

Welcome to the North Texas Region Tryout process. The North Texas Region is one of 40 regions across the United States that supports the USA Junior Volleyball program. Each region has its own process for clubs to select players and form teams to compete in local, regional, and national competitions.

This document is a guide to help you and your child make the most out of the North Texas Region club tryout process and make your experience an enjoyable and rewarding one. Your involvement in the process leading up to that important first day of tryouts will help to minimize frustrations and better assure finding a club that fits your needs and your child's level of play.

If this is your first time to navigate thru the tryout process you are not alone. Even veteran parents often find the process difficult. There are many choices of clubs, practice locations, levels of play, travel, etc. We hope to give you a foundation of ideas to work with, considerations you may not have explored, and avenues of research in an effort to make your choice of clubs right for you and your child.

Getting Started. Within this document there will be links to pages within the North Texas Region web site. Please follow these links and familiarize yourself with the layout as this is where most all of your research will take place. Allow yourself plenty of time ahead of that first tryout date to compile the information you will need for a successful tryout.

Following is a suggested bullet list of priorities that will leave you much better prepared for tryouts. Each item will be fully described throughout this document along with supporting links to the NTR/North Texas Region web site.

- **Registration. Complete this step as early as possible.**
- **Evaluate your child's level of play before searching for clubs.**
- **Determine 2 or 3 clubs that offer your child's level of play.**
- **Attend Clinics offered by these clubs prior to tryouts**
- **Talk with veteran parents and players**
- **Attend Parent information meeting hosted by the club**
- **The tryout process**

- Signing the “Offer and Acceptance” contract
- What to do if not selected during the legal window

Registration:

All players, as well as coaches and adult volunteers must be registered before participating in any sanctioned events including tryouts. The most common registrations are for NEW MEMBERS and RENEWING MEMBERS. You must be a registered member before participating in any clubs tryouts. Please complete this registration process as early as possible.

When initially filling out the member registration you will be asked which club. You will enter “undecided” at this time. You will not know which club name to put on this line until after tryouts and you have signed an “Offer and Acceptance” contract with a club. At that time you can go back into the registration process and type in the selected club.

For more information regarding the registration process please go to this link: http://ntrvolleyball.org/?page_id=559

Register as “NEW MEMBER” http://ntrvolleyball.org/?page_id=49

Register “RENEWING MEMBER: http://ntrvolleyball.org/?page_id=51

Evaluate your Child’s skill level:

Volleyball is a multi-skilled sport which requires excellent ball handling skills at the higher levels and usually requires years of experience to become proficient. Being honest with your child’s current abilities will reduce frustration and help you to avoid wasting valuable time by attending tryouts that are outside your child’s reach. Hoping to make a club’s top team in your child’s age group with limited experience will almost always lead to disappointment. If somehow your child (with limited skills) made one of the club’s upper teams their playing time may be compromised and their development delayed due to lack of touches during games.

On most clubs web site, or contained in their club handbook, is a disclosure to parents and players that *playing time is not guaranteed*. At the club level, playing time is earned thru the athlete's dedication to skill development. Finding a club that is suited for your skill level will better assure you of valuable playing time. More ball touches increases the likelihood of success. Playing on a top level team with limited skills will not get you to the next level if you are spending most of the time on the bench.

Attending clinics hosted by the clubs that you have chosen is a good way to measure your child's abilities with other players in their age group. You can also ask the Coaches where they feel your child would best be suited.

Many contract offers will be given out during the first day of tryouts (more on contracts later in this document) and if you have gone to a tryout that was intended for players with much higher skill levels than your child currently possesses you may have wasted a good opportunity to try out for a club team that would have been a perfect fit for your child. By the time you go back to try out for the other club all offers may have already been given out and accepted.

The bottom line is that you will not want to waste valuable tryout time on teams that you will likely not make. Be very realistic attending that first tryout. With further skill development this season you may be on your way to making that prized team the next season.

Narrow your search to 2 or 3 Clubs.

Searching for clubs begins on the Juniors Club page.

http://ntrvolleyball.org/?page_id=62

On this page all clubs in the North Texas Region are listed and have links to those clubs that maintain web sites. You can locate clubs alphabetically or grouped in the communities / area they serve.

Once you have determined the clubs you wish to focus on learn as much as you can about them thru their website, other parents at school

volleyball games, and players that have been with them during previous seasons.

The club's web site should give you all the information about their upcoming season. You'll want to know how much the entire season will cost you, do they compete locally only or are there additional travel expenses to consider. Practice dates / times and location of the practices (some clubs are located in one area but practice in another), number of tournaments, number of players on each team, playing time rules, club rules, etc. Many web sites are rich with information about the club, while some will have little disclosure of their club.

Check out the club's Coaching Staff and their bio's. In particular seek out the Coach or Coaches in the age group you will be participating in. If you have completed your research early enough you will be able to join in on some of the clinics led by your age group Coach prior to tryouts. Club season lasts for 6 months so you will want to make sure you are comfortable with your Coach and trust that you will benefit from a season with them.

