



2025-26 and 2026-27 Women's Basketball Rules Changes

The following rules changes were approved by the NCAA Women's Basketball Rules Committee and the NCAA Playing Rules Oversight Panel. All rules changes are effective with the 2025-26 season.

Rule	Rules Change and Rationale
Uniforms (Game jersey and Shorts) Rule 1-22.10	To eliminate the requirement that game jerseys be tucked into the game shorts. Rationale: Game jerseys have become shorter and are not always manufactured to be long enough to be properly tucked into the game shorts. When players lift their arms, the jersey often becomes untucked, making it difficult for officials to enforce the rule properly.
Supplemental Apparel Rule 1-23.2 and .6	To require that undergarments (tights) and knee/leg sleeves are the same legal color. Rationale: Considering the relaxation of the rule surrounding what a sleeve is and what tights are (leg length, number of legs, etc.), the current rule is difficult for officials to enforce due to the sensitive nature of ensuring compliance. Requiring everything below the waist to be the same color makes enforcement less intrusive and assists institutions in being compliant.
Supplemental Apparel Rule 1-23.3.c	To permit headbands not wider than 4 inches. Rationale: The current rule allows for headbands not wider than 2 inches. This proposal allows for the continued relaxation of the uniform rules.
Duties of the Shot-Clock Operator Rule 2-11.6.d	To set the shot clock to 20 seconds when, following a dead ball, the offense is awarded the ball for a throw-in in their frontcourt. Rationale: Teams do not need the extra 10 seconds to advance the ball from their backcourt. This change is anticipated to increase possessions throughout the course of the game.
Out of Bounds – Player, Ball Rule 7-1.1	To penalize bench personnel who physically assist a player with the ball. Examples include assisting a player to stay inbounds when their momentum is taking them out of bounds, and pushing a player in a direction the coach wants the player to go. This would not penalize incidental contact by a player with bench personnel. Rationale: To address situations where bench personnel deliberately interfere with a player to prevent an out-of-bounds violation.

Rule	Rules Change and Rationale
Traveling Rule 9-5.4.a.3 and b.2	To adjust the traveling rule to permit a player who executes a jump stop/step back to land on both feet at approximately the same time. Rationale: The current traveling rule requires both feet to land simultaneously. This proposal would increase accuracy on traveling rulings due to the increased speed of the players when determining whether the feet land simultaneously.
Personal Fouls Rule 10-10.5.c	To permit a defender to contact a ball handler/dribbler with more than one “hot stove” touch, provided this is not persistent contact and does not inhibit the rhythm, speed, balance, or quickness of the ball handler/dribbler, nor does it re-route or otherwise impede the dribbler. Rationale: The elimination of the multiple touch fouls that do not affect the freedom of movement will provide continuous action and less interruptions for contact that does not impede or hinder the ball handler/dribbler.
Technical Fouls Rules 10-12.2.f and .g	To move the Administrative Technical Fouls for more than 5 players participating in the game and excessive timeouts to the Team Technical Foul category. Rationale: These offenses are committed by players and coaches (teams) and are not administrative. Placing them under the Team Technical Foul category is an appropriate placement as the players and coaches commit these technical fouls.
Disqualifying Fouls and Suspensions for Fighting Rules 10-14 Penalty and 10-15.10	To require a one-game suspension for an individual who failed to serve a suspension for physical abuse of an official or fighting, and a one-game suspension for the team's head coach when the individual who should have served their suspension failed to do so. Rationale: The Committee addressed PROP's January directive to rules committees to establish penalties when an individual fails to serve a rule-required suspension.
Coaches' Appeals Rule 11-4	To permit coaches to appeal the following rulings: (1) an out-of-bounds violation by the officials, (2) a backcourt violation, (3) whether team control changed before a ruled foul only if it could affect the awarding of free throws, and (4) whether the foul was charged to the correct individual. The coaches' appeal may be made at any time during the contest (provided it is within the window for a proper appeal), and there is no limit to the number of appeals a coach may initiate. Unsuccessful appeals result in a charged timeout to the team. Teams may appeal even when they have no timeouts remaining; however, when a team with no timeouts remaining loses an appeal, they are assessed a technical foul for an excessive timeout (the penalty is two free throws, plus an awarded throw-in to the offended team at the point of interruption).

Rule	Rules Change and Rationale
	Rationale: To provide coaches with an opportunity to appeal/challenge a ruling made by game officials. For (1), officials no longer have the ability to use replay of their own volition. For (2) and (3), officials cannot use replay on their own. For (4), officials retain the ability to use replay on their own. These changes should increase the pace of play, particularly by decreasing the number of out-of-bounds reviews late in the game. (1) was used as an experiment during the 2025 WBIT.
Experimental Rule— Coaches' Appeals (2025-26 Exhibition Games Only) Rule 11-4	NOT NAIA APPLICABLE For 2025-26 exhibition games only and by mutual agreement of the competing institutions, to permit coaches to appeal a foul charged to their own team at any time during the contest. There is no limit to the number of appeals a coach may initiate and the appeal must be made before the ball becomes live following the ruling of the foul. Unsuccessful appeals result in a charged timeout to the team. Teams may appeal even when they have no timeouts remaining; however, when a team with no timeouts remaining loses an appeal, they are assessed a technical foul for an excessive timeout. Rationale: To provide coaches with an opportunity to appeal a ruled foul on pertinent plays that, if incorrect, could cause a coach to remove a player from the game for an extended period of time.