Your first indoor line-judge duty

Indoor preparation aid — FIVB 2025–2028; separate USAV note. Not official training or certification.

Before the first serve

Tell the referee this is your first assignment. Ask which rulebook applies and who to ask if you need help. Complete any required local training first.

Ask the referee to show your starting spot, assigned boundary lines and antenna/service-boundary duties. Confirm the signal for a blocked view and how long to hold a signal.

Get the supplied flag; practise in, out, touched and judgment impossible. Put your phone away and check that your view and escape space are clear.

Where to stand

With two line judges, the FIVB arrangement uses diagonally opposite corners nearest each referee's right-hand side. Each covers the adjacent end line and sideline. With four, each covers the line assigned to that position. Have the referee point them out; do not choose a corner by following spectators.

Stay outside the court and clear of a server or a chasing player. Adjust safely when needed, then recover your assigned view. Never stand on the boundary, step into a rally to improve the view or block a camera/official.

Five flag signals

Ball contacts your line or the court: Point the flag down: in.

Floor contact entirely outside the boundary: Raise the flag vertically: out.

Receiving team clearly touches the ball before it goes out: Raise the flag and touch its top with your free palm: touched.

Assigned antenna or service-boundary fault, clearly seen: Wave the flag overhead, then point to the antenna or relevant line.

Your view is blocked and you cannot judge: Raise and cross both arms and hands in front of your chest.

Your rally routine

At a decision: show a clear signal, look to the first referee and hold it briefly; repeat it if asked. The referee decides the rally outcome.

If screened: do not guess from the sound, a player's reaction or the crowd. Use judgment impossible. Do not award a replay yourself.

For the server's foot fault, judge at the service contact or take-off for a jump serve: touching the end line, the court or ground outside the service zone is a fault. Landing inside after a legal take-off is not itself a service foot fault. Check any other assigned service duties in the briefing.

Three practice decisions

1. A small part of the ball touches the paint — The landing is close to your assigned sideline. You clearly see part of the ball contact the line. In or out? In. The boundary line belongs to the court. Point the flag down; a ball does not need to land mostly inside.

2. A block touch before an out ball — An attack crosses the net, brushes a receiving-side blocker's hand, then lands outside that team's end line. You clearly see the touch and landing. What do you report? Touched. Show the touched flag signal rather than reporting a clean out ball. This example is not the different case where a ball rebounds back to the attacking side.

3. A player hides the landing — A player crosses your view exactly as the ball lands. Others shout "out," but you did not see the contact. What do you signal? Judgment impossible. Cross both arms and hands in front of the chest, then look to the referee. Do not guess and do not decide on a replay.

Breaks and finishing

Between rallies, reset your flag and attention. Do not coach players or debate calls with spectators.

At time-outs and set intervals, go only to the position the referee specified; remain available and keep clear of warm-ups.

Do not leave after a set or match until the referee releases you. Return the flag and ask about any uncertainty before your next assignment.

My duty record (fill in before play)

Date / match: _____

Rulebook / referee: _____

My corner / assigned lines: _____

Break position / handover: _____

Sources and scope

Checked 28 October 2026: FIVB rules 8.3–8.4, 12.4.3, 29–30 and diagram 12; USAV indoor rule 27, diagram 12 and case 27.01. See the current official sources below.

learnvolley.com/how-to/line-judge