Throughout the Official Basketball Rules, all references made to a player, coach, official, etc. in the male gender also apply to the female gender. It must be understood that this is done for practical reasons only.

RULE ONE – THE GAME

Art. 1 Definitions

1.1 Basketball game

Basketball is played by two (2) teams of five (5) players each. The aim of each team is to score in the opponents' basket and to prevent the other team from scoring.

The game is controlled by officials, table officials and a commissioner, if present.

1.2 Basket: opponents'/own

The basket that is attacked by a team is the opponents' basket and the basket which is defended by a team is the team's own basket.

1.3 Winner of a game

The team that has scored the greater number of points at the end of playing time shall be the winner.

RULE TWO – COURT AND EQUIPMENT

Art. 2 Court

2.1 Playing court

The playing court shall have a flat, hard surface free from obstructions (Diagram 1) with dimensions of twenty-eight (28) m in length by fifteen (15) m in width measured from the inside edge of the boundary line.

2.2 Lines

All lines shall be drawn in white colour, five (5) cm in width and clearly visible.

2.2.1 Boundary line

The playing court shall be limited by the boundary line, consisting of the endlines (on the short sides) and the sidelines (on the long sides). These lines are not part of the playing court.

Any obstruction including seated team bench personnel shall be at least two (2) m from the playing court.

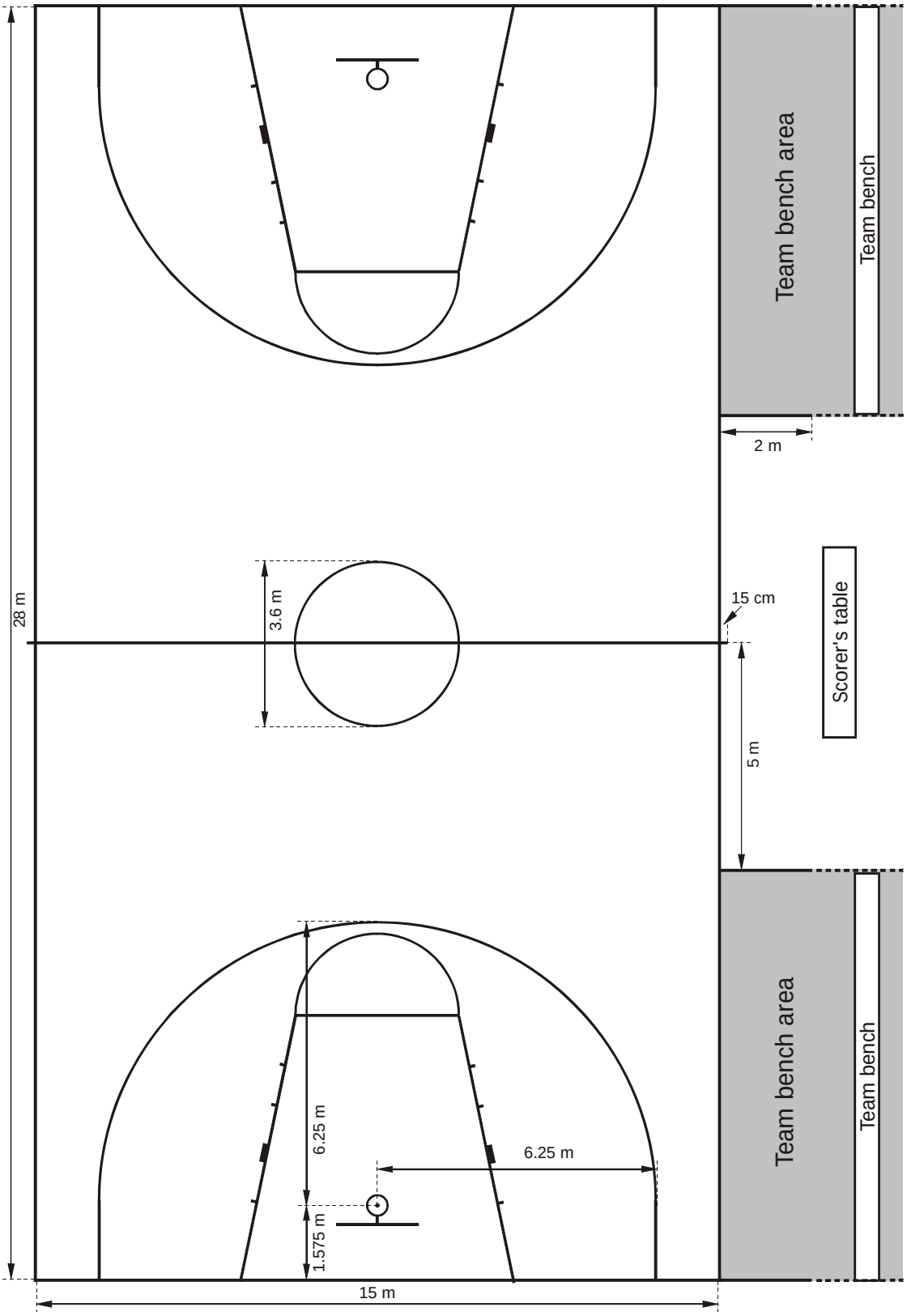


Diagram 1 Full size playing court

2.2.2 Centre line, centre circle and semicircles

The centre line shall be marked parallel to the endlines from the mid-points of the sidelines. It shall extend fifteen (15) cm beyond each sideline.

