



COBRA Optimists

2026 Youth Basketball League

LEAGUE RULES

- ✓ Iowa High School Athletic Association rules used, except as otherwise noted.
 - ✓ Twenty-minute halves with continuous clock until last minute of each half, when normal dead ball rules apply. Half-time intermission will be five minutes. An overtime period, if necessary, will be sudden death (first team to score wins). A coin toss will determine possession in this overtime. A “free throw” sudden death is also possible.
 - ✓ Three (3) time outs per team per game, to be used at coach’s discretion. Time-outs are limited to one minute. An additional time out per team will be allowed per overtime period.
 - ✓ Warm-up periods between games will be limited to seven minutes. This may be modified if needed to keep games on schedule.
 - ✓ All team players must wear numbered jerseys.
 - ✓ **Teams in the 5th and 6th division can use either man-to-man or zone defense, though man-to-man defense is highly encouraged.**
 - ✓ **Teams in the 5th and 6th division may full court press to a 15-point lead. Teams in the 3rd and 4th division CANNOT use a full court press. NOTE: For 3rd-4th grade games, in the last minute in games where the lead is 4 points or less, the clock will not start until the ball is over the half court line.**
 - ✓ **Teams in the 3rd and 4th grade division must use a half court man-to-man defense only. No zone defenses are allowed. Double-teaming is allowed only in the lane area. Also, the leading team is not allowed to steal the ball once the lead has become > 15 points. This applies only to on-the-ball steals, not pass interceptions.**
 - ✓ Game balls will be provided by the teams and returned to them after the games. Game balls will be the 28.5-inch size, unless both teams agree before the game to use a different size. Warm-up balls are to be provided by the teams.
 - ✓ We ask that teams provide one person each per game to assist in scorekeeping and running the clock.
 - ✓ Only players in uniform and 2 coaches are allowed in the bench area.
 - ✓ Any three (3) technical fouls on one team per game results in game forfeit. Referees have the right to eject any coach, player or parent for excessive unsportsmanlike or abusive behavior.
 - ✓ Per IHSAA rules, two free throws are awarded on and after the 5th team foul.
 - ✓ **A shorter free throw line will be used for the teams in the 3rd and 4th division. Because of restrictions on taping, the free throw “line” in the 3rd and 4th division will be directed by the officials.**
 - ✓ The three point line will be used in all age groups.
- *** Coaches, please be aware that, in the 3rd and 4th grade division, officials may be a little more tolerant of ball-handling violations, e.g., traveling, since many kids in this age group are just learning. Personal fouls will be called more closely, since it is important for kids to understand what is right and wrong about these types of fouls.
-