



Considerations for Athletes & Families for Selecting a Club Volleyball Program

This guide is to help athletes and families make informed decisions when choosing a club program. Each family is responsible for understanding the policies, expectations, and commitments before signing with a club.

Key Principles

- **Commitments:** All parties (clubs, athletes, families) must honour Volleyball Manitoba (VM) and Volleyball Canada (VC) policies, plus club-specific rules.
- **Player Rights:** Players are not "owned" by clubs. Each membership year ends May 31; athletes are free to choose a new club the following year.
- **Independence:** Clubs are independent organizations but must follow VM/VC policies when registered members.
- **Signing:** The only recognized commitment is the **VM Individual Registration Form**, available during the early-signing window (August) or after tryouts (December).

What to Ask About Clubs

- **Values:** Do the club's actions match its stated values? Do they align with your family's goals?
- **Structure:** How is the club run—non-profit, business, or volunteer-led? Does it have proper governance, policies, and financial transparency?
- **Best Practices:** Look for clear complaints processes, financial accountability (two signing officers, annual statements), and risk management.
- **Reputation:** Ask past athletes about their experience. Are many players returning?
- **Coaches:** What are their qualifications, philosophy, and track record? Do their actions match their philosophy?

Practical Considerations

- **Schedules:** Do practice and travel schedules work with school, work, and other sports? Does the club support multi-sport athletes?
- **Commitment Level:** Understand attendance expectations and impacts if activities are missed.
- **Fees:** What do fees cover? (e.g., hotels, travel, practices, uniforms, sport science, social activities). What is the refund policy?
- **Parental Involvement:** Is fundraising or volunteering required?

Age Category Rules

- Review VM's **age category regulations** each year (e.g., Tripleball at 12U/13U, fair play rules at 14U).
- Choose the developmentally appropriate age group based on birth year.



Signing & Tryouts

- **Early Signing (17U/18U only):** Clubs may re-sign athletes in August.
- **Open Signing (all ages):** Begins after VM's published tryout dates.
- **No Pressure:** Athletes must be free to choose without pressure or consequences.
- **Tryouts:** Players may attend multiple tryouts unless they've already signed.
- **Commitments:** Once signed, athletes must stop attending other tryouts.
- **Fair Play:** Playing time is not guaranteed—ask about expectations.

Safe Sport & Athlete Protection

VM is committed to a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment.

- **Zero Tolerance:** No harassment, bullying, abuse, discrimination, or misconduct.
- **Reporting:**
 - Club policies → contact your club directly.
 - VM/VC policies → visit <https://volleyballmanitoba.ca/safe-sport/what-is-safe-sport/>
- **Persons in Authority:** All coaches/club leaders must complete screening, criminal/child abuse checks, Safe Sport and Respect in Sport training.
- **Best Practice:** Follow VC's "Open and Observable" environments—interactions must be transparent and justifiable.