

# SIMPLE SEASONS

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## BASKETBALL

## Simple Seasons Basketball

*A print-and-(quick-)play basketball simulation game*

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## Overview

Simple Seasons Basketball is a quick-play basketball game that generates realistic scores. It can be played on its own to relive the thrill of a full season, playoffs, or series, or it can be used in conjunction with a longer-playing game in order to generate standings without having to play full games.

To play, you'll need one or more season bundles, each of which contains:

- A season of Simple Seasons Basketball team cards
- The season's playoff bracket
- A blank playoff bracket for that season
- The season's as-played schedule

## Materials

This core bundle contains:

- These directions
- Guide to basketball franchises
- Scoresheet
- Optional card back design

What you'll need to provide on your own:

- 1d20 and 1d10 (or a favorite dice-rolling app)
- Paper/a printer to print out the season bundle materials
- Pen/pencil

Also available from the shop:

- Historical modifier chart (free)
- Event deck (core bundle expansion)

**A** 2021-2022 Men's Pro Basketball

**B** Atlanta

**C** 43-39, 2nd Southeast (9E)

|     |     |     |      |
|-----|-----|-----|------|
| <70 |     | 70  |      |
| 80  |     | 90  | ≤4   |
| 100 | 5-7 | 110 | 8-13 |
|     | 120 | 14+ |      |

**G**

|    |    |       |
|----|----|-------|
| HC | OT | Def   |
| +4 | 0  | H d+1 |
|    |    | V d+1 |

**E** **F**

(c) Short Season Games

## How to read a card

A: Year/Sport - in order: the season (year/s), gender, level (pro/minor/college), and sport for the team

B: Team - the nickname, city, or region of the team that this card represents

C: Record - how the team finished in reality. In order: win-loss record, division place, division name, and conference playoff ranking finish (if the team qualified). *In this example, the playoff ranking is "9E," which means Atlanta was seed #9 in the East.*

If the league had only one division, this box will only list the team record and overall finish (i.e., "53-29, 1st place"). If a star symbol (★) is shown, this means the team won its league championship; in leagues with playoffs, the star denotes the playoff champion.

D: Scoring key - the chart from which a team's base score is determined

E: HC rating - the team's Home Court modifier, to be added to the Luck roll

F: OT rating - the team's Overtime modifier, to be added to an OT roll (if necessary)

G: Defense chart - depending on whether this team is home or visitor, the appropriate modifier will be added to the opposing team's dice roll. (The "d" stands for "dice.")

The Simple Seasons Basketball cards are similar to, but very different from, the cards in other Simple Season sports games!

## How to play (quickstart)

1. Choose two teams.
2. Roll d20 and d10 for visiting team. Apply opponent DEF rating to d20 result.
3. Check visiting team card for base score, then add d10 Luck result. (Note: on d10, a ten means zero.)
4. Repeat step 2 for home team.
5. Repeat step 3 for home team, then add Home Court modifier.

## How to play (detailed)

These steps are very detailed, but as you see above in the quickstart section, it's really quite simple! Once you have this down, each matchup will take about 30-45 seconds to complete.

(These directions assume you'll be using the accompanying scoresheet, but play however works best for you.)

### Step 1. Select your team

Select any two teams from any two seasons. Determine which team will be the home (H) team and which will be the visitor (V), and write the teams on the appropriate lines in the first column of the scoresheet.

*For example, I'll use 2021-2022 Utah and 2021-2022 Washington, with Utah as the home team. I write Washington next to V: and Utah next to H:.*

### Step 2a. Roll your d20 and begin to fill in the scoresheet

On the scoresheet, move from left to right. Roll your d20 for each team, and write the result in the second column (Roll, under Roll & mods). In the third column,

write the opponent's Defense Rating. So in the visitor's row, I would write the home team's Defense Rating, and in the home team's row, I would write the visitor's Defense Rating. Next, in the fourth column, write the team's Historical Modifier (if you're using teams from different seasons). Add those three columns for each team and write the totals in the Roll Total column. Use the Roll Total to consult the team's Scoring Key, and write that number in the Base Score column.

*I roll first for Washington and get a 13. I record this in their Roll column. Then I roll for Utah and get a 14, which I record under their Roll column. Next, I enter Utah's home Defense Rating (-1) in the Opp Def column in Washington's row, and I do the same thing for Washington's visiting Defense Rating (+0) in Utah's row. Because these teams are from the same season, I don't put anything in the Hist Mod column. Now, I find the teams' Roll Totals; Washington's is  $13 + (-1) = 12$ , and Utah's is  $14 + (0) = 14$ .*

*Now I go to the team cards. On Washington's card, 12 falls in their 110-point range. On Utah's card, 14 lands in their 110-point range as well. I'll write 110 in both teams' Base Score columns. Looks like we'll have a close matchup here.*

### Step 2b. Roll your d10 and finish filling in the scoresheet

Next, fill in the home team's Home Court modifier, then roll your d10 for each team. All teams get lucky in any given game, and this number indicates how many points a team lucked their way into.

