

Youth Basketball - Frequently Asked Questions

Q. When will practices begin?

A. See season schedule. Specific times will be determined by your coach and gym availability and will contact you with a practice schedule after team assignments.

Q. When will games be?

A. See season schedule. The game schedule will be determined after we know how many teams we will have in each division. Your coach will give you a detailed schedule after a few practices.

Q. Where will games and practices take place?

A. Games & practices will take place at the following locations

Grades 1-2 South Whidbey Elementary, South Campus Gym
5476 S. Maxwellton Road, Langley

Grades 3-4 South Whidbey Community Center (The old Langley Middle School), the multipurpose gym
723 Camano Avenue
and/or South Whidbey Elementary School North Campus Gym

5380 S. Maxwellton Road, Langley

Grades 5-6 South Whidbey Community Center (The old Langley Middle School), the Auxiliary and/or the Main Gym
723 Camano Avenue, Langley

Travel Teams Games take place in Skagit County.

Q. When will the season end?

A. The season will conclude between February 23 and March 16.

Q. When and where is Picture Day?

A. Pictures will take place on January 17 or 18. Your coach will choose a time slot for that day and will notify you.

Q. Does my child have to be at Picture Day?

A. **Yes!** Part of our thank you gift to your team sponsor will be a nice plaque with a picture of the team on it. You needn't have individual pictures taken but the whole team must be present for the team photo. No purchase is required, but we want everyone to be in the team pictures.

Q. What if my child has never played basketball before?

A. That's okay. No child will be kept from playing basketball because of lack of skill or experience. We are a recreational teaching league and everyone who registers in time will be assigned a team and allowed to play. Tell your child to simply do the best he/she can. All children will be placed on a team, regardless of skill. We really want kids to learn to play!

Q. How will I know what team/coach my child has been assigned to?

A. Your coach will contact you shortly after the draft has been completed.

Q. Does my child need to be at the Skills Assessment if s/he participated last year?

A. Yes. There will be new coaches and players and it gives us an idea of the full range of skills in order to have a fair draft.

Q. How are the teams formed?

A. We try to form teams of similar skill, making for closer, more competitive games. Requests for carpooling or for a certain coach will be disregarded (except siblings). There are two important parts to the forming of teams, the Skills Evaluation and the Draft (team assignments):

SKILLS EVALUATION The purpose of the Skills Evaluation is to give coaches an opportunity to see what level kids are playing at so that teams can be assigned evenly. All kids who want to play will check in at the designated school. They will be assigned a number, which will be pinned to their clothing. Players will be evaluated by coaches at various skills. For older grades short scrimmages may be held. These evaluations will be kept confidential by the coaches and basketball coordinator. **NO ONE WILL BE CUT**, everyone gets to play.

DRAFT (TEAM ASSIGNMENTS) Once all players have been evaluated they will be assessed by the coaches of their age group. After the coaches discuss each player's skill level, and experience, players will be distributed between the teams to make an even playing field. Adjustments may be made as necessary for balance. After the draft, coaches will notify their own team members of their selection, and give information about their practice schedule.

Q. If there is such an effort to have parity among the teams, then why don't teams win half of the time.

A. There are a variety of reasons as to why that happens. Teams may lose a skilled player due to injury or scheduling problems. Players may perform better than expected. Behavior challenges may dampen a team's progress. Volunteer

coaches' skills may be uneven. The ideal season would be where each team wins 50% of their games. However, that rarely happens. Whenever you have competition and play a game where you keep score, one team is going to win and one is going to lose. It's the nature of sports. Try to judge your child's season not by whether the team won or lost, but by the experience they had and the skills they gained. **To give us the best shot at balancing teams, please make sure your child participates in the Skills Assessments.**

Q. What is the team size?

A. Depending on the division. We try to limit teams to 8 players; this allows each player the maximum playing time, while allowing for absences. Teams may be as small as 5 players or as big as 10.

Q. If my child has a conflict with the practice or game times with his/her team, can I switch teams?

A. Sorry, we are not able to accommodate individual schedules and/or coach preference etc.

Q. I have two children that are in the same age division. Can they be put on the same team?

A. If you notify us in advance, we will put them together on the same team.

Q. What are the uniform requirements?

A. SWPRD provides a team shirt for all participants, which will be distributed in time for the first game. Participants must provide shorts to complete the uniform, we recommend black or white (depending on your shirt) to be consistent. Players must wear soft-soled basketball shoes on the courts. You do not need expensive basketball shoes however shoes should offer good support. Please contact us about our "Sneaker Fund" if you are unable to afford appropriate shoes for your child. No jewelry or metal hair accessories are permitted during games.

Q. Do I need to buy a basketball for my child?

A. Balls will be provided for practices and games, but if you choose to purchase one for your child check out the rules which indicate which size your league will be using. Be sure to write your child's name on the ball.

Q. Can I bring snacks or drinks for my child or to share with the whole team?

A. No food or drinks (except water) are allowed in the gyms. We must be firm on this rule, as we are guests in the use of South Whidbey School District's Gymnasiums and this is a condition of our use.

