



CLUB HANDBOOK

Ver. 2025

Apex Volleyball Club
(217) 972-0650
www.apexvbc.org

The Apex Volleyball Club program was founded to provide an outstanding and quality club program for area athletes. A balance of fundamentals, teamwork, and enjoyment of the game is emphasized throughout practices and competitions. Our program provides an opportunity for athletes to achieve their goals. Any player from any school is welcome at APEX.

Why be a part of Apex Volleyball Club?

Our Success: APEX is a program that is designed to provide athletes with superior volleyball skills and sportsmanship. Our teams will be competitive at many local and regional tournaments with a select team competing in national qualifiers. Participation in many local, regional, and national tournaments by athletes has proven beneficial in developing skills which will make this a leading region in volleyball.

Some Rules and Regulations

APEX abides by all USA Volleyball (USAV), Junior Volleyball Association (JVA), and Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) rules and state school athletic association rules. NOTE: If this is your first experience with Club volleyball, remember that not all club volleyball rules are the same as high school rules. A high school coach cannot coach more than three players from their own school.

Before the First Tryout Session

Before stepping out on the floor for the first tryout session athletes must turn in the following documents and have registered:

- JVA Waiver
- \$25.00 Tryout Fee, which is non-refundable (Checks should be made payable to APEX)

Assessments

Athletes aspiring to be a part of APEX will first go through a battery of physical tests such as the VERT [™] then they are evaluated on skill execution. Athletes will be assessed on their ability to pass, set, serve, and hit. Finally, they are watched during a game situation for their instinctive traits. We base our selections on what the athletes do during the tryout period and what we perceive their potential to be. We select athletes based on the following criteria: Coach ability, willingness to be a team player, athletic ability for volleyball, athletic potential, work ethic, drive, competitive attitude, and, lastly, current skill ability and or experience.

Tryouts are open to parents to view. We ask that they remain distraction free.

After Tryouts

After tryouts, the coaching staff will meet to determine which athletes will be offered an opportunity to participate in our program.

What if I Play Other Sports?

School sports and activities are an integral part of the scholastic experience and we still make every effort to schedule practices around some of these other activities. However, it is recommended that if an athlete is going to miss more than 15% of practices and tournaments, those families reconsider participation in our program. Missing such a significant amount of time does not make it cost effective for the families and makes it very difficult to build team chemistry and team cohesion at a competitive level. If an athlete participates in another sport, we expect them to make APEX a priority when there is a conflict between the two sports. This means we expect the athlete to attend all APEX practices, unless there is a scheduled competition for the other sport at the same time as an APEX practice. If a game for the other sport conflicts with a APEX practice, the athlete will be excused from the APEX practice. If an APEX competition conflicts with another sport competition, the coach and the athlete will decide, on a case-by-case basis as to which event takes priority. All APEX teams require dedication on the part of the athlete for the team to be a success. This means that missed practices could result in forfeiture of playing time.

APEX Fees

APEX per player fees are as follows:

13U, 14U and 15U club fee: \$950.00

11u and 12u club fee: \$950.00

Extended season fees will be determined at a later date if applicable.

Families with multiple players playing for APEX will receive a 10% reduction in fees per family.

Fees include the following:

Uniform

Tournament entry fees for allowable tournaments

Balls

Gym rental

Coaches expenses (other than air travel if required)

Coaching fees

The higher amount for the extended season teams is to cover the longer season, higher tournament entry fees, number of tournaments, and number of hotel nights for coaches.

It is imperative that all parents understand that coaches should never incur any exceptional costs during the course of a season. Coaches should be able to provide their own transportation to and from tournaments that the team drives to (this does not mean that they can't travel with someone from the team). Coaches should be prepared to be responsible for all of their own food. If teams fly to tournaments during their season, the coach should never incur the cost of the flight. Fundraising (or a collection of money from parents on the team) should be done to make sure

this doesn't become an issue. Also, if your team incurs additional tournaments or overnights, the team will be responsible for these costs. Coaches do not pay for tournaments, hotel rooms or airline flights at any time! All additional costs for teams and coaches not covered by APEX player fees must be paid for by fundraisers or by the team parents.