*Now I look for my home team's Home Court rating. Utah has a +6. I enter this number into the Home Court column in Utah's row (the corresponding area in the visitor's row is blacked out). Then I roll my d10 for the teams' luck: 4 for Washington and 5 for Utah.*

### Step 3. Determine the winner

Finally, add up the Roll Score, Home Court, and Luck columns for each team. This will give you a total score!

*To determine the score at the end of regulation, I do some quick math. Washington ends with  $110 + 4 = 114$  points. Utah ends the game with  $110 + 6 + 5 = 121$  points--Utah wins by 7!*

Step 4. If tied, go to overtime. Repeat as many times as necessary.

If the Reg Score is tied, go into overtime. For the first Overtime column, roll a d10 for each team and record the result there. Then, find each team's OT rating on their card, and record that number in the second column. Add the Overtime Roll and the Overtime Mod columns together for the Overtime Score (column 3). Then add the Overtime Score to the Reg Score to see if you have a winner--if not, repeat this step again and again until one team has more points.

*Let's say, in the previous example, that I had rolled slightly different Luck scores for each team, resulting in a 118-118 tie. The next thing I'd do is roll a d10 for each team; I get a 5 for Washington and a 3 for Utah, and I write those into the Overtime Roll column. Then I check the team cards for their OT ratings; Washington is a +5, and so is Utah, so I record those on the scoresheet.*

*Now I add the Reg Score, the Overtime Roll, and the Overtime Mod together to get a final score of Washington 128, Utah 126. So Washington pulls it out in an overtime nailbiter! If the score had remained tied, I would have just repeated this step again and again until we had a winner.*

## Important rules

Be aware of these special rules as you play Simple Seasons Basketball:

10 = 0

Remember: on a d10, 10 always means 0. (Some d10s differ in that they may have a 10 or they may have a 0.)

## Negative luck

The Luck d10 roll is always added to the base score **except** for two special instances: when the base score is ">70" and in the case of a "nat 1," as described next.

*(Example: My rolls result in a 6 (d20 plus DEF) and a 3 (d10) on the 1949-1950 Baltimore card, who are my visiting team. The 6 lands in Baltimore's "<70" range. So I calculate the team's final score as  $70 - 3 = 67$ .*

## Nat 1/Nat 20

If you're familiar with RPGs, you're familiar with nat 1s and nat 20s. If you've never played D&D, nat (or "natural") 1s and 20s are when you roll a 1 or 20, respectively, on a d20. They represent the worst or best case outcome in a given situation. And that concept also applies to this game.

Sometimes a team has a really great night. If you roll a nat 20, then instead of rolling a d10 for Luck, you have the option to roll a d20 instead.

Similarly, sometimes a team has a really terrible night. If you roll a nat 1, you must roll a d20 instead of a d10 for luck, which you then subtract from your base score (similar to negative luck described above).

## The most important rule

If you discover a rule that works better than what I've outlined here, go for it! Use your imagination and have fun.

## Other Ways to Play

While the game is intended to act as a realistic score generator, that's not the only way you can use the cards. Here are a few ideas:

### War-style (2 player)

Shuffle all cards in the season(s) you'd like to use face-down into a deck. Then deal each player a number of cards; I recommend dealing 3 each if you have less than 20 cards in the deck, dealing 4 each if you have less than 30 in the deck, or 5 each if you have more than 30 cards in the deck. At the start of every turn, each player selects one team from their hand and places it face-down in front of them. Then, players turn over their cards together.

Play a game (or series of games) between these two teams. The winner of the match gets to keep the losing card and places it in their hand. Players then draw a new card from the deck to their hands, and play continues from there, with each player selecting one team from their hand and pitting them against each other, until one player has the whole deck.

### Full Tournament

Include all your teams in a March Madness-style tournament, and see who comes out the victor.

### Ladder Tournament

Order your teams from worst to first, then pit the last team against the second-to-last team to see how far it can get.

### Random Tournament

Shuffle all your cards into the same deck then deal out matchups randomly. Create a bracket, or group them all back together after each round and deal them out again.

If you discover a new way to play, I'd love to hear it! Let me know at [shortseasongames@gmail.com](mailto:shortseasongames@gmail.com).

## Credits and contact info

Based on statistics and information provided by Basketball Reference ([basketball-reference.com](http://basketball-reference.com)). Design information based on data from TruColor ([trucolor.net](http://trucolor.net)), the Basketball Jersey Database ([bballjerseys.com](http://bballjerseys.com)), the Basketball Jersey Archive ([basketballjerseyarchive.com](http://basketballjerseyarchive.com)), and/or Chris Creamer's SportsLogos.net.

Playtested using real dice and the Roll My Dice app. Further testing done using Google Sheets and the RANDBETWEEN function.

More seasons and a core bundle expansion are available (along with other games) at [shortseasongames.com](http://shortseasongames.com).

Questions, comments, or concerns? Reach Short Season Games at [shortseasongames@gmail.com](mailto:shortseasongames@gmail.com).

Thanks for playing!