Q. What if, after the season starts, someone has to drop off the team? Do we find a replacement?

A. This situation will be handled by the Coordinator on a case-by-case basis.

Q. Will games/practices be cancelled if it snows or the power's out?

A. In the case of inclement weather or power outages we will likely cancel games or practices. If South Whidbey schools have closed, then basketball will be canceled. If there is a power outage or it is unsafe to get to the game location, the game will be cancelled. We will leave a message on our voice message system (360-221-5484) indicating the status of basketball.

Q. Will forfeited or cancelled games be rescheduled?

A. We will not re-schedule forfeited games. We will attempt to re-schedule cancelled games if possible.

Q. What's the difference between Little Dribblers for grades 1-2, and the Grade 1-2 Basketball League?

A. Kids in grades 1-2 may sign up for one or both. Little Dribblers is a basketball skills development program, an introduction to basketball teaching the basics of the sport. The basketball league is where they will be assigned to teams and participate in games after a couple of weeks of practice. We would encourage all beginners to sign up for Little Dribblers, at least once.

Q. Are there scholarships for the basketball league?

A. Yes, there are limited needs-based scholarships, but please apply by the posted scholarship application deadline.

Scholarship info and application here: <https://www.islandcountywa.gov/Health/AHC/Pages/HIYI-Scholarship.aspx>

Q. What is S.W.I.S.H. travel team?

[Sign up through Parks & Rec.](#) Grade 7-8 boys have the opportunity to be a part of a more experienced traveling team, joining Skagit County's S.W.I.S.H. League. Teams are grouped by grade and may play in a combined grade team. Games are Saturdays, beginning in early January. Teams may have byes and/or double-headers. 11 game guarantee. Practice at S.W. gyms, schedule TBD. [Follows S.W.I.S.H. League rules & procedures.](#) Grade 7-8 girls had the same opportunity in the fall.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Participation in sports can be a great learning experience for players, coaches, referees, and parents. The following code of conduct standards were established so everyone can enjoy organized sports.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- Encourage your child to play by the rules. Children learn best by example, so applaud good plays of both teams.
- Emphasize the benefits of skill development and practice. De-emphasize competition in the lower age groups.
- Know the rules of the game and support the officials. This approach will help in the development of the sport.
- Applaud a good effort in victory and in defeat; highlight the positive points of the game. Never yell or physically abuse your child after a game or practice.
- Recognize the value of volunteer coaches. Communicate with them, support them, and thank them regularly!
- Help keep the game & practice facilities clean, safe & in good condition.
- Help the coaches with time- and score-keeping as needed.
- Children (siblings of the players) **MUST BE UNDER DIRECT SUPERVISION** at all times.

PLAYER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Play for fun and enjoyment of the sport.
- Winning is a consideration, but not the only one, nor the most important one.
- Work hard to improve your skills.
- Be a team player- get along and cooperate with your teammates.
- Be on time for all games and practices.
- Learn the rules and play by them. Never argue with the decision of an official or coach.
- Respect your coaches, teammates, parents, opponents and the officials.
- Respect the arena and its facilities. Without them you would not have a place to play.

COACHES

- Strive to provide a safe environment which challenges each participant's playing potential while maintaining the integrity of "team play".
- Be a positive role model to players. Be concerned with their overall development. Exit the season having left the sport and players better served than the year before.
- Care more about players than winning the game.
- Be generous with praise when it is deserved. Be consistent, honest, fair and just. Do not publicly criticize players. Do not yell at or verbally/physically abuse players or officials.
- Organize practices that are fun and challenging to the players.
- Be familiar with the rules, techniques and strategies of the sport. Encourage all players to be team players.
- Maintain an open line of communication with the parents of each player.

TAUNTING AND BAITING

Regrettably, this point of emphasis has reached the game of basketball. Taunting and baiting of opponents or officials has no place whatsoever in community athletics. Using "trash talk", intimidation, aggression, ridiculing motions, pointing fingers and gestures are all forms of taunting and baiting. Such conduct is contrary to the basic concept of fair play and honorable competition which SWPRD strives to provide for participants and will not be tolerated. Allowing players, parents or coaches to commit acts of taunting or baiting is sending the message that it is acceptable behavior. These undesirable acts will not be a part of our basketball league. Spectators, players, or coaches who engage in this activity will be reprimanded and/or removed from the game.

GYM USE

We must show respect for our schools and the privilege of using them. We ask all players, coaches and parents to help out. **It is not the sole responsibility of the coach or the last team to clean the gym!**

- All participants and spectators are permitted in designated areas only, which include the gym, the restroom facilities, and the hall immediately near the gym.
- **NO FOOD OR DRINK (except water) IN THE GYMS.**
- When lowering or raising electrical basketball hoops STOP when the wheel stops spinning.
- All mechanical bleachers have a latch or locking feature. Know how they work before opening them.
- Please keep the balls locked in the ball box. The leather balls must not get wet or be used outside.
- Do not use emergency doors unless it is an emergency.
- Sweep the floors, return bleachers/chairs to their original location, pick up all trash and lost & found items.
- Make sure all doors, including emergency doors, are shut and locked before leaving.