Note to NEW parents of extended season team players:

- The team commitment, travel requirement, and potential additional expenses for extended season teams are considerably more than for CLUB teams.
- Extended season teams may practice more than 2 times per week depending on practice court availability.
- Extended season coaches will schedule extra team meetings including team bonding, fundraising activities and possibly film review.
- Extended season team fees include budget for hotel nights for coaches.
- Extended season teams may decide to compete in additional tournaments. Extended season coaches will discuss this option with players and parents and all additional expenses must be covered by fundraising or by the team as a whole.
- Extended season teams may travel by air to qualifiers and hopefully a national tournament.
- Hotel and travel fees for parents are not included in APEX fees.

Parents concerned about the commitment required for extended season teams should discuss the expectations with the coach immediately after learning their daughter has been selected for an extended season team.

A non-refundable payment is required for all Club and extended season teams following tryouts. For those who have paid an initial tryout fee this will be deducted from the total amount due. The projected payment will be ½ of the initial fee, followed by 2 or 3 agreed upon payments to be completed prior to the end of the season.

All fees (checks only), should be made payable to APEX and sent to:

APEX
PO Box 3972
Decatur, IL, 62524

Do not give any money to a coach. They have been instructed not to accept fees. Any charges incurred by APEX for returned checks will be added to the balance of your fees. There will be a 5 day grace periods on all late payments. If the payment has not been made after the end of the grace period, a \$10.00 penalty will be assessed. The penalty will not be included on the athlete's total amount due.

Fund Raising

Fundraising opportunities will be offered throughout the club season to all female athletes. Participation in fundraising is voluntary and all proceeds will go directly to the athlete's club account. More information will follow.

Playing Time

WE DO NOT GUARANTEE EQUAL PLAYING TIME ON ANY TEAM OR AT ANY EVENT. APEX has the philosophy that what you pay for is instruction time during practices. Attendance, attitude, effort, performance, the athlete's potential, the team's needs at the moment, and the team's needs in the future are all factors in determining playing time for athletes, and the decision is left solely to the discretion of the Apex coach.

The "coaching decision" is not up for debate or question. Athletes are encouraged to ask what they can improve on to get more playing time. (See Grievance Procedure)

Rules and Regulations

1. While representing APEX, all athletes are expected to behave in a responsible manner. Determination of what is responsible lies solely with APEX.
2. Athletes are expected to support fellow team members in practice and in competition, and to display the qualities of a dedicated athlete such as: a positive attitude, good team spirit, and the desire to learn and improve.
3. Athletes are expected to conduct themselves in an exemplary manner that demonstrates pride, admiration and respect for themselves, their parents, and the APEX Program at all times.
4. As volleyball is a team sport, it is expected that the athlete will participate in all team activities both on and off the court. (Hotel accommodations, eating with the team, fundraising, etc.)
5. Athletes understand that if they are involved with any of the following behaviors, they will be given a onetime warning, after which they will be subject to dismissal from the organization: Disregard of coach or club rules Lack of team cooperation (remaining with the team during referee and sitting time.)
6. If athletes are involved with any of the following behaviors they will be immediately dismissed from the APEX program, with no refund:
Use of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs, any other behavior deemed by APEX as inappropriate and subject to dismissal.
7. Athletes understand that if they do not fulfill their financial obligations to the APEX program that they will not be eligible to register, in the future, with other cooperating programs until they have reconciled with APEX.
8. Athletes that do not fulfill their commitment to play the entire season for APEX including all end of season national or regional tournaments without a valid excuse will be considered "Not in Good Standing with APEX"
9. Athletes considered "Not in Good Standing with APEX" will not be eligible to play for another APEX team for the remainder of the current season plus the following season. Parents wishing to challenge the "Not in Good Standing with APEX" status of a player may do so in

writing to the APEX Board. All challenges must be submitted prior to tryouts for any season. The decision of the APEX Board regarding the challenge will be final.

