

I. GLOSSARY

The meaning of the technical terms used in these rules and in the competition announcements is as follows.

1. BASIC TERMS

Player count: the number of team members actively on the court (in the water) at the same time.

Quota: the minimum number of women mandatorily required within the player count in the mixed disciplines.

Squad: the team's total registered roster, including both active players and substitutes.

Event: the category determined by the player count (Singles, Doubles, Triples, Team).

Discipline: the specific combination of player count, gender distribution and quota (e.g. mixed doubles).

Age category: the entry category determined by the players' age.

Division: the competition class determined by the players' sporting background and skill level.

Entry status: the team's organizational background (Open, Club, Corporate, Community).

Numerical advantage: a special, non-cumulative equalization rule that, in the case of teams composed entirely of female, youth or senior members, permits one additional active player on the court in the men's disciplines.

2. THE RALLY

Let serve: a service that touches the net but lands legally within the opponent's court.

Forced pass: a rule that applies solely to the moment of receiving the serve. The ball arriving from the service may not be returned directly on the first touch; the receiving team must mandatorily perform at least one internal pass between teammates.

Illegal touch: a ball contact deemed a fault, meaning a clear double touch (the same player contacts the ball twice in succession), or catching, holding, lifting (carried ball) or throwing the ball.

Net touch: any contact of a player's body or clothing with the net during a rally, which is in all cases deemed a fault and results in a point for the opponent.

Joint touch: when two teammates contact the ball at exactly the same time. This is deemed a legal play, counts as two ball contacts, and either player may then play the ball again.

Block touch: a ball contact made during an attempt to defend against an opponent's attack at the net, which does not count toward the team's three permitted touches, and the blocking player may then play the ball again immediately.

Out-of-bounds ball (out): when the ball lands in the water without touching the court lines or the corner clips. If the ball touches the line or the clip with any small part of it, it is in play (in), even if most of it is already out. In the absence of a referee, the right to decide belongs to the team to whose court the ball landed closer.

3. COMPETITION CONDUCT AND ADMINISTRATION

Competition types (formats): these define the extent to which the competition announcement prescribes the application of the official rules.

Standard: a competition type in which play follows the official rules without modifications.

Regional: a competition type in which play follows a local modification of the normal rules (for example, due to environmental conditions).

Drawn: a competition type in which the composition of the teams is determined by a draw at the start of the competition.

Competition director: the supreme leader and decision-maker of the tournament, who is entitled to modify the rules in extraordinary circumstances and adjudicates official protests.

4. ENTRY AND ELIGIBILITY SYSTEM

Every competing team and player must mandatorily and jointly meet the following three conditions for the entry to be valid.

AGE CATEGORY	DIVISION	ENTRY STATUS
Youth (U16): players who have not reached the age of 16 in the year of the competition.	Beginner: recreational players with no competitive background who have not previously won an official tournament in this division.	Open: informal, recreational entry without membership or corporate obligations.
Junior (U25): players who have not reached the age of 25 in the year of the competition.	Advanced: more experienced amateurs, or players who have moved up from the beginner division based on a win.	Club: entry tied to official aQuolley club membership or an annual competition license.
Adult (Standard): the category for players between 25 and 55 years of age.	Pro: athletes with a registered volleyball, beach volleyball or foottennis background at a national or international federation.	Corporate: company teams in which every member of the squad is verifiably employed by the same company.
Senior (O55): players who have reached or exceeded the age of 55 in the year of the competition.	Absolute (Elite/Open): an unrestricted division in which participants of any skill level may take part.	Community: a category based on the formal organization of family, friend or local civic communities.

II. DETAILED RULES

1. STRUCTURAL DATA OF EVENTS AND DISCIPLINES

EVENT	DISCIPLINE	PLAYER COUNT	QUOTA	SQUAD	COURT SIZE
Singles	Men's / women's	1 player	–	1 player	8×4 m
Doubles	Men's / women's / mixed	2 players	1 player	3 players	10×5 m
Triples	Men's / women's / mixed	3 players	min. 1 player	5 players	11×6 m
Team	Open / mixed	4–6 players	min. 2 players	6–8 players	12×6 m

2. NET HEIGHT AND WATER DEPTH

The net height must be determined from the bed level, measured at the center of the net, as a function of the prevailing water depth and the given discipline. The recommended water depth is between 0.6 and 1.3 m.

WATER DEPTH	WOMEN'S DISCIPLINE	MIXED DISCIPLINE	MEN'S DISCIPLINE
0.6–0.9 m	2.35 m	2.40 m	2.45 m
0.9–1.1 m	2.45 m	2.50 m	2.55 m
1.1–1.3 m	2.55 m	2.60 m	2.65 m

3. GAMEPLAY AND MATCH FORMAT

Basic principle: the rules of aQuolley follow the rules of volleyball, with the following exceptions.

Objective of the rally: to land the ball on the water within the opponent's court, or to force the opponent into a fault.

Team touches: a maximum of 3 touches per team is permitted (the block does not count toward this).

Serving position: the serving player may move no more than 0.5 m away from the baseline and must remain within the court. Pulling the baseline back with the body or displacing it in any way is prohibited.

Let serve: if the serve touches the net and lands in the legal area, the serve must be repeated.

Forced pass: after receiving the serve, the receiving team must perform at least one further touch (an internal pass) before sending the ball to the opponent's side. In open play this requirement no longer applies.

Touch methods: contacting the ball with any part of the body and in any manner is permitted, except for a clear double touch or a throw (catching or holding the ball). Due to the extreme difficulty of moving in the water, open-palm receiving and setting are permitted, as is fingertip contact on soft drop shots.

Scoring and sets: matches are played to two sets won, and sets are played to 15 points. After 14–14, play continues until one of the teams gains a two-point advantage.

Time-outs: in every discipline, teams may call a time-out twice per set.

Rotation: In doubles and triples, switching positions is optional, but the server must alternate: at every new serve, a different player on the team serves. In teams of four or more, alongside the change of server — just as in the rules of volleyball — a full rotation is also mandatory. Each time the team wins back the right to serve, the players must move one position clockwise.

Substitution rules: there are no substitutions in singles. In the other disciplines, a maximum of two substitutions may be made per set. In the triples and team disciplines, the double substitution is also permitted.

III. COMPETITION ADMINISTRATION AND EXTRAORDINARY PROCEDURES

1. AD HOC RULE MODIFICATIONS

In the case of a large number of entries, the competition director may decide to dispense with the third set in the group stage. In addition, the two-point margin is not necessarily required in the second set, and sets may be played to 11 points instead of 15. Since the weather, the water temperature and the wind conditions can greatly affect whether competitions can be held, the competition director is entitled to modify the planned start, resumption and finish times.

2. ADJUDICATION OF PROTESTS

The aQuolley experience platform prioritizes a light-hearted and inclusive atmosphere, where fun and friendship come before achieving competitive results at any cost. For this reason, the organizers only check the eligibility data of competing players (gender, age, competitive status or family relationships) on a random, spot-check basis.

If a complaint — a protest — concerning a violation of the eligibility rules is filed against someone, the competition director will request proof of the disputed data from the team concerned. If the evidence received is deemed valid, the protest is rejected; otherwise, the team concerned by the protest is disqualified. Teams are responsible for the accuracy of each player's data. Protests must be submitted at least 180 minutes before the start of the competition.