The centre circle shall be marked in the centre of the playing court and have a radius of 1.80 m measured to the outer edge of the circumference. If the inside of the centre circle is painted, it must be the same colour as the restricted areas.

The semicircles shall be marked on the playing court with a radius of 1.80 m measured to the outer edge of the circumference and with their centres at the mid-points of the free-throw lines (Diagram 2).

2.2.3 Free-throw lines, restricted areas and free-throw rebound places

A free-throw line shall be drawn parallel to each endline. It shall have its furthest edge 5.80 m from the inner edge of the endline and shall be 3.60 m long. Its mid-point shall lie on the imaginary line joining the mid-points of the two endlines.

The restricted areas shall be the floor areas marked on the playing court, limited by the endlines, the free-throw lines and the lines which originate at the endlines, their outer edges being three (3) m from the mid-points of the endlines and terminating at the outer edge of the free-throw lines. These lines, excluding the endlines, are part of the restricted area. The inside of the restricted areas may be painted but must be the same colour as the centre circle.

Free-throw rebound places along the restricted areas, reserved for players during free throws, shall be marked as in Diagram 2.

2.2.4 Three-point field goal area

A team's three-point field goal area (Diagram 1 and Diagram 3) shall be the entire floor area of the playing court, except for the area near the opponents' basket, limited by and including:

- Two parallel lines extending from and perpendicular to the endline, with the furthest edges 6.25 m from the point on the floor directly perpendicular to the exact centre of the opponents' basket. The distance of this point from the inside edge of the mid-point of the endline is 1.575 m.
- A semicircle with the radius of 6.25 m measured to the outer edge of the circumference from the centre (which is the same point as defined above) which meets the parallel lines.

2.2.5 Team bench areas

Team bench areas (Diagram 1) shall be marked outside the playing court, on the same side as the scorer's table and the team benches.

Each area shall be limited by a line extending from the endline, at least two (2) m in length and by another line at least two (2) m in length, drawn five (5) m from the inside edge of the centre line and at right angles to the sideline.

There must be fourteen (14) seats available in the team bench area for the coaches, the assistant coaches, the substitutes and the team followers. Any other people shall be at least two (2) m behind the team bench.

