



Zone Defence & Extended Zone Defence Manual



Definition of Zone

A Zone, for the purpose of this ban is defined as:

- Any defence played **in** the quarter court, which does not incorporate normal man- to-man defensive principles.

Zone Defence is **NOT** permitted in;

- All Under 12 competitions.
- All Under 14 Competitions.
- Open Tier Under 16 Competitions.

Definition of Extended Zone

An Extended Zone, for the purpose of this ban is defined as:

- Any defence played **beyond** the quarter court, which does not incorporate normal man- to-man defensive principles.

Extended Zone is **NOT** permitted in;

- All Under 12 competitions.
- Open Tier Under 14 Competitions.

Zone & Extended Zone Defence

Overview

- SAC define Zone and Extended Zone defence as any defence that does not employ normal man to man defensive principles.
- There is general acceptance that the constant use of Zone and Extended Zone defences in the younger age groups adversely effects the development of both defensive and offensive skills in younger athletes.
- For many years, Basketball Australia has introduced a rule banning the use of Zone defences at National level for Under 14 competitions and has called upon all State bodies to assist with the implementation of this policy right throughout Australia.
- SAC has banned Zone defence for the under 12, and under 14 age groups at the Championships for many years and has now extended this ban in the Open Tier of the under 16 age group.
- SAC has also extended this ban to Extended Zone defence for the under 12 age group and the Open Tier of the under 14 age group.

Definition

A Zone or Extended Zone defence, for the purpose of this ban is defined as:

- Any defence which does not incorporate normal man- to-man defensive principles.
- A Zone defence is played in the Quarter Court, and an Extended Zone defence is played beyond the quarter court (i.e. half, $\frac{3}{4}$ or full court).

An Illegal Defence is any Zone or Extended Zone defence which is played in grades in which it is not allowed.

Violations

The use of man-to-man defence is integral to the Country Championships. Supervisors will be concerned about the determination of players or teams who are not executing acceptable man-to-man defensive principles.

Specifically, violations fall into one of the five categories listed below;

- One or more player(s) was/were just guarding a space on the court, with no attempt to be responsible for an opposition player.
- One or more player(s) was/were not in an acceptable man-to-man defensive position in relation to their man and the ball.
- A cutter moved through the keyway and was not defended using acceptable man-to-man defensive techniques - for example, bumped, switched or followed.
- Following a trapping or help and recover situation, one or more players made no attempt to re-establish man-to-man defensive positioning.

Zone Violations (continued)

- A team played an Extended Zone defence (in grades which allow this defence) but did not assume man-to-man defensive positioning once the ball had been advanced into the quarter court.

Penalties

Supervisors, SAC representatives or Referee Coaches will assess the following penalties against the team that commits an Illegal Defence violation. They will start at the appropriate level of penalty based on the severity and intent of the offending team.

- **Reminder.** A reminder may be given to the team via any one of the coaches, the team manager or (if present) an association coaching lead that they should actively coach one or more players to adhere to normal man-to-man defensive principles.
- **Warning.** The head coach will be warned that continued violations of the Illegal Defence will result in the coach being assessed with a behavioural technical foul.
- **Technical Foul.** The head coach will be issued with a technical foul.

Guidelines for Players, Coaches and Supervisors

The onus is on the offensive team to expose an Illegal Defence. They can do this in many ways. There can be no illegal defence ruling without the offensive team doing one or more of the following:

- sending a cutter through the keyway,
- playing an offensive alignment which differs to the alignment of the defence,
- having the ball change sides of the court.
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The onus is on the coach of the defensive team to actively coach their players to execute normal man-to-man defensive principles. It may only take one player who is not executing normal man-to-man defensive principles for the team's defence to be illegal, even though a coach may not have specifically instructed their team to play a Zone or Extended Zone defence.

In grades which allow it, teams may play Extended Zone defence, provided they re-assume normal man-to-man defensive principles as soon as the ball reaches the quarter court.

No zones are allowed on sideline or baseline out-of-bounds plays.

A defender guarding a player who is on the side of the court opposite the ball, must clearly be defending a designated player not just standing in the keyway.

Guidelines for Players, Coaches and Supervisors (continued)

On cuts and screens, a defensive player may follow, bump, hedge or switch but there must be some defensive action which takes account of the action of the offence.

In a man-to-man defence, players may help or trap (where teams put 2 or more players on the ball) and the other players may temporarily stay in a zone alignment (e.g. 2 players on the ball and the other 3 players defending space) until the ball leaves the trap, after which all players must re-assume normal man- to-man defensive principles.

In grades which do not allow Extended Zone defence, supervisors are only concerned about defences after a made basket or after a side ball beyond the quarter court. On a missed basket or live ball turnover (e.g. transition defence) no illegal defence violations may occur with respect to Extended Zone defence.

The use of Extended Man-to-Man defence is allowed and strongly encouraged over the use of Extended Zone defences for greater player development outcomes in young players.

Examples

- A novice team is failing to match up when the ball enters the quarter court, but as the offensive team is continually shooting the ball early in the shot clock without a discernible offensive spacing or an alignment, running any cuts, screens or other offensive actions, or having the ball change sides of the court, they fail to expose any possible illegal defence. **Ruling: No action.**
- A novice player, Team A #4 is failing to match up with an opposition player when the ball enters the quarter court. The offense maintains a 5-out alignment, changes sides with the ball, and A4 does not leave the keyway and show that they are responsible for an opposition player. Due to the player's inexperience, the coach is reminded that they should actively coach A4 to be responsible for a player. **Ruling: Reminder.**
- As the game progresses, the player Team A #4 shows no discernible improvement, and the coach is not actively coaching the player to defend legally. The coach is given a warning that any further violations will result in a technical foul being assessed on the coach. **Ruling: Warning.**
- With 2 minutes to go in a tied game, after a time out, Team A plays a 2-2-1 zone press to try to force a turnover on a side ball in the back court. Provided they are in a grade which allows Extended Zone defence, and they fall back into man-to-man defence, there is no illegal defence. **Ruling: No action.**

Examples (continued)

- The game is in a grade which does not allow Extended Zone defence. No reminders or warnings have been given. The supervisor rules that the strategy is pre-meditated and that the coach has directed the players to play the defence. At the next break in play, the supervisor approaches the bench and instructs the referees to issue a technical foul on the coach of team A. Team B receives 1 free throw and the game resumes as it was prior to the technical foul. **Ruling: Technical Foul.**

Process

- If a coach suspects the opposition of an illegal defence violation, they should discreetly ask their team manager or assistant coach to alert the Supervisor to a possible breach of the illegal defence rule.
- The Supervisor will observe and either apply no penalties or a penalty depending on the severity and intent of the offending team.
- Referees will not be involved in the process, except when directed to administer a technical foul to an offending coach.
- Coaches who act demonstratively in alerting a supervisor or SAC Staff to a potential violation by the other team, may themselves be issued with a technical foul if appropriate.

Glossary

- **Quarter Court** The area of the court from the free-throw line or throw-in line to the nearest end line.
- **Man-To-Man Defence** Any defence where the primary purpose of the team's players is to primarily defend an opposition player rather than an area of the court.
- **Zone Defence** Any defence which does not incorporate normal man-to-man defensive principles in the Quarter Court.
- **Extended Zone Defence** Any defence which does not incorporate normal man-to-man defensive principles played beyond the Quarter Court.
- **Illegal Defence** Any defence, in certain competition grades, that does not incorporate normal man-to-man defensive principles.