10. Athletes (of legal driving age) understand that they may not drive themselves or other players to any tournament outside of the Decatur Area.

11. APEX is proud of our image. We require all practice, game shirts and warm up shirts be worn in lieu of apparel representing other club programs at all times.

12. Any athlete damaging equipment owned by APEX or any facility used by APEX during practices, tournaments or other functions, or at lodging facilities will be required to reimburse APEX and/or facility for the damages before continuing with APEX. In some cases, the athlete may be dismissed from APEX.

13. An athlete with a delinquent account during the current season will be denied the privilege of playing in a tournament and will sit out at practice until the account is paid or arrangements are made with the Director.

14 All athletes must have the following items signed by their parents or guardians before they will be allowed to practice: APEX Handbook, USA Volleyball Waiver Form, Medical Form.

15. In case of inclement weather, a coach or someone from a phone chain will call your home to notify you of practice cancellations.

16. We strongly encourage athletes who make an APEX team to take this participation seriously. This means we expect APEX practices and tournaments are of the highest priority.
Practice Rules

17 Coaches determine whether or not their practices are open or closed.

18. Scheduled practice time is START time and not arrival time. Plan on arriving at least 15 minutes prior to the start of each practice. There is a consequence for arriving late to practice and competitions.

19. Volleyball shoes are to be carried into practice and tournaments and only worn for practice and tournaments. This is to ensure that the shoes last longer and our facility surfaces remain clean and safe.

20. Horseplay by athletes or coaches at practice or tournaments is strictly prohibited.

21. All athletes are expected to make every effort to attend every practice. Only an illness serious enough to keep the athlete home from school or a genuine family emergency is a legitimate excuse for missing practice. Regardless of the reason, if an athlete misses practice, her playing time may be affected.

22. If an athlete cannot be at practice, the athlete is expected to call the coach. It is the athlete's responsibility (not the parent's) to reach the coach before the practice starts.

23. If an athlete has a second unexcused absence from a practice, she will be notified by the organization of dismissal from the program. At this time she may appeal this dismissal to the APEX board.

Unexcused absences are defined as any miss for a reason other than the following: a) school academic and sporting functions, such as team practices and competition; b) church functions, such as weddings, confirmations, etc.; c) family functions, such as vacations with immediate family or graduation of an immediate family member, and d) illness or injury. Examples of unexcused absences are; Kings Island, baby-sitting, homework, job, dances, vacation with a friend, or non-school related athletics or activities.

24. Athletes are encouraged to bring water, in an unbreakable container, to practices and tournaments. Absolutely no glass containers are allowed.

25. Chewing gum is prohibited during practice.

Tournament Rules

26. All athletes are expected to be in the gym, ready to warm-up, at the scheduled arrival time. This usually means the athlete needs to arrive at the site 15 minutes prior to the scheduled arrival time. EARLIER IS ALWAYS BETTER.

27. Proper conduct is expected from all members of the Club at all times. This includes athletes, parents, and supporters. This also means treating supporters from other teams, other parents, and officials with respect.

28. An athlete will only wear the uniform provided through APEX while playing and will maintain good condition of the uniform since the athlete will be representing APEX and their team while wearing it.

29. Athletes and/or parents are expected to provide transportation for their athlete to and from tournament sites and practices.

30. If an athlete cannot be at a tournament, the athlete is expected to call the coach as soon as the athlete knows she will be absent. It is the athlete's responsibility (not the parent's) to reach the coach before the tournament starts. A single unexcused absence may result in dismissal from the team.

31. If an athlete has two or more excused absences from tournaments in a single season, the athlete may be dismissed from the team.

32. Athletes will not be allowed to leave the tournament site until excused by the coach.

33. Except in cases of true emergency, an athlete who has an officiating assignment may not leave a tournament before the assignment is completed.

