



## YMCA SPIRIT / RECREATIONAL LEAGUES GUIDLINES

In order to best serve every player at every level, the YMCA offers two levels of play in most sports - the Recreational leagues and the Spirit leagues. The philosophy of YMCA Youth Sports is:

- Learn Skills
- Develop Sportsmanship
- Promote Teamwork
- Strengthen Self Confidence
- Make New Friends
- Learn Lifetime Fitness
- HAVE FUN

The Spirit leagues expand that philosophy to meet the needs of players and coaches who welcome the opportunities for skill development in a more competitive atmosphere with players of similar skills and desires in order to prepare them with physical and mental readiness to participate at high levels.

<b>RECREATIONAL LEAGUE</b>	<b>SPIRIT LEAGUE</b>
<p>Offers a place for every player - regardless of skill levels. Players register individually, and YMCA directors assign them to teams based on school areas and friend requests.</p> <p>Primary Objective is to offer a FUN experience combined with basic skill development in a low-key, non-competitive atmosphere. Records are not kept and awards are not given.</p> <p>Guarantees players equal playing time.</p> <p>Teams are limited to one practice per week.</p> <p>Most recreation sport programs play 7 or 8-week schedules.</p> <p>Offers a broad base of sport opportunities for participation in a variety of athletic experiences.</p>	<p>Teams are formed by coach-select procedures. Coaches are encouraged to select players of similar skills, desires, and commitment levels to create teams that will participate competitively.</p> <p>Combines competition with fun in leagues where records are kept, and awards are given in some Spirit leagues.</p> <p>Equal playing time is encouraged, but not guaranteed</p> <p>Teams may practice more than once a week.</p> <p>Offers expanded league play and/or tournament opportunities.</p> <p>Athletes have the opportunities to expand their abilities and specialize in one or more sports.</p>

**SPIRIT COACHES NOTE** : When combining teams for competition, please keep in mind that players and families are sensitive. Do consider the feelings of each player.

1. Coaches must keep sight of all players involved and make sure each player has an opportunity to play, whether in the Recreational league or in the Spirit league. Coaches moving from Recreational leagues to Spirit leagues with only a select portion of the recreation team must communicate these intentions to every player of the recreational team.
2. Before approaching a player from another team ( Rec. or Spirit ) about joining a new Spirit team, coaches must contact that player's current coach so he/she is aware of these intentions.
3. If a coach is approached by a player (or parent of a player) currently playing on another team, that person must contact the current coach of the player to let him/her know of the desire to change teams.
4. Although Spirit leagues are designed to be more competitive, FUN is still of primary importance. The # 1 reason that players quit playing sports is that - it is no longer fun. Please keep this in mind.