



2012 NFHS FOOTBALL RULES BOOK

ROBERT B. GARDNER, Publisher
Bob Colgate, Editor
NFHS Publications

To maintain the sound traditions of this sport, encourage sportsmanship and minimize the inherent risk of injury, the National Federation of State High School Associations writes playing rules for varsity competition among student-athletes of high school age. High school coaches, officials and administrators who have knowledge and experience regarding this particular sport and age group volunteer their time to serve on the rules committee. Member associations of the NFHS independently make decisions regarding compliance with or modification of these playing rules for the student-athletes in their respective states.

NFHS rules are used by education-based and non-education-based organizations serving children of varying skill levels who are of high school age and younger. In order to make NFHS rules skill-level and age-level appropriate, the rules may be modified by any organization that chooses to use them. Except as may be specifically noted in this rules book, the NFHS makes no recommendation about the nature or extent of the modifications that may be appropriate for children who are younger or less skilled than high school varsity athletes.

Every individual using these rules is responsible for prudent judgment with respect to each contest, athlete and facility, and each athlete is responsible for exercising caution and good sportsmanship. These rules should be interpreted and applied so as to make reasonable accommodations for athletes, coaches and officials with disabilities.

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Published by the **NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS**,
PO Box 690, Indianapolis, Indiana 46206; Phone: 317-972-6900, Fax: 317.822.5700,
www.nfhs.org. Cover photos courtesy of Visual Image Photography.

2012 NFHS Football Rules Changes

(For comments on the 2012 rules changes, see page 87)

- 1-2-3h,** Restrictions have been removed for corporate advertising and
1-2-3i (NEW) markings on the field of play.
- 1-5-2b** Football gloves must meet the NOCSAE test standard starting in 2013.
- 1-5-3c(8) (NEW)** Play cards must be worn on the wrist.
- 2-3-7** Blocking-below-the-waist rules revised.
- 2-4-1** Definition of a catch revised.
- 3-5-10d** Player required to be removed if helmet comes off during the down.
- 9-3-8 (NEW)** Restrictions added to blocking on free kicks.
- 9-4-3h** Illegal personal contact penalty has been revised.
- 9-4-3k** Horse-collar rule has been modified.

2012 Editorial Changes

1-1-4; 1-1-8; 1-2-1; 1-2-3e NOTE 2; 1-2-4; 1-3-1c, g; 1-5-1b, c (NEW); 1-5-2b; 1-6-2; Table 1-7 (5); 2-5-3; 2-15-1; 2-16-2f; 2-24-3; 2-24-4; 2-32-15; 2-41-1; 2-44; 3-2-2; 3-2-3b; 3-4-3b; 3-5-2b; 3-5-5b; 3-5-10b, c; 4-2-1; 4-2-2d(2); 4-2-2e(3); 4-2-2j; 8-2-2, 3; 8-3-6b; 9-3-8 PENALTY; 9-4-4 PENALTY; 9-5-2d; Football Fundamentals IX-6; Penalty Summary.

2012 Points of Emphasis

(For complete discussion of the 2012 points of emphasis, see page 82.)

1. Concussions, Contact to and with the Helmet, Helmet Technology and Proper Helmet Fitting
2. Heat Acclimatization and Preventing Heat Illness
3. Hurdling
4. Illegal Blocking Below the Waist
5. Illegal Shifts Involving the Quarterback
6. Improper Uniforms

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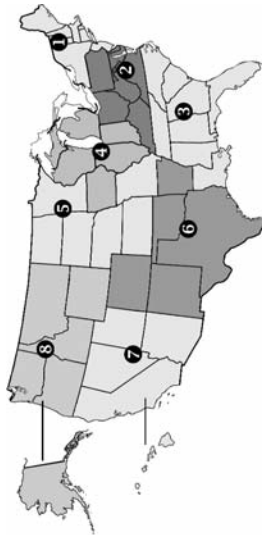
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SHARED RESPONSIBILITY AND FOOTBALL HELMET WARNING STATEMENT

Athletes who participate in the sport of football accept the risk of injuries. However, athletes also have the right to assume that those who are responsible for the conduct of the sport, i.e., administrators, coaches and athletic trainers, have taken reasonable precautions to minimize the risk of significant injury. Refinements in the playing rules, the development of risk minimization guidelines and the establishment of equipment standards have helped to reduce significant injuries. However, to legislate safety via the rules book and equipment standards is never a complete answer. All who are involved with participation in the sport of football share in the responsibility of minimizing the sport's inherent risks.

The coach is responsible for pregame verification that in addition to other required equipment, each player has a helmet which meet National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) standards when manufactured and that each helmet has an exterior warning label. While important, the fact the athletes are wearing certified helmets is only the first step. The athletes involved must be aware of all the basic principles of head and neck injury prevention.

Helmet Warning Statement

Since 1985, the NOCSAE football helmet standard has required a warning label on the outside of the helmet to inform each player of these risks and responsibilities. Each helmet shall have permanently affixed to the exterior of the shell a clearly legible statement which can be easily read without removal of any decal tape, other temporary material or permanent part, which contains language that effectively communicates to the purchaser and user the following information, using the same or similar language:

WARNING

NO HELMET CAN PREVENT ALL HEAD OR ANY NECK INJURIES A PLAYER MIGHT RECEIVE WHILE PARTICIPATING IN FOOTBALL.

DO NOT USE THIS HELMET TO BUTT, RAM OR SPEAR AN OPPOSING PLAYER. THIS IS IN VIOLATION OF THE FOOTBALL RULES AND SUCH USE CAN RESULT IN SEVERE HEAD OR NECK INJURIES, PARALYSIS OR DEATH TO YOU AND POSSIBLE INJURY TO YOUR OPPONENT.

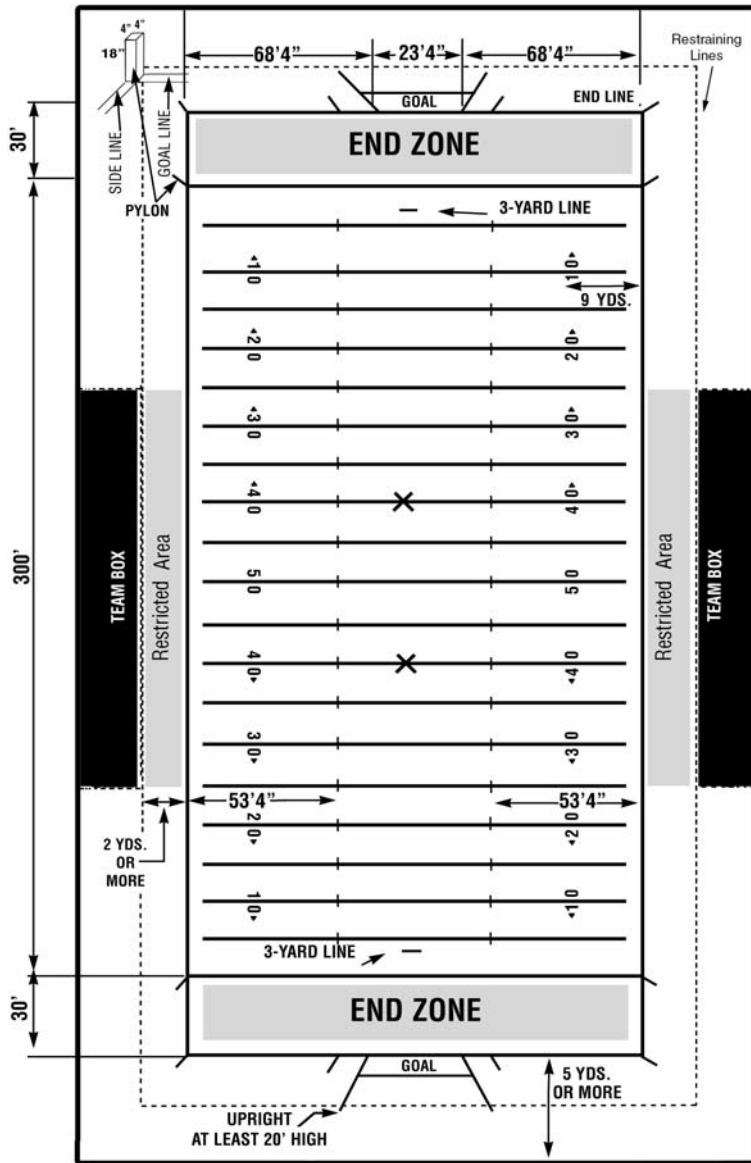
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Each state high school association adopting these rules is the sole and exclusive source of binding rules interpretations for contests involving its member schools. Any person having questions about the interpretation of NFHS rules should contact the rules interpreter designated by his or her state high school association.

