guarded, or taking too long on certain throw-ins/free
8 seconds	Failing to move the ball from the backcourt to the frontcourt within eight seconds.
24 seconds	Failing to attempt a shot that meets the shot-clock requirements before the shot clock expires.
Backcourt violation	After establishing team control in the frontcourt, illegally causing the ball to return to the backcourt.
Out of bounds	The ball or player touching the ball is outside the playing court.
Goaltending / interference	Illegal contact with the ball during a shot or with the basket under the relevant rules.

11. THROW-IN

A throw-in is used to put the ball back into play from outside the boundary line. The thrower must follow the referee's instructions and must not illegally step onto the court or take longer than permitted.

12. SHOT CLOCK

Standard FIBA basketball uses a 24-second shot clock. In situations where the rules require a frontcourt reset, the shot clock may be reset to 14 seconds. The table officials operate the shot clock according to the referee's decision and FIBA procedure.

13. OVERTIME

If the game is tied after the fourth quarter, a 5-minute overtime is played. If still tied, additional 5-minute overtime periods are played until a winner is determined.

14. PLAYER CONDUCT

ATHLIMA expects all participants to maintain sportsmanship.

- No fighting or threatening behaviour.
- No abusive or discriminatory language.
- No deliberate physical harm.
- No arguing aggressively with referees.
- Team benches must remain under control.
- Players must shake hands or otherwise show respect after the game when directed by the organizers.

15. TECHNICAL / DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Referees may issue technical or disqualifying fouls where the rules require them. ATHLIMA organizers may also impose tournament disciplinary action for serious misconduct, fighting, abuse of officials, damage to venue property or repeated violations of tournament regulations.

16. WALKOVER / FORFEIT

A team that fails to appear or cannot field the minimum number of eligible players at the scheduled start may be declared to have forfeited the game, subject to the tournament's published regulations and the referee/organizer's decision. The exact score or standings treatment should be stated in ATHLIMA's competition regulations before the event.

17. REFEREE & OFFICIAL AUTHORITY

The referees have authority to make decisions on violations, fouls, timing, possession and other game situations. Their decisions during the game must be respected. Any formal protest must follow the competition's protest procedure and deadlines.

18. QUICK PLAYER CHECKLIST

Before the game	During the game	After the game
Correct uniform	Respect officials	Respect opponents
Proper shoes	No unnecessary contact	Return equipment
Know your team number	Play fair	Leave court safely
Warm up properly	Follow referee signals	Follow organizer instructions

19. IMPORTANT FIBA NOTE

This document is a simplified ATHLIMA competition guide. It does not reproduce the full FIBA Official Basketball Rules. For a situation not covered here, the latest applicable FIBA Official Basketball Rules and Official Interpretations should be consulted.

FIBA's official rules are available through its official website and document library.

ATHLIMA • PLAY HARD. PLAY FAIR. RESPECT THE GAME.