Officiating

Officiating is the shared responsibility of the entire team. All APEX athletes are required to attend a scorekeeper clinic and help with the line judging, scorekeeping, score flipping, and officiating. Each coach will determine a procedure their team will follow for officiating assignments. **EVERY PLAYER IS REQUIRED TO STAY UNTIL THE ENTIRE TEAM CAN LEAVE. PLEASE, DO NOT ASK THE COACH IF YOU CAN LEAVE EARLY. YOU ARE EXPECTED TO STAY!**

Grievance Procedure

Competitive team athletics, by its very nature, creates situations where everyone may not be happy all the time. Knowing when to communicate and how to communicate with your athlete's coach is a concern for almost every parent at some time during the season. Most often the concern is how to inquire about issues surrounding playing time.

At APEX, we encourage the athlete to take responsibility for their participation. For this reason we expect the player to talk to the coach first when she has a problem concerning her playing time, or if she is unclear about what the coach expects from her either in practice or in a competition. The appropriate way to do this is for the athlete to ask the coach what she needs to do to get more opportunities to play in matches. Most of the time, the player knows why they may not be playing as much as a teammate when the parent may not.

Parents can best help their athlete by helping her set some goals to achieve more opportunities. When a parent has a problem that is specific to their own athlete, we also expect them to first talk to their athlete's coach. Coaches have been instructed not to discuss "coaching decisions" with a parent. These "coaching decisions" include, but are not limited to, specific match decisions such as who played when, where, and how long. Also, who was subbed out and when, etc etc. The coach will not be required to defend his/her thought process or conclusions in the determination of playing time, and it is improper for a parent to request that.

Specifically, the procedures to follow if you as a parent, or your athlete as a member of an APEX team, have concerns about APEX policies or a coach's actions are, in this order:

1. The athlete will speak or meet with the coach to discuss the matter. If the matter remains unresolved, or if the athlete has reasonable concern that speaking to the coach will not resolve the matter,
2. The parent should speak to or meet with the coach. Parents should call the coach on the phone to set a meeting. Meetings are to be at times and locations other than tournaments. If a parent approaches a coach during a tournament, we have instructed the coach to refuse to discuss any controversial matter, to refer the parent to the Club Director and to walk away from the situation. The recommended time for a parent and/or athlete to talk to a coach about a problem is a previously arranged meeting time either before or immediately after a scheduled practice. If the matter remains unresolved, or if the parent has reasonable concern that speaking to the coach will not resolve the matter,

3. The parent may speak to the Coach and the Club Director. In certain situations, APEX may ask the athlete to attend the meeting also.

Meetings should be previously arranged. Meetings will not be scheduled during a tournament. The Coach or the Club Director will not engage in discussions about “coaching decisions.”

Other Policies Regarding Grievances

1. APEX will not tolerate hostile, aggressive confrontations between a parent and any official, or a parent and any coach, or a parent and any athlete, or a parent and any other parent, whether the coach, athlete or other parent is a member of APEX or not. Violation of this policy may result in the athlete being dismissed from APEX without refund.

2. It is inappropriate for an athlete or a parent to approach other Apex members about a problem the athlete or parent is having with a coach, about objections to coaching decisions, or about disagreement with an administrative decision. Asking uninvolved people to take sides in an issue is unfair to the third party and to the Club. For the psychological health of the teams and the Club as a whole, grievances need to be handled between the parties involved and in the proper manner.

3. If a player or parent is approached and asked to listen to, or express an opinion about matters between two other parties in the Club, is strongly encouraged to refer the complaining party to take the matter up with either the coach in question, or the Club Director, Tony Holly,

4. Any member who, as a third party, hears remarks or stories about APEX, its employees or its policies, that cause the member to be concerned, is encouraged to contact the Coach and/or the Club Director immediately to determine the facts, or to alert the club administration to a situation it may be unaware of. It is detrimental to everyone involved to repeat complaints you hear or overhear to other uninvolved parties. By the time a story gets to the third or fourth party, it frequently bears little resemblance to the truth or the facts of the situation.