A very important consideration when trying out for a club is how many players they have returning from the previous season. You will need to ask this question of the Director and have a good feel for how many positions will be available at tryouts. If a team is returning with most of its players it may be very difficult to come away with a position on this team and a very critical portion of the tryout window may be lost. You could have spent that time at another Club's tryout that has many more positions available.

Attend Club Clinics prior to tryouts:

The best information you can be armed with at tryouts will come from participating with the Club and Coach you are interested in during their off season clinics. And these clinics provide two-fold information. The Coaches are also able to see your child's abilities and have a better understanding of their skill level prior to tryouts. Players often attend tryouts nervous and have poor performances when it matters. If the Coach knows what you are capable of prior to tryouts they are able to make better decisions during the selection process.

Talk with Veteran Players and Parents:

While attending Club Clinics you will have time to mingle. Use that time to your benefit by asking questions of players and their parents. Those families that have been with the Club during one or more seasons can give you a wealth of information.

Attend Parent Information Meetings:

Most Clubs offer one or more Parent information meetings prior to tryouts. Clubs will give you information about themselves that may not be on the web site and they will give you the opportunity to ask questions that you still have unanswered. Many other Parents will ask questions that you may not have considered. This is also a great time to mingle with returning families. The North Texas Region web site has a link for all Clubs that gives you dates / times / locations of their Parent information meetings.

http://svjgroup.com/ntregistration/Internet/Club_InfoMtgList.asp

The Tryout Process:

This is what it all comes down to. By this time you should have your tryouts narrowed down to 2 or 3 Clubs. You will not likely have time to attend more than 3. The North Texas Region has established a “window” of legal tryout dates. For each age group participating in tryouts the legal window begins on Saturday morning and ends Monday noon.

Age Group Definitions: http://ntrvolleyball.org/?page_id=95

Age Group Tryout Legal Dates: http://ntrvolleyball.org/?page_id=80

When attending tryouts make sure you have all the required documentation. For certain you will need proof of USA Volleyball membership (Registration thru the North Texas Region web site) and a birth certificate. You will also need the USAV Medical History and Release form that is typically part of most clubs tryout packets. These

packets can most often be printed from the Club's web site. Check with the Club prior to tryouts.

During the tryout process Clubs have different approaches for selecting players. Many will evaluate each skill (passing, setting, hitting, etc) for all around abilities, some clubs will put players in actual play to evaluate their skills, movement, communication, etc. Coaches in charge of the tryout procedures will advise the participants what they are looking for. Listen carefully to their instructions.

After the first round of tryouts on Saturday, Clubs may make offers to some players. You may have performed very well and did not get an offer but that does not mean the Club is not considering you for a position on their team. Since you have already narrowed your choice of Clubs that you planned to tryout for you can continue to the next Club. If the first Club was your top choice and you did not get an offer you will want to make sure you keep the Director informed that you are still interested in an offer. Without doing so, the Director does not know you are still unsigned and may make offers to players on hand.

The Offer and Acceptance contract is the legal conclusion to the tryout process. If the Director makes you an offer during the legal tryout window and you accept it both parties will sign the contract and up front monies in the form of dues is delivered to the Club. At that point your season begins. If the Club has multiple teams in your age group and you were given an offer for a particular team (such as the National team) that teams name (designation) will be written on the "team" line of the contract. Once you have signed this contract you cannot continue to participate in other Clubs tryouts.

If during the tryout process you are given a written offer by the Director and you decide to wait before making your decision you have until Monday noon to accept the offer or the offer expires. Once you are given a written offer and do not accept you can continue tryouts with other Clubs. You have until Monday noon to accept any of the offers made or they become void.

During the tryout process please be mindful of other athletes as they also pursue positions with the same Clubs you are trying out for. If you

were given a written offer from each Club on your list and you did not accept any of them in a timely manner you could possibly be blocking other athletes from having an opportunity to get offers from the Club of their choice.

Follow this link to the North Texas Region web site for more information: http://ntrvolleyball.org/?page_id=80

Signing the legal contract:

The “Offer and Acceptance” form is provided by the Club Director. This will be the official document that will bind the athlete and Club for the duration of the season. If the club has multiple teams and you are made an offer on the top team you will need to make sure that team’s name is written in on this line. The Club Director will keep this contract on file. This contract is signed by the Club Director, Parent or Legal Guardian, and the Player.

What if you do not get selected during the legal window:

Many athletes will not get offered during the legal window for a variety of reasons. The Clubs you were trying out for were returning with players from last season with only a few positions available, the Club needed Setters and you are a Defensive Specialist, your skills were not at the level of the team you were seeking, etc. Regardless of the reason there are always players that did not sign with a Club.

The North Texas Region web site has a link called “Clubs needing Players” at http://ntrvolleyball.org/?page_id=154 for players that did not get offered during the legal window. Many Clubs had made offers to players that waited until the end of the legal window to make their decision. If that athlete was made offers at 3 Clubs and accepted one it left 2 Clubs with unfilled positions. This is the blocking that athletes are encouraged not to partake in. Many athletes will lose opportunities to play on the Club of their choice because of this situation.

Good Luck to all Athletes in the North Texas Region!