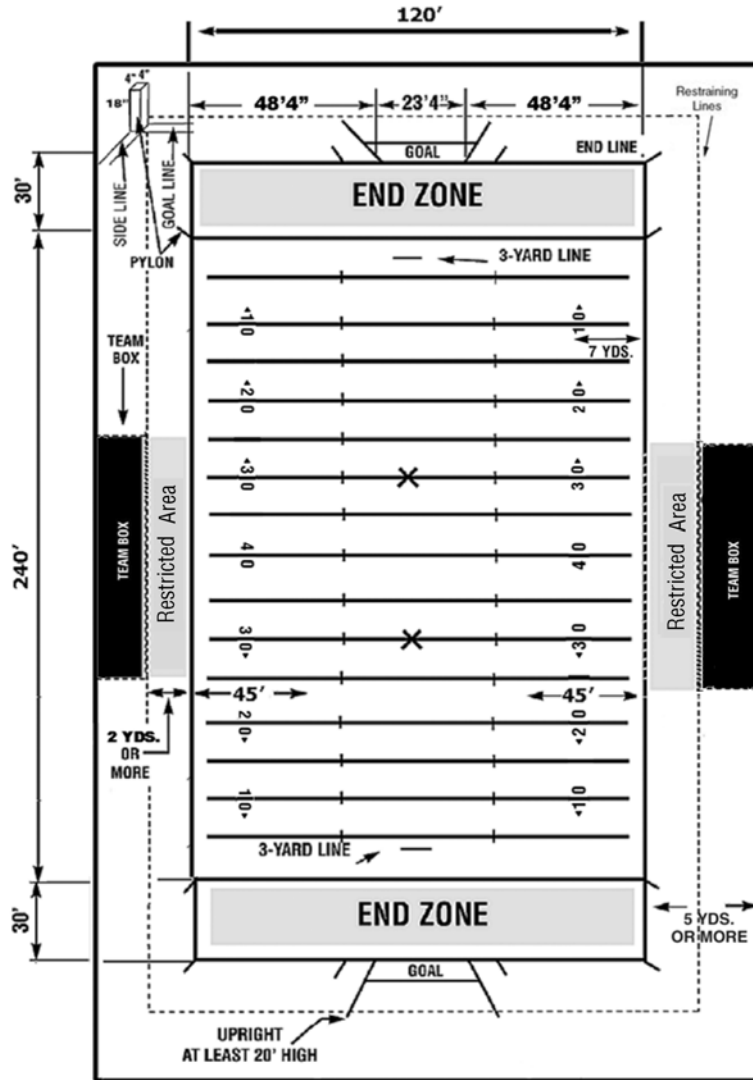
The NFHS is the sole and exclusive source of model interpretations of NFHS rules. State rules interpreters may contact the NFHS for model rules interpretations. No other model rules interpretations should be considered.

11-player Football Field Diagram



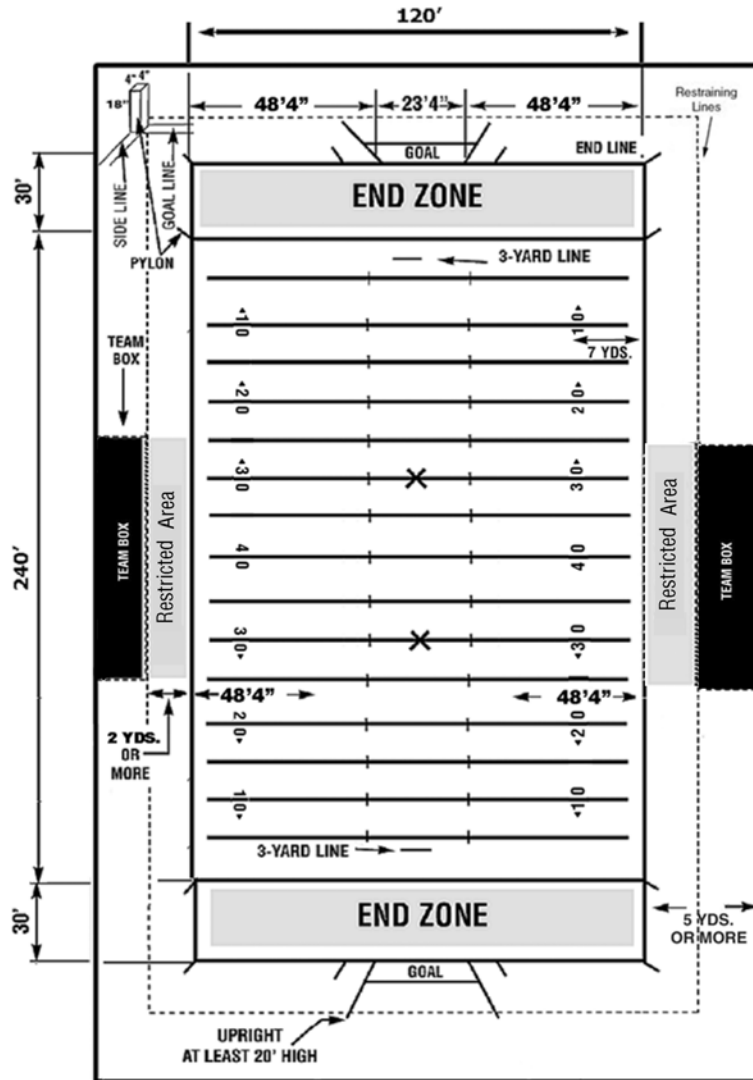
Eight- and Six-player Football Field Diagram

Note: By state association adoption, the dimensions of the field may be altered.



Nine-player Football Field Diagram

Note: By state association adoption, the dimensions of the field may be altered.



Rule **1** *The Game, Field, Players and Equipment*

SECTION 1 THE GAME

ART. 1 . . . It is the object of the game for one team to carry or pass the ball across the opponent's goal line or to kick the ball through the opponent's goal by a place kick or drop kick. The game is won by the team which accumulates the most points.

ART. 2 . . . The game of football is played with an inflated ball by two teams on a rectangular field 360 by 160 feet. While the ball is live, an interval called a down is in progress and the team in possession attempts to advance the ball by carrying, kicking or passing it. If a foul occurs, the penalty loss, if not declined, is enforced during the interval between downs. The team in possession has a series of four downs numbered 1, 2, 3 and 4 to advance the ball to the line to gain, which is usually 10 yards in advance of the spot where the series begins. Points are scored by touchdown, successful try, field goal or safety.

ART. 3 . . . Each team shall begin the game with 11 players, but if it has no substitutes to replace injured or disqualified players, it may continue with fewer.

ART. 4 . . . The game is administered by game officials whose title and duties are stated in the NFHS Football Game Officials Manual.

NOTE: Each state association may determine the number of game officials to be used.

ART. 5 . . . Prior to the game, the referee shall meet with the head coach(es) and captain(s) and explain that everyone is expected to exhibit good sportsmanship throughout the game.

ART. 6 . . . The referee has authority to rule promptly, and in the spirit of good sportsmanship, on any situation not specifically covered in the rules. The referee's decisions are final in all matters pertaining to the game.

ART. 7 . . . The game officials shall assume authority for the contest, including penalizing unsportsmanlike acts, 30 minutes prior to the scheduled game time or as soon thereafter as they are able to be present.

ART. 8 . . . The game officials' jurisdiction extends through the referee's declaration of the end of the fourth period or overtime. The game officials retain clerical authority over the game through the completion of any reports, including those imposing disqualifications, that are responsive to actions occurring while the game officials had jurisdiction. State Associations may intercede in the event of unusual incidents that occur before, during or after the game officials' jurisdiction has ended or in the event that a game is terminated prior to the conclusion of regulation play.

ART. 9 . . . The game officials shall have the authority to make decisions for

infractions of the rules. The use of any replay or television monitoring equipment by the game officials in making any decision relating to the game is prohibited.

ART. 10 . . . The referee's decision to forfeit a game is final.

ART. 11 . . . Protests of NFHS rules are not recognized.

SECTION 2 THE FIELD AND MARKINGS

ART. 1 . . . The field shall be a rectangular area with dimensions, lines, zones, goals and markers as shown on the accompanying diagram. There shall be two sidelines running the length of the field along each side that serve as boundary lines for play. It is recommended there be a slope of $\frac{1}{4}$ inch per foot from the center of the field to each sideline on a natural grass field. There shall be two goal lines, running parallel to each other and perpendicular to the sidelines. The field of play is the area within the boundary lines, and the goal lines. There shall be two endlines, running parallel to each other, parallel to the goal lines that serve as a boundary line for play.

NOTE: The rise from each sideline to the center of a natural grass field is 20 inches when the recommended slope is used.

ART. 2 . . . Yard-line markers, constructed of soft, pliable materials, if placed on the ground, should be no closer than 5 yards to the sideline.