5. Please refrain from negative comments around your daughter and the other athletes. Young players are vulnerable and if they hear complaining about the coach, the coach’s style or APEX policies, this can have an adverse effect on their performance and/or attitude. If you, as a parent, are unhappy about something, you should follow the grievance procedure of this guide to resolve the matter.

6. Repetitive complaining to the athlete(s) or other third parties that interferes with the Club’s efforts to pursue its stated mission and purpose may be cause, in the sole determination of the Club, to ask a member to resign.

Tournaments

Tournaments can last anywhere between 1 and 4 days. Teams will begin pool play where they will play each team in their pool with the winning teams advancing to a Gold bracket and other teams advancing to a Silver or Bronze bracket. Most tournaments are best 2 out of 3 games with rally scoring. Seating is sparse in most of the gyms so we recommend that you bring your own chairs. We strongly advise that you pack a cooler for your athlete for the day of a tournament because they can run long. Most tournament facilities will not allow coolers to be brought inside the facility. Some players bring pillows and sleeping bags so they can rest between rounds. Games, homework, books, etc. are all recommended for some of the longer tournaments. Arrive early so you can help set up your team area and get ready to warm-up.

Except for starting times, most tournaments do not follow a set time schedule. Matches will begin 10 minutes after the end of the previous match. If the tournament is run well, it should be over around 6:00 p.m. But to be on the safe side, expect to be there all day.

Team Parent Duties

A team parent is needed for each club and open team. As team parent you would be required to fulfill, but not limited to, the following responsibilities.

Assist the coach in any way possible. Such as:

- Establish a phone tree and email list for the coach, players and parents.
- Make calls to parents (players) regarding practice times, places and changes (if needed).
- Provide written directions to tournaments, hotels and practice locations (if needed).
- Arrange car pools for tournaments (if needed).
- Act as a liaison between the parents, coaches and players.
- Ensure that all parents attending (not just the team parent) assist the coach in making sure that the players are in bed on time, curfew is enforced and lights are out on overnights, as directed by the coach. It is important that each parent (or assigned guardian) take responsibility for their daughter (or assigned player) on overnights!
- Help the coach to determine eating arrangements (such as ordering pizza, going for carry-out during a tournament, calling ahead for reservations to a restaurant, buying breakfast items, etc.). Some coaches may be stricter than others and may want the team to eat together. This should be discussed with the coach and every effort should be made to comply by all parents.
- Make hotel reservations for all players, coaches and parents (who will be attending from your team) on overnights. Costs for the coaches' rooms are covered by players' fees (up to a certain number of nights, depending on open or club level at an average of \$90-\$100 per night). The team parent needs to find out the exact cost of the coaches room (with taxes), and notify the APEX Treasurer to get a check for the exact amount of the coaches' room(s) before leaving for the tournament.
- Do not hold rooms for other parents on your credit card! Get a confirmation number for each parent room and get that number to the appropriate parent so they can confirm their own room. You are responsible for confirming your own room and the coaches' room. Pay for the coaches' room with the check issued by Bill Schwab.
- If traveling by air, make sure that travel arrangements are made for everyone from your team that is flying. On some teams, someone other than the team parent may be able to handle this due to travel experience or connections at airlines.
- Assist in securing fund raising opportunities to help offset team costs, unless someone else on the team has taken on this responsibility.
- Assist APEX in recruiting parents from your team to assist in running our club tournament.

Apex Fees

The balance of the APEX fee must be paid in full prior to the end of the season. Checks must be made payable to "APEX VBC"

Privacy Statement

The personal information that you provide to apply for membership is used within APEX to provide the services that we offer to you. APEX does not share your personally identifiable information with any nonaffiliated third party businesses, organizations, or individuals