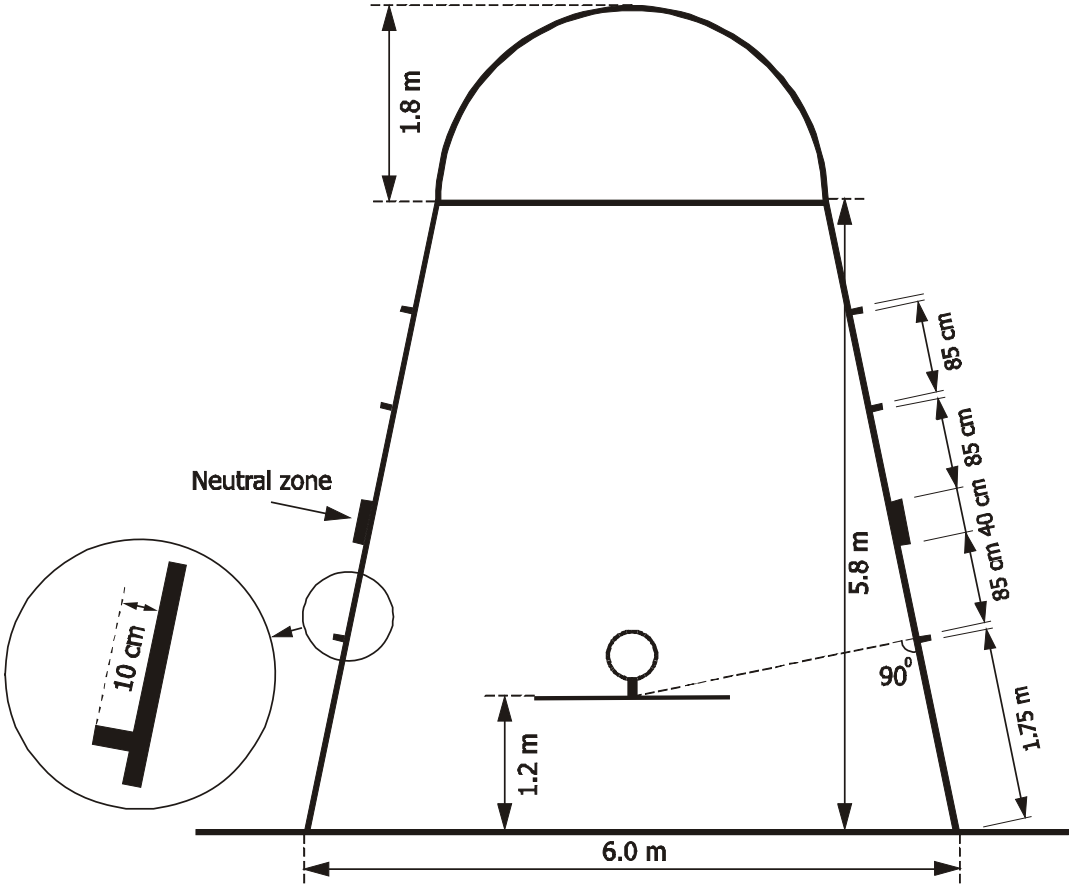


Diagram 2 Restricted area

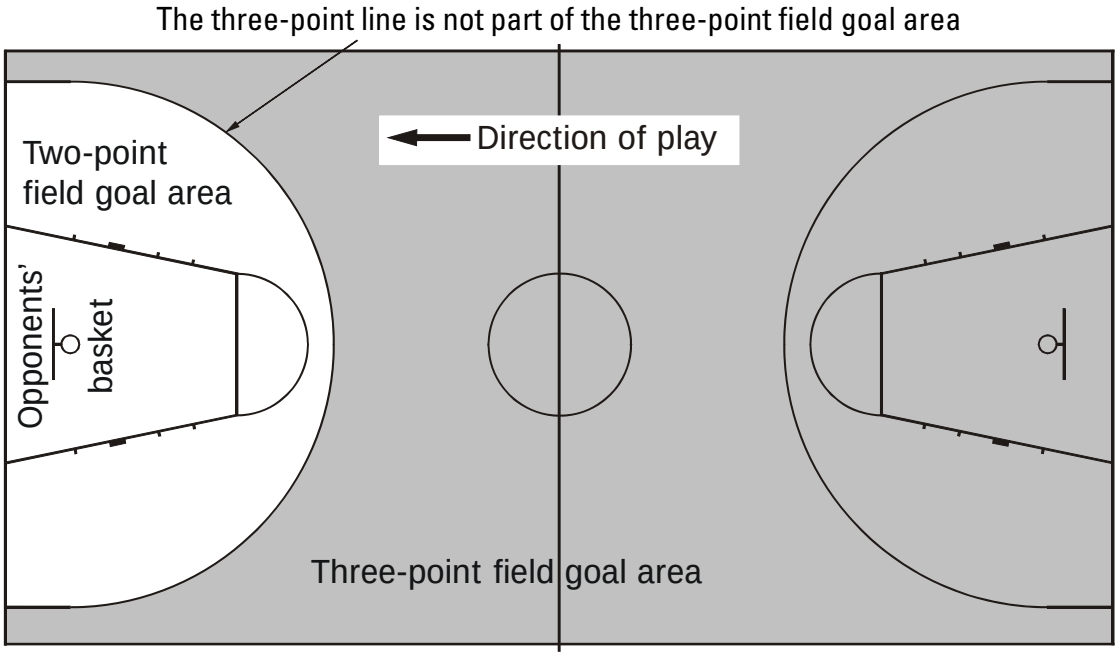
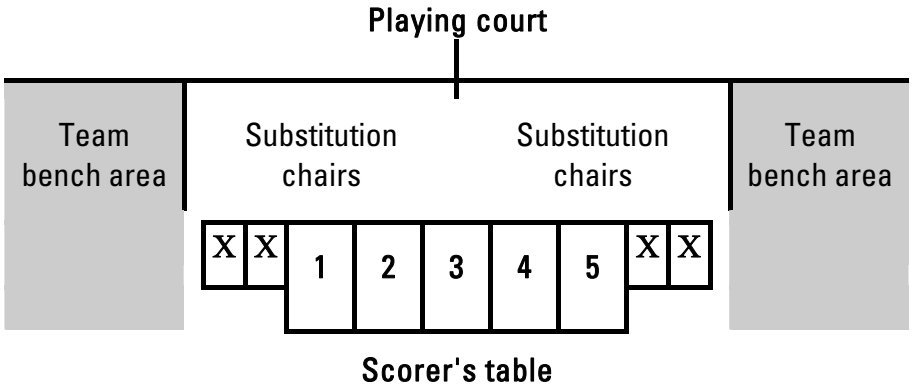


Diagram 3 Two-point/Three-point field goal area

2.3 **Position of the scorer's table and substitution chairs** (Diagram 4)

1 = Twenty-four second operator
2 = Timer
3 = Commissioner, if present
4 = Scorer
5 = Assistant scorer



The scorer's table and its chairs must be placed on a platform. The announcer and/or statisticians (if present) can be seated at the side of and/or behind the scorer's table.

Diagram 4 Scorer's table and substitution chairs

Art. 3 Equipment

The following equipment will be required:

- Backstop units, consisting of:
  - Backboards
  - Baskets comprising (pressure release) rings and nets
  - Backboard support structures including padding
- Basketballs
- Game clock
- Scoreboard
- Twenty-four second device
- Stopwatch or suitable (visible) device (not the game clock) for timing time-outs
- Two (2) separate, distinctly different and loud sound signals
- Scoresheet
- Player foul markers
- Team foul markers
- Alternating possession arrow
- Playing floor
- Playing court
- Adequate lighting

For a more detailed description of basketball equipment, see Appendix on Basketball Equipment.