ART. 3 . . . Lines and other markings:

- a. Lines shall be marked with a noncaustic, nontoxic material designed for marking fields such as powdered gypsum, calcium carbonate and liquid aerosol paint. It is recommended that these lines be white. Neither lime, hydrated lime or other chemical derivatives of lime, nor caustic material of any kind may be used for marking football fields.
- b. Yard lines shall be marked with a continuous line every 5 yards beginning and ending 4 inches from each sideline.

NOTES:

1. Game administration may place on the field of play, 4 inches from each sideline, yard-line extensions that should be 24 inches in length and 4 inches in width.
2. If the field of play has a logo in the center or at any other part of the field of play, that logo should not obstruct the visibility of the required marks every five yards. A solid or shadow-bordered 4-inch-wide line is permissible. A shadow line is a line that designates the required 4-inch width by use of a border or outline lines, at least $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch wide which shall lie within the 4-inch width. Shadow lines that are the natural color of the field of play are permissible. The area within these lines need not be one color, but the continuous 4-inch-wide outline must be clearly visible to the game officials.
- c. End lines and sidelines shall be continuous lines at least 4 inches wide. All other field dimension lines should be marked 4 inches in width.
- d. A 4-inch-wide restraining line shall be placed around the outside of the field, at least 2 yards from the sidelines and end lines, as an extension of the line limiting the team box area, except in stadiums where the total playing enclosure does not permit the restraining line. It is recommended that the restraining line be marked by placing 12-inch-long lines, separated at

24-inch intervals.

NOTE: Game administration may place 4-inch wide and 12-inch long bisecting marks along the restraining line at each 5-yard line between the goal lines.

- e. A series of "hash marks" should be 24 inches in length and 4 inches in width and shall be located 53 feet, 4 inches from and parallel with each sideline dividing the field of play longitudinally in thirds. The lines shall be marked so that each 5-yard line bisects the hash mark.

NOTES:

1. Game administration may place on the field of play, with the inner edge of the extension in line with the outer edge of the hash mark, yard-line extensions that should be 24 inches in length and 4 inches in width.
 2. It is permissible to use college or professional fields with hash marks marked at the distance specified by their respective codes, and with advertising and/or commercial markings placed on the field of play by home management that meet the requirements of Rule 1-2-3l.
- f. Nine-yard marks, 12 inches in length and 4 inches in width, shall be located 9 yards from each sideline. The 9-yard marks shall be marked so that at least each successive 10-yard line bisects the 9-yard marks. These marks shall not be required if the field of play is visibly numbered. If on-the-field numbers are used, the tops of those numbers shall be 9 yards from the sideline, should be 6 feet in height and 4 feet in width and may include directional arrows next to the yard-line numbers indicating the direction toward the nearest goal line.
 - g. Team boxes shall be marked on each side of the field outside the coaches' area between the 25-yard lines for use of coaches, substitutes, athletic trainers, etc., affiliated with the team. The coaches' area is a minimum of a 2-yard belt between the front of the team box and the sideline, and becomes a restricted area when the ball is live.

NOTES:

 1. It is permissible for both team boxes to be on the same side of the field, provided each team box is marked between respective 20- and 45-yard lines.
 2. It is recommended goal lines and the team box boundaries be marked in a color which contrasts with other field markings and the area between the sidelines and the team box boundaries be solid white or marked with diagonal lines.
 - h. Decorative markings in the end zones shall be no closer than 2 feet from the boundary and the goal lines.
 - i. Measurements shall be from the inside edges of the boundary marks, such marks being out of bounds.
 - j. Each goal-line mark shall be entirely in its end zone so the edge toward the field of play and its vertical plane is the actual goal line. The goal line shall extend from sideline to sideline.
 - k. A line, 4 inches wide and a minimum of 24 inches in length, shall be centered in the field of play, three yards from each goal line.
 - l. Advertising and/or commercial markings may not obstruct the yard lines, hash marks or nine-yard marks (seven-yard marks for nine-, eight- and six-player).

ART. 4 . . . A soft, flexible pylon, which is 4 inches square, 18 inches high, either orange, red or yellow in color, and does not create risk, shall be placed at the inside corner of each of the intersections of the sidelines with the goal lines and the end lines, as well as with each intersection of the hash marks extended and shall be placed either 3 feet beyond the end lines or on the end lines. When properly placed, the goal line pylon is out of bounds at the intersection of the sideline and the goal line extended.

ART. 5 . . . The goal:

- a. The goal is the vertical plane midway between the sidelines extending indefinitely above the inside of the uprights and the front edge of the crossbar and in the same vertical plane as the inside edge of the end line.
- b. The top of the crossbar shall be 10 feet above the ground, measured from the base of each upright to the top of the crossbar at the intersection, or at each end of the crossbar perpendicular to the ground when a single pedestal is used.
- c. The crossbar shall be 23 feet, 4 inches long.
- d. The uprights shall be 23 feet, 4 inches apart inside to inside and each upright may not exceed 4 inches in width.

NOTE: It is permissible to use college or professional fields with goal post uprights set at the width specified by their respective codes.

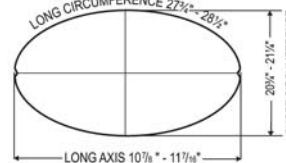
- e. The uprights shall extend a minimum of 10 feet above the crossbar.
- f. The goal posts shall be padded with resilient, shock absorbing material to a height of at least 6 feet above the ground.
- g. The horizontal crossbar and the uprights above it shall be free from any decorative material except paint which is recommended to be either silver, white or yellow in color. One wind directional streamer may be attached to the top of each upright. Wind directional streamers shall be 4 inches in width, 42 inches in length and either red, orange, or yellow in color.

SECTION 3 GAME EQUIPMENT

The NFHS does not perform scientific tests on any specific items of equipment to determine if the equipment poses undue risks to student-athletes, coaches, officials or spectators. Such determinations are the responsibility of equipment manufacturers. For additional information on Equipment Guidelines in Appendix C, see page 98.

ART. 1 . . . The ball shall meet the following specifications:

- a. A tan-colored cover consisting of either pebbled-grain, cowhide or approved composition (leather or rubber) case without corrugations other than those formed by the natural seam grooves and the lace on one of the grooves.
- b. One set of either eight or 12 evenly spaced



**Figure 1-3-1
FOOTBALL DIMENSIONS**

laces. The length of the lace shall be confined to within $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches from each end of the ball.

- c. A continuous 1-inch white or yellow stripe centered 3 to $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches from each end of the ball free from decorations or logos added during or after production. Stripes shall be located only on the two panels adjacent to and perpendicular to the seam upon which the laces are stitched.
- d. Conforms to the shape and dimensions as shown in the diagram.
- e. Weighs between 14 and 15 ounces.
- f. Inflated to a pressure of $12\frac{1}{2}$ to $13\frac{1}{2}$ psi (pounds per square inch) or 878.8 to 949.1 grams per square centimeter.
- g. The ball for 9th grade and above, as in Table 1-3-1, shall include the NFHS Authenticating Mark.

The mark can be displayed in either format:
A current list of NFHS authenticated products
can be found on the Web site, www.nfhs.org.



NOTE: By state high school association adoption, the ball to be used in games involving only players below the 9th grade may have dimensions as found in the following table:

Table 1-3-1
BALL SPECIFICATIONS

	9th grade and above	8th grade and below
Weight	14 to 15 ounces	12 to 14 ounces
Long circumference	$27\frac{3}{4}$ to $28\frac{1}{2}$ inches	26 to 27 inches
Long Axis	$10\frac{7}{8}$ to $11\frac{7}{16}$ inches	10 to 11 inches
Short circumference	$20\frac{3}{4}$ to $21\frac{1}{4}$ inches	19 to 20 inches
Inflation pressure	$12\frac{1}{2}$ to $13\frac{1}{2}$ psi	$12\frac{1}{2}$ to $13\frac{1}{2}$ psi

METHOD OF MEASURING

1. All measurements shall be made after the ball is inflated to 13 psi.
2. The long circumference should be measured 90 degrees from lace around the ends of the ball, over the groove but not in the groove.
3. The long axis should be measured from end to end but not in the nose indentation.
4. The short circumference should be measured around the ball, over the valve, over the lace, but not over a cross lace.

ART. 2 . . . Each team shall provide at least one legal game ball to the referee at the time the game officials assume authority for the contest. Only legal game balls approved by the referee may be used during the contest.

Each team may use any referee-approved ball of its choice to free kick or start a new series of downs. If a touchdown occurs following a change of possession and the scoring team did not put the ball in play, any referee-approved ball may be used for the try.

NOTE: By state association adoption, a specific ball which meets specifications may be mandated for postseason or state playoff competition.

ART. 3 . . . The referee shall decide whether the ball meets specifications. If the field is wet, the referee may order the ball changed between downs.

ART. 4 . . . A kicking tee shall be made of pliable material which elevates the lowest point of the ball no more than 2 inches above the ground.

ART. 5 . . . Either a yardage chain which joins two rods exactly 10 yards apart or any other 10-yard indicator with a visible line-to-gain indicator shall be used as the official line-to-gain equipment. This equipment and a down indicator shall be provided by game management.

- a. The line-to-gain indicator shall be used to fix the line to gain, and the down indicator shall be used to mark the spot of the ball and indicate the number of the down in a series. The game officials shall check the line-to-gain indicator for accuracy prior to the start of the game.
- b. The official line-to-gain and down indicators shall be operated approximately 2 yards outside the sideline opposite the press box, except in stadiums where the total playing enclosure does not permit. If there is no press box, the location will be specified by game management at the request of the linesman. The line-to-gain indicator shall be removed from the sideline when the line to gain is the goal line.
- c. Unofficial auxiliary line-to-gain and down indicators may be used on the sideline opposite the official line-to-gain and down indicators, and shall be operated approximately 2 yards outside the sideline, except in stadiums where the total playing enclosure does not permit.
- d. All line-to-gain and down-indicator rods shall have flat lower ends covered by protective caps.

NOTE: It is recommended that the members of the crew wear distinctive vests or jackets furnished by home or game management.

ART. 6 . . . A timing device referred to as “the game clock” or “the clock” shall be provided by the game management. The operator(s) shall be approved by the referee.

ART. 7 . . . Supplementary equipment to aid in game administration may be used if authorized by the state association.

SECTION 4 PLAYER DESIGNATIONS

ART. 1 . . . Each team shall designate a player as field captain and only he may communicate with game officials. His first choice of any offered decision is final, except as in 6-5-4. Decisions involving penalties shall be made before any charged time-out is granted either team.

ART. 2 . . . For convenience, a player is designated by his position on offense during the snap. Figure 1-4-2 shows one of the offensive formations and the recommended numbering of players according to position.

ART. 3 . . . Each player shall be numbered 1 through 99 inclusive. See 7-2-5.

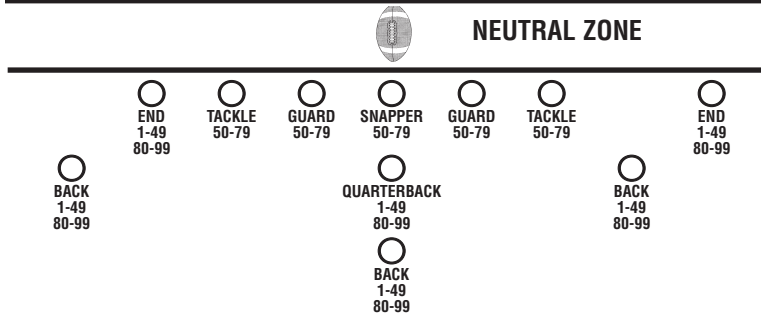


Figure 1-4-2 – RECOMMENDED NUMBERING OF OFFENSIVE TEAM PLAYERS

SECTION 5 PLAYER EQUIPMENT

The NFHS does not perform scientific tests on any specific items of equipment to determine if the equipment poses undue risks to student-athletes, coaches, officials or spectators. Such determinations are the responsibility of equipment manufacturers. For additional information on Equipment Guidelines in Appendix C, see page 98.

NOTE: As mentioned in Section 5, under Player Equipment, NOCSAE refers to the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment, while SGMA refers to the Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association.

ART. 1 . . . Mandatory equipment. Each player shall participate while wearing the following pieces of properly fitted equipment, which shall be professionally manufactured and not altered to decrease protection:

- a. **Helmet and Face Mask:**
 1. A helmet and face mask which met the NOCSAE test standard at the time of manufacture. The face mask shall have a surface covered with resilient material designed to prevent chipping, burrs or abrasiveness and be properly secured to the helmet as designed by the manufacturer.
 2. The helmet shall be secured by a properly fastened chin strap with at least four attachment points.

NOTE: All players shall wear helmets that carry a warning label regarding the risk of injury and a manufacturer's or reconitioner's certification indicating satisfaction of NOCSAE test standards. All such reconitioned helmets shall show recertification to indicate satisfaction with the NOCSAE test standard. The coach's pregame verification to the referee and umpire that all players are properly equipped in compliance with the rules includes the exterior warning label.

- b. **Jersey:**
 1. A jersey, unaltered from the manufacturer's original design/production, and which shall be long enough to reach the top of the pants and shall be tucked in if longer.

2. Players of the visiting team shall wear jerseys, unaltered from the manufacturer's original design/production, that meet the following criteria: The body of the jersey (inside the shoulders, inclusive of the yoke of the jersey or the shoulders, below the collar, and to the bottom of the jersey) shall be white and shall contain only the listed allowable adornments and accessory patterns in a color(s) that contrasts to white:
 - (a) as the jersey number(s) required in 1-5-1c or as the team and/or player name within the body and/or on the shoulders,
 - (b) either as a decorative stripe placed during production that follows the curve of the raglan sleeve or following the shoulder seam in traditional yoke construction, not to exceed 1 inch at any point within the body of the jersey; or as decorative stripe(s) added in the shoulder area after production, not to exceed 1 inch per stripe and total size of combined stripes not to exceed 3.5 inches,
 - (c) within the collar, a maximum of 1 inch in width, and/or
 - (d) as a side seam (insert connecting the back of the jersey to the front), a maximum of 4 inches in width but any non-white color may not appear within the body of the jersey (inside the shoulders, inclusive of the yoke of the jersey or the shoulders, below the collar, and to the bottom of the jersey). The exception to (d) would be what is stated in (b) above.
 - (e) The visiting team is responsible for avoidance of similarity of colors, but if there is doubt, the referee may require players of the home team to change jerseys.

NOTE: An American flag, not to exceed 2 by 3 inches, and either a commemorative or memorial patch, not to exceed 4 square inches and with written state association approval, may be worn on the jersey provided neither the flag nor the patch interferes with the visibility of the number.

3. Players of the home team shall wear jerseys, unaltered from the manufacturer's original design/production, that meet the following criteria: The body of the jersey (inside the shoulders, inclusive of the yoke of the jersey or the shoulders, below the collar, and to the bottom of the jersey) may not include white, except as stated below. If white appears in the body of the jersey of the home team, it may only appear:
 - (a) as the jersey number(s) required in 1-5-1c or as the team and/or player name within the body and/or on the shoulders,
 - (b) either as a decorative stripe placed during production that follows the curve of the raglan sleeve or following the shoulder seam in traditional yoke construction, not to exceed 1 inch at any point within the body of the jersey; or as decorative stripe(s) added in the shoulder area after production, not to exceed 1 inch per stripe and total size of combined stripes not to exceed 3.5 inches,
 - (c) within the collar, a maximum of 1 inch in width, and/or
 - (d) as a side seam (insert connecting the back of the jersey to the front), a maximum of 4 inches in width but any white color may not appear within the body of the jersey (inside the shoulders, inclusive

of the yoke of the jersey or the shoulders, below the collar, and to the bottom of the jersey). The exception to (d) would be what is stated in (b) above.

- (e) The visiting team is responsible for avoidance of similarity of colors, but if there is doubt, the referee may require players of the home team to change jerseys.

NOTE: An American flag, not to exceed 2 by 3 inches, and either a commemorative or memorial patch, not to exceed 4 square inches and with written state association approval, may be worn on the jersey provided neither the flag nor the patch interferes with the visibility of the number.

c. **Numbers**

1. The numbers shall be clearly visible and legible using Arabic numbers 1-99 inclusive and shall be on the front and back of the jersey.
2. The numbers shall be centered horizontally at least 8 inches and 10 inches high on front and back, respectively, and with continuous bars or strokes approximately 1½-inches wide.
3. The color and style of the number shall be the same on the front and back.
4. The body of the number shall be either:
 - (a) a continuous color(s) contrasting with the jersey color, or
 - (b) the same solid color(s) as the jersey with a minimum of one border that is at least ¼-inch in width of a single solid contrasting color.

d. **Pads and Protective Equipment** – The following pads and protective equipment are required of all players:

1. Hip pads and tailbone protector which are unaltered from the manufacturer's original design/production.
2. Knee pads which are unaltered from the manufacturer's original design/production, which are worn over the knee and under the pants and shall be at least ½ inch thick or ⅜ inch thick if made of shock absorbing material.
3. Shoulder pads and hard surface auxiliary attachments, which shall be fully covered by a jersey.
4. Thigh guards which are unaltered from the manufacturer's original design/production.
5. A tooth and mouth protector (intraoral) which shall include an occlusal (protecting and separating the biting surfaces) and a labial (protecting the teeth and supporting structures) portion and covers the posterior teeth with adequate thickness. It is recommended the protector be properly fitted and:
 - (a) Constructed from a model made from an impression of the individual's teeth, or
 - (b) Constructed and fitted to the individual by impressing the teeth into the tooth and mouth protector itself.
 - (c) The tooth and mouth protector shall be of any readily visible color, and may not be:

- (1) completely white; or
- (2) completely clear.
- e. Pants which completely cover the knees, thigh guards and knee pads and any portion of any knee brace that does not extend below the pants.
- f. Shoes which shall be made of a material which covers the foot (canvas, leather or synthetic) and attached to a firm sole of leather, rubber or composition material. Shoes may have cleats or may be cleatless. Among the items which do not meet these requirements are gymnastic slippers, tennis shoes cut so protection is reduced, ski and logger boots and other apparel not intended for football use:
 - 1. Removable cleats shall conform to the following specifications:
 - (a) Constructed of a material which does not chip or develop a cutting edge.
 - (b) Legal cleat material includes leather, nylon, rubber and non metallic polymers that will not chip or develop a cutting edge while functioning as a cleat. Cleats may be tipped with a steel material hardened to a Rockwell hardness approximately C55 to a depth of .005-.008 while minimizing the risk of brittle failure of the tip component, in its entirety, including any shafts or threads that may be a part of the tip.
 - (c) The base and the tip of the cleat shall be parallel.
 - (d) The free end of the cleat may be rounded in an arc with a radius of not less than 7/16 inch provided the overall length is not more than 1/2 inch measured from the tip of the cleat to the sole of the shoe.
 - (e) The cleat may be attached to a raised platform which is molded to the shoe. The platform may be no more than 5/32 inch in height and must be wider than the base of the cleat. The widest part of the cleat must be in direct contact with the platform. The 5/32-inch raised platform must be wider than the base of the cleat and must extend across the width of the sole to within 1/4 inch or less of the outer edges of the sole.
 - (f) A single toe cleat does not require a raised platform that extends across the width of the sole. The raised platform of the toe cleat is limited to 5/32 inch or less.
 - (g) The 5/32-inch platform is measured from the lowest point of the platform to the sole of the shoe.
 - (h) An effective locking device which prevents the exposure of metal posts shall be incorporated.
 - (i) The cleat wall shall be at least 3/16 inch in diameter.
 - (j) The sides of the cleat shall taper uniformly from a minimum base of 3/4 inch in diameter to a minimum tip of 3/8 inch in diameter.
 - 2. Nonremovable cleats are limited to studs or projections that do not exceed 1/2 inch in length measured from the sole of the shoe to the tip of the cleat and which are made with nonabrasive rubber or rubber-type synthetic material that does not have or develop a cutting edge.

ART. 2 . . . The following auxiliary equipment may be worn if sanctioned by the

umpire as being soft, nonabrasive, nonhardening material:

- a. Forearm pads, which may be anchored on each end with athletic tape.
- b. Through the 2012 season, gloves and hand pads, which may be anchored with athletic tape. Gloves, even though modified, must have (unless made of unaltered plain cloth):
 1. A securely attached label or stamp (NFHS/NCAA specifications) indicating compliance with test specifications on file with the SGMA as of January 1, 1994, or
 2. A permanent, exact replica of the NOCSAE glove seal (Meets NOCSAE Standard), that must be visible and appear legibly on the exterior wrist opening of the glove.

Beginning with the 2013 season, gloves, which may be anchored with athletic tape, and even though modified, must meet the NOCSAE test standard at the time of manufacture, unless made of unaltered plain cloth.

NOTES:

1. A glove is a covering for the hand having separate sections for each finger. Pads worn on the hand, but not having separate sections encircling at least part of any finger are not gloves. The thumb is not considered a finger.
2. Non-athletic gloves, worn solely for warmth and made of unaltered plain cloth, and which do not enhance contact with the ball, do not require a label or stamp indicating compliance.
- c. Tape, bandage or support wrap on the hand or forearm to protect an existing injury.

EXCEPTION: Tape, bandage or support wrap(s) not to exceed three thicknesses are legal without inspection or approval.

ART. 3 . . . Illegal equipment. No player shall participate while wearing illegal equipment. This applies to any equipment, which in the opinion of the umpire is dangerous, confusing or inappropriate. Illegal equipment shall always include but is not limited to:

- a. The following items related to the Game Uniform:
 1. Jerseys and pants that have:
 - (a) A visible logo/trademark or reference exceeding 2¼ square inches and exceeding 2¼ inches in any dimension.
 - (b) More than one manufacturer's logo/trademark or reference on the outside of either item. (The same size restriction shall apply to either the manufacturer's logo/trademark or reference).
 - (c) Sizing, garment care or other nonlogo labels on the outside of either item.
 2. Slippery or sticky substance of a foreign nature on equipment, towel, uniform, opponent or on an exposed part of the body which affects the ball or an opponent.
 3. Tear-away jerseys or jerseys that have been altered in any manner that produces a knot-like protrusion or creates a tear-away jersey.
 4. Any transverse stripe on the sleeve below the elbow.
 5. Uniform adornments, with the exception of:

- (a) One unmarked moisture-absorbing white towel, which shall be no less than 4 inches in width and 12 inches in length and no greater than 18 inches in width and 36 inches in length; or
 - (b) Moisture-absorbing sweatbands, when worn on the wrist beginning at the base of the thumb and extending no more than 3 inches toward the elbow.
- b. The following items related to Pads and Padding:
- 1. Hard and unyielding items (guards, casts, braces, etc.) on the hand, wrist, forearm, elbow, or upper arm unless padded with a closed-cell, slow-recovery foam padding no less than ½" thick.
 - 2. Knee and ankle braces which are altered from the manufacturer's original design/production.
- NOTE:** Knee and ankle braces that are unaltered do not require any additional padding.
- 3. Knee braces worn over the pants.
 - 4. Plastic material covering protective pads whose edges are not rounded with a radius equal to half the thickness of the plastic.
 - 5. Rib pads and back protectors unless fully covered by a jersey.
 - 6. Shin guards that do not meet NOCSAE specifications.
- c. The following Other Illegal Equipment:
- 1. Ball-colored helmets, jerseys, patches, exterior arm covers/pads, undershirts or gloves.
 - 2. Communication devices, other than those permitted in Rule 1-6-1 and Rule 1-6-2.
 - 3. Eye shade (grease or no-glare strips or stickers) that is not a solid stroke or includes words, numbers, logos or other symbols within the eye shade.
 - 4. Eyeshield attached to the helmet that is not:
 - (a) Constructed of a molded rigid material; or
 - (b) Clear without the presence of any tint.
 - 5. Jerseys, undershirts or exterior arm covers/pads manufactured to enhance contact with the football or opponent.
 - 6. Jewelry. Religious and medical alert medals are not considered jewelry. A religious medal must be taped and worn under the uniform. A medical-alert medal must be taped and may be visible.
 - 7. Metal which is projecting or other hard substance on clothes or person.
 - 8. Play cards not worn on the wrist or arm.
 - 9. Equipment not worn as intended by the manufacturer.

ART. 4 . . . Prior to the start of the game, the head coach shall be responsible for verifying to the referee and umpire that all of his players are legally equipped and in compliance with these rules. Any questions regarding legality of a player's equipment shall be resolved by the umpire.

ART. 5 . . . When any required player equipment is missing or when illegal equipment is found, correction shall be made before participation. An official's time-out shall be declared to permit prompt repair of equipment which becomes

illegal or defective through use. (See 3-5-2b, 5b and 7e)

ART. 6 . . . Each player shall properly wear the mandatory equipment while the ball is live.

PENALTY: Unsportsmanlike conduct (Arts. 2, 3, 5) – (S27) — 15 yards. See 9-8-1h. Failure to properly wear required equipment during a down (Art. 6) – (S27, S23) – 5 yards. See 3-6-2d for failure to properly wear required equipment when the ball is about to become live.

SECTION 6 COACHES FIELD EQUIPMENT

ART. 1 . . . Communication devices, other than audio recorder, Local Area Network (LAN) phones and/or headsets, including but not limited to mobile phones, still photograph(s), film, analog or digital video(s) and/or Internet depictions, shall not be used for coaching purposes during the game or between periods.

NOTE: Each state association may authorize the use of a drum by a team composed of deaf or partially deaf players, in order to establish a rhythmic cadence following the ready-for-play signal.

ART. 2 . . . LAN phones and/or headsets may be used by coaches, other non-players and players; however, players may use LAN phones and/or headsets only during authorized outside nine-yard mark conferences.

NOTE: Such prohibition as detailed in Rule 1-5-3c(2) does not include the use of computers and/or other electronic devices, which produce reports for the purpose of compiling statistics, including those listed in the NFHS Statisticians' Manual. However, the use of computers and/or other electronic devices shall be considered illegal if they are used at any time during the game and can be used to produce play tendencies and other scouting information and such information is given to any member of any team prior to the conclusion of the game.

PENALTY: Unsportsmanlike conduct (Arts. 1, 2) – (S27) – 15 yards. See 9-8-1e.

SECTION 7 STATE ASSOCIATION ADOPTIONS

Each state association has the authority to make decisions and provide coverage relative to a number of specific rules and may individually adopt specific coverage relative to the following:

NOTE: Each state association may, in keeping with applicable laws, authorize exceptions to NFHS playing rules to provide reasonable accommodations to individual participants with disabilities and/or special needs, as well as those individuals with unique and extenuating circumstances. The accommodations should not fundamentally alter the sport, allow an otherwise illegal piece of equipment, create risk to the athlete/others or place opponents at a disadvantage.

Table 1-7 — Table of State Association Adoptions

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determining the number of game officials to be used in the game. (1-1-4 NOTE) 2. Determining the size of ball to be used for games with players below 9th grade. (1-3-1 NOTE) 3. Mandating the use of a specific ball for postseason or playoff competition. (1-3-2 NOTE) 4. Authorizing the use of supplementary equipment to aid in game administration. (1-3-7) 5. Authorizing the wearing of a commemorative/memorial patch. (1-5-1b(2-3 NOTE)) 6. Authorizing the use of a drum for rhythmic cadence for deaf or partially deaf teams. (1-6-1 NOTE) 7. Establishing a procedure to resolve games tied following the fourth quarter. (3-1-1) 8. Establishing a point differential to termi- | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> nate games or to use a running clock when the point differential is reached. (3-1-2) 9. Establishing rules regarding continuation of interrupted games. (3-1-4) 10. Authorizing the use of 10-minute periods for games involving combinations of 9th, 8th and/or 7th grade students. (3-1-5 NOTE 1) 11. Determining the length of halftimes, provided it is not less than 10 minutes and not more than 20 minutes. (3-1-5 NOTE 2) 12. Determining when the coin toss is to be held. (3-2-1) 13. Authorizing the use of TV/radio time-out (3-5-7k) 14. Designating the 11-player field dimensions as official for nine-, eight- or six-player competition. (Pages 91-92) |
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Rule 2 *Definitions of Playing Terms*

SECTION 1 BALL – DEAD, LIVE, LOOSE

ART. 1 . . . A dead ball is a ball not in play. The ball is dead during the interval between downs.

ART. 2 . . . A live ball is a ball in play. A ball becomes live when the ball has been legally snapped or free kicked and a down is in progress.

ART. 3 . . . A loose ball is a pass, fumble or a kick. The terms “pass,” “fumble” and “kick” are sometimes used as abbreviations when the ball is loose following the acts of passing, fumbling or kicking the ball. A loose ball which has not yet touched the ground is in flight. A grounded loose ball is one which has touched the ground. Any loose ball continues to be a loose ball until a player secures possession of it or until it becomes dead by rule, whichever comes first.

SECTION 2 BATTING

Batting is intentionally slapping or striking the ball with the arm or hand.

SECTION 3 BLOCKING

ART. 1 . . . Blocking is obstructing an opponent by contacting him with any

part of the blocker's body.

ART. 2 . . . In blocking, a player may contact opponents with the arms or hands provided the technique is legal. The legal techniques are as follows:

- a. Closed or cupped hand technique:
 1. The elbows may be inside or outside the shoulders.
 2. The hands must be closed or cupped with the palms not facing the opponent.
 3. The forearms are extended no more than 45 degrees from the body.
- b. Open hand technique. The hand(s) shall be:
 1. In advance of the elbow.
 2. Inside the frame of the blocker's body; the frame of the blocker's body is the front of the body at or below the shoulders.
 3. Inside the frame of the opponent's body, except when the opponent turns his back to the blocker during the block or after the blocker is committed to his charge. The frame of the opponent's body is at the shoulders or below other than the back.
 4. At or below the shoulders of the blocker and the opponent, except when the opponent squats, ducks or submarines during the block or after the blocker is committed to his charge.
 5. Open, when the palm(s) are facing the frame of the opponent or when the forearms are extended beyond the 45 degree angle from the body.

ART. 3 . . . The blocker's hand(s) may not be locked nor may he swing, throw or flip the elbow or forearm so that it is moving faster than the blocker's shoulders at the time the elbow, forearm or shoulder contacts the opponent. The blocker may not initiate contact with his arm or hand against an opponent above the opponent's shoulder, but he may use his hand or arm to break a fall or maintain his balance.

ART. 4 . . . An offensive player may also use his hands or arms:

- a. When he is a runner, to ward off or push any player.
- b. During a kick, to ward off an opponent who is attempting to block him.
- c. To push, pull or ward off an opponent when the ball is loose if he may legally touch or possess the ball if such contact is not pass interference, a personal foul or illegal use of hands.

ART. 5 . . . A defensive player may also:

- a. Use unlocked hands, hand or arm to ward off an opponent who is blocking him or is attempting to block him.
- b. Push, pull or ward off an opponent in an actual attempt to get at the runner or a loose ball if such contact is not pass interference, a personal foul or illegal use of hands.

NOTE: When a player simulates possession of the ball, reasonable allowance may be made for failure of the defense to discover the deception. This does not cancel the responsibility of any defensive player to exercise reasonable caution in avoiding any unnecessary contact.

ART. 6 . . . When a player on defense uses a hand or arm, the hand must be in advance of the elbow at the time of the contact and at the shoulder or below

unless the opponent squats, ducks or submarines.

ART. 7 . . . Blocking below the waist is making initial contact below the waist from the front or side against an opponent other than a runner. Contact with an opponent's hand(s) below the waist that continues into the body below the waist is considered blocking below the waist. Blocking below the waist applies only when the opponent has one or both feet on the ground.

ART. 8 . . . Chop block is a combination block by two or more teammates against an opponent other than the runner, with or without delay, where one of the blocks is low (at the knee or below) and one of the blocks is high (above the knee) (see Table 9-3-6).

ART. 9 . . . Interlocked blocking occurs when one player grasps or encircles a teammate just prior to or while blocking an opponent.

SECTION 4 CATCH

ART. 1 . . . A catch is the act of establishing player possession of a live ball which is in flight, and first contacting the ground inbounds while maintaining possession of the ball.

ART. 2 . . . Catching is always preceded by touching the ball; thus, if touching causes the ball to become dead, securing possession of the ball has no significance.

ART. 3 . . . A simultaneous catch or recovery is a catch or recovery in which there is joint possession of a live ball by opposing players who are inbounds.

SECTION 5 CLIPPING/BLOCKING IN THE BACK

ART. 1 . . . Clipping is a block against an opponent when the initial contact is from behind, at or below the waist, and not against a player who is a runner or pretending to be a runner.

ART. 2 . . . Blocking in the back is a block against an opponent when the initial contact is in the opponent's back, inside the shoulders and below the helmet and above the waist, and not against a player who is a runner or pretending to be a runner.

ART. 3 . . . Such cases shall not be ruled clipping and/or blocking in the back unless the game official sees the initial contact. When in doubt, the contact is legal and not from behind. When the contact is ruled to be from behind, and the game official has question as to the initial point of contact, it shall be ruled clipping.

SECTION 6 CONFERENCES

ART. 1 . . . Coach-Referee Conference – The referee confers with the coach at the sideline in front of his team box in the field of play.

ART. 2 . . . Authorized Team Conference – There are two types of authorized team conferences:

- a. Outside Nine-Yard Mark Conference – One or more team members and one or more coaches directly in front of the team box within 9 yards of the side-line, or
- b. Between Nine-Yard Mark Conference – One coach on the field to confer with no more than 11 players at his team's huddle between the hash marks.

SECTION 7 DOWN – LOSS OF DOWN

ART. 1 . . . A down is action which starts with a legal snap (beginning a scrimmage down) or when the ball is kicked on a free kick (beginning a free-kick down). A down ends when the ball next becomes dead.

ART. 2 . . . Loss of a down is the loss of the right to replay a down.

SECTION 8 ENCROACHMENT

Encroachment occurs when a player is illegally in the neutral zone during the time interval starting when the ball is marked ready for play and until the ball is snapped or free kicked. For the purposes of enforcing encroachment restrictions, an entering substitute is not considered to be a player until he is on his team's side of the neutral zone.

SECTION 9 FAIR CATCH

ART. 1 . . . A fair catch is a catch by a receiver of a free kick in or beyond the neutral zone to the receiver's goal line, or of a scrimmage kick beyond the neutral zone to the receiver's goal line, after a valid signal, under conditions in which the receiver forfeits the right to advance the ball in return for protection from being blocked or tackled by an opponent.

ART. 2 . . . An awarded fair catch occurs when the offended team chooses to take the ball at the spot of the kick-catching interference rather than accepting the distance penalty from the previous spot and replaying the down.

ART. 3 . . . A valid fair-catch signal is the extending and lateral waving of one arm, at full arm's length above the head, by any R player.

ART. 4 . . . An invalid fair-catch signal is any signal by a receiver before the kick is caught or recovered:

- a. That does not meet the requirements of a valid signal.
- b. After the kick has touched a receiver.
- c. After the kick has touched the ground.

ART. 5 . . . An illegal fair-catch signal is any signal by a runner:

- a. After the kick has been caught.
- b. After the kick has been recovered.

SECTION 10 FIELD AREAS

ART. 1 . . . The field is the area within the boundary lines and the endlines.

ART. 2 . . . The field of play is the area within the boundary lines and the goal lines.

ART. 3 . . . The side zones are the areas bounded by the sidelines, the hash marks and the goal lines.

ART. 4 . . . The end zones are 10 yards in depth and are located at each end of the field between the goal line and the end line. The goal line is in the end zone and a team's end zone is the one it is defending.

SECTION 11 FIGHTING

Fighting is any attempt by a player or nonplayer to strike or engage a player or nonplayer in a combative manner unrelated to football. Such acts include, but are not limited to, attempts to strike an opponent(s) with the arm(s), hand(s), leg(s) or foot (feet), whether or not there is contact.

SECTION 12 FIRST TOUCHING

ART. 1 . . . During a free kick it is first touching if the ball is touched in the field of play by any K player before it crosses R's free-kick line and before it is touched there by any R player.

ART. 2 . . . During a scrimmage kick it is first touching if the ball is touched by any K player in the field of play and beyond the expanded neutral zone before it is touched there by R and before the ball has come to rest.

SECTION 13 FORCE

ART. 1 . . . Force is the result of energy exerted by a player which provides movement of the ball. The term force is used only in connection with the goal line and in only one direction, i.e., from the field of play into the end zone. Initial force results from a carry, fumble, kick, pass or snap. After a fumble, kick or backward pass has been grounded, a new force may result from a bat, an illegal kick or a muff.

ART. 2 . . . Responsibility for forcing the ball from the field of play across a goal line is attributed to the player who carries, snaps, passes, fumbles or kicks the ball, unless a new force is applied to either a backward pass, kick or fumble that has been grounded.

ART. 3 . . . The muffing or batting of a pass, kick or fumble in flight is not considered a new force.

ART. 4 . . . Force is not a factor:

- a. On kicks going into R's end zone, since these kicks are always a touchback regardless of who supplied the force.
- b. When a backward pass or fumble is declared dead in the end zone of the opponent of the player who passed or fumbled, with no player possession.

SECTION 14 FORMATIONS

ART. 1 . . . A scrimmage formation requires a minimum of seven A players legally on their line at the snap.

ART. 2 . . . A scrimmage kick formation is one in which no player is in position to receive a hand-to-hand snap from between the snapper's legs, and at the snap, either:

- a. A player is in position with a knee on the ground 7 yards or more behind the line of scrimmage, in position to be the holder and receive the long snap and with another player 3 yards or less behind that player in position to attempt a place kick, or
- b. A player is 10 yards or more behind the line of scrimmage and in position to receive the long snap.

ART. 3 . . . A free-kick formation is a formation used for a free-kick down. Following the ready-for-play for a free-kick down and until the ball is kicked:

- a. All R players must be behind their free-kick line.
- b. All K players, other than the kicker and holder, must be behind their free-kick line.

SECTION 15 FORWARD PROGRESS

ART. 1 . . . Forward progress is the end of advancement of the ball, toward the opponent's goal, in a runner's possession or the forward-most point of the ball when it is fumbled out of bounds and it determines the dead-ball spot.

ART. 2 . . . When an airborne player makes a catch, forward progress is the furthest point of advancement after he possesses the ball if contacted by a defender.

SECTION 16 FOULS AND PENALTIES

ART. 1 . . . A foul is a rule infraction for which a penalty is prescribed.

ART. 2 . . . Types of fouls are:

- a. Dead ball—a foul which occurs in the time interval after a down has ended and before the ball is next snapped or free kicked.
- b. Double—one or more live-ball fouls (other than nonplayer or unsportsmanlike) are committed by each team at such a time that the penalties offset.
- c. Flagrant—a foul so severe or extreme that it places an opponent in danger of serious injury, and/or involves violations that are extremely or persistently vulgar or abusive conduct.
- d. Live ball—a foul which occurs during a down.
- e. Multiple—two or more live-ball fouls (other than nonplayer or unsportsmanlike) are committed during the same down by the same team at such a time that the offended team is permitted a choice of penalties.
- f. Nonplayer or unsportsmanlike—a noncontact (other than unintentional contact as specified in 9-4-8) foul while the ball is dead or during the down which is not illegal participation and does not influence the play in progress.
- g. Player—a foul (other than nonplayer or unsportsmanlike) by a player in the game hereafter referred to as a foul.

- h. Post-scrimmage kick — a foul by R (other than illegal substitution or participation) when the foul occurs:
 1. During scrimmage kick plays, other than a try or successful field goal.
 2. During a scrimmage kick play in which the ball crosses the expanded neutral zone.
 3. Beyond the expanded neutral zone.
 4. Before the end of a kick.
 5. And K will not be next to put the ball in play.
- i. Simultaneous with the snap—an act which becomes a foul when the ball is snapped or free kicked.

ART. 3 . . . No foul causes loss of the ball.

ART. 4 . . . No foul causes a live ball to become dead.

ART. 5 . . . A penalty is a result imposed by rule against a team or team member that has committed a foul.

ART. 6 . . . Game situations which produce results somewhat similar to penalties, but which are not classified as fouls are: disqualification of a player, first touching of a kick by K and forfeiture of a game.

**SECTION 17 FREE-BLOCKING ZONE — LEGAL BLOCKING BELOW
THE WAIST, LEGAL CLIPPING, LEGAL BLOCK IN THE BACK**

ART. 1 . . . The free-blocking zone is a rectangular area extending laterally 4 yards either side of the spot of the snap and 3 yards behind each line of scrimmage. A player is in the free-blocking zone when any part of his body is in the zone at the snap.

ART. 2 . . . Blocking below the waist is permitted in the free-blocking zone when the following conditions are met:

- a. All players involved in the blocking are on the line of scrimmage and in the zone at the snap.
- b. The contact is in the zone.

ART. 3 . . . Clipping is permitted in the free-blocking zone when the following conditions are met:

- a. By offensive linemen who are on the line of scrimmage and in the zone at the snap.
- b. Against defensive players who are on the line of scrimmage and in the zone at the snap.
- c. The contact is in the zone.

ART. 4 . . . Blocking in the back is permitted in the free-blocking zone when the following conditions are met:

- a. By offensive linemen who are on the line of scrimmage and in the zone at the snap.
- b. Against defensive players who are in the zone at the snap.
- c. The contact is in the zone.

ART. 5 . . . The free-blocking zone disintegrates and the exception for a player to block below the waist and/or the exception for an offensive lineman to clip and/or block in the back is not to continue after the ball has left the zone.

SECTION 18 FUMBLE

A fumble is any loss of player possession other than by handing, passing or legal kick.

SECTION 19 HANDING

ART. 1 . . . Handing the ball is transferring player possession from one player to a teammate in such a way that the ball is still in contact with the first player when it is touched by the teammate. Handing the ball is not a pass. Loss of player possession by unsuccessful execution of attempted handing is a fumble.

ART. 2 . . . Forward handing occurs when the runner releases the ball when the entire ball is beyond the yard line where the runner is positioned.

ART. 3 . . . Backward handing occurs when the runner releases the ball when any part of the ball is on or behind the yard line where the runner is positioned.

SECTION 20 HELMET CONTACT – ILLEGAL

ART. 1 . . . Illegal helmet contact is an act of initiating contact with the helmet against an opponent. There are several types of illegal helmet contact:

- a. Butt Blocking is an act by an offensive or defensive player who initiates contact against an opponent who is not a runner with the front of his helmet.
- b. Face Tackling is an act by a defensive player who initiates contact with a runner with the front of his helmet.
- c. Spearing is an act by an offensive or defensive player who initiates contact against any opponent with the top of his helmet.

SECTION 21 HUDDLE

A huddle is two or more players of the same team grouped together before a down.

SECTION 22 HURDLING

Hurdling is an attempt by a player to jump (hurdle) with one or both feet or knees foremost over an opponent who is contacting the ground with no part of his body except one or both feet.

SECTION 23 INTERCEPTION

An interception is the catch of an opponent's fumble or pass.

SECTION 24 KICKS

ART. 1 . . . A kick is the intentional striking of the ball with the knee, lower leg or foot.

ART. 2 . . . A kick ends when a player gains possession or when the ball becomes dead while not in player possession.

ART. 3 . . . A legal free kick is any legal kick which puts the ball in play to start a free-kick down. After the ready-for-play signal and before the kick, each player other than the kicker and holder for a place kick must be behind his free-kick line. A free kick is used for a kickoff, for a kick following a safety, and is used if a free kick is chosen following a fair catch or awarded fair catch.

ART. 4 . . . A legal scrimmage kick is any legal kick from in or behind the neutral zone. Either a place kick, punt, or drop kick may be used. For a place kick, the ball must be controlled on the ground or on a legal kicking tee by a teammate.

ART. 5 . . . A kickoff is a free kick which puts the ball in play at the beginning of each half of the game, after a successful field goal and after any try. A place kick or a drop kick shall be used for the kickoff.

ART. 6 . . . A drop kick is a legal kick by a player who drops the ball and kicks it when it touches the ground or as it is rising from the ground. A drop kick may be used for a scrimmage kick, a kickoff, a free kick following a safety or for a free kick following a fair catch or awarded fair catch.

ART. 7 . . . A place kick is a legal kick made while the ball is in a fixed position on the ground or on a kicking tee. No material or device may be placed on the ground to improve the kicker's footing. The ball also may be held in position on the ground or on a kicking tee by a place-kick holder who shall be a teammate of the kicker. A place kick may be used for a scrimmage kick, a kickoff, a free kick following a safety or for a free kick following a fair catch or awarded fair catch.

ART. 8 . . . A punt is a legal kick by a player who drops the ball and kicks it before it has touched the ground. A punt may be used for a free kick following a safety or for a scrimmage kick.

ART. 9 . . . An illegal kick is any intentional striking of the ball with the knee, lower leg or foot which does not comply with Articles 3 and 4. When the ball is loose following an illegal kick, it is treated as a fumble.

SECTION 25 LINE OF SCRIMMAGE

ART. 1 . . . The line of scrimmage for each team is a vertical plane through the point of the ball nearest the team's goal line. It is determined when the ball is marked ready for play and remains until the next ready-for-play signal.

ART. 2 . . . An offensive player is on his line of scrimmage when he complies with the position requirements of a lineman.

ART. 3 . . . A defensive player is on his line of scrimmage when he is within 1 yard of his scrimmage line at the snap.

SECTION 26 LINES

ART. 1 . . . The boundary lines are the end lines and sidelines and are out of bounds.

ART. 2 . . . The end line is the outer limit of each end zone.

ART. 3 . . . The goal line is the vertical plane which separates the field of play from the end zone. When related to a live ball in a runner's possession (touching inbounds) while the ball is over the out-of-bounds area, the goal line includes the extension beyond the sidelines. A team's own goal line is the one it is defending.

ART. 4 . . . The hash marks are a series of marks parallel with the sidelines which divide the field of play longitudinally into thirds. The hash marks shall be marked so that they are bisected by the yard lines.

ART. 5 . . . The line to gain is the yard line established when a new series (first down) is awarded. Unless there is a penalty following the ready-for-play signal, the line to gain is 10 yards in advance of the foremost point of the ball when placed for the first down of the series. If the line to gain extends into the end zone, the goal line is the line to gain.

ART. 6 . . . The sideline is the lateral limit of the field of play and the end zones. It extends from one end line to the other.

ART. 7 . . . A yard line is any line and its vertical plane parallel to the end lines. The yard lines, marked or unmarked, in the field of play are numbered in yards from a team's own goal line to the middle of the field.

ART. 8 . . . A restraining line is a line placed around the outside of the field. No person, including but not limited to, spectators, game administrators or members of the media, shall be allowed within the restraining line. A maximum of three coaches as well as permitted nonplayers are allowed within the restraining line in front of the team box, as provided for in Rule 9-8-3.

SECTION 27 MUFF

A muff is the touching of a loose ball by a player in an unsuccessful attempt to secure possession.

SECTION 28 NEUTRAL ZONE

ART. 1 . . . The neutral zone is the space between the two free-kick lines during a free-kick down and between the two scrimmage lines during a scrimmage down. For a free-kick down, the neutral zone is 10 yards wide and for a scrimmage down it is as wide as the length of the football. It is established when the ball is marked ready for play.

ART. 2 . . . The neutral zone may be expanded following the snap up to a maximum of 2 yards behind the defensive line of scrimmage, in the field of play, during any scrimmage down.

SECTION 29 OUT OF BOUNDS

ART. 1 . . . A player or other person is out of bounds when any part of the person is touching anything, other than another player or game official that is on or outside the sideline or end line.

ART. 2 . . . A ball in player possession is out of bounds when the runner or the ball touches anything, other than another player or game official that is on or outside a sideline or end line.

ART. 3 . . . A loose ball is out of bounds when it touches anything, including a player or game official that is out of bounds.

SECTION 30 PARTICIPATION

Participation is any act or action by a player or nonplayer that has an influence on play.

SECTION 31 PASSING

ART. 1 . . . Passing the ball is throwing a ball that is in player possession. In a pass, the ball travels in flight.

ART. 2 . . . A forward pass is a pass thrown with its initial direction toward the opponent's end line.

NOTE: Prior to releasing the ball on a pass, if the potential passer is contacted, and the ball is released, it is a forward pass if his arm was moving forward on contact.

ART. 3 . . . A forward pass has gone beyond the neutral zone if at any time during the pass, the entire ball is beyond the neutral zone.

ART. 4 . . . A forward pass ends when it is caught, touches the ground or is out of bounds.

ART. 5 . . . A backward pass is a pass thrown with its initial direction parallel with or toward the runner's end line.

ART. 6 . . . A backward pass ends when it is caught or recovered or is out of bounds.

SECTION 32 PLAYER DESIGNATIONS

ART. 1 . . . A player is one of the 22 team members who is designated to start either half of the game or who subsequently replaces another player. A player continues to be a player until a substitute enters the field and indicates to the player that he is replaced, or when the substitute otherwise becomes a player.

ART. 2 . . . A player of A is A1 and teammates are A2 and A3. Other abbreviations are B1 for a player of B, K1 for a player of the kickers and R1 for one of the receivers.

ART. 3 . . . A back is any A player who has no part of his body breaking the plane of an imaginary line drawn parallel to the line of scrimmage through the waist of the nearest teammate who is legally on the line, except for the player under the snapper, who is also considered a back.

ART. 4 . . . An offensive blocker is a player who is blocking or in position to block by being between the potential tackler and the runner.

ART. 5 . . . A captain of a team is a player designated to represent his team during:

- a. The pregame and overtime coin toss. (Limit of four captains in game uniform.)
- b. The selection of second half options.
- c. Penalty decisions following a foul.
- d. Ball placement on a try, a kickoff, after a safety, after a fair catch or awarded fair catch, after a touchback and to start an overtime.

ART. 6 . . . A disqualified player is a player barred from further participation in a game.

ART. 7 . . . A holder is a player who controls the ball on the ground or on a kicking tee.

ART. 8 . . . A kicker is any player who legally punts, drop kicks or place kicks. A player becomes a kicker when his knee, lower leg or foot makes contact with the ball. He continues to be the kicker until he has had reasonable opportunity to regain his balance or until after a free kick, he has advanced 5 yards beyond his free-kick line or the kick has touched the ground or any other player.

ART. 9 . . . A lineman is any A player who is facing his opponent's goal line with the line of his shoulders approximately parallel thereto and with his head or foot breaking an imaginary plane drawn parallel to the line of scrimmage through the waist of the snapper when the ball is snapped.

ART. 10 . . . A nonplayer is a coach, athletic trainer, other attendant, a substitute or a replaced player who does not participate by touching the ball, hindering an opponent or influencing the play. See 9-6 for illegal participation.

ART. 11 . . . A passer is a player who throws a legal forward pass. He continues to be a passer until the legal forward pass ends or until he moves to participate in the play.

ART. 12 . . . A replaced player is one who has been notified by a substitute that he is to leave the field. A player is also replaced when the entering substitute becomes a player.

ART. 13 . . . A runner is a player who is in possession of a live ball or is simulating possession of a live ball.

ART. 14 . . . A snapper is the player who is facing his opponent's goal line with his shoulders approximately parallel thereto and who snaps the ball. In a scrimmage-kick formation, the snapper remains a snapper until he has had a reasonable opportunity to regain his balance and protect himself or until he blocks or moves to otherwise participate in the play.

ART. 15 . . . A substitute is a team member who may replace a player or fill a player vacancy. A substitute becomes a player when he enters the field and communicates with a teammate or a game official, enters the huddle, is positioned in a formation or participates in the play. An entering substitute is not considered to be a player for encroachment restrictions until he is on his team's side of the neutral zone. A team member entering the field to fill a player vacancy remains a substitute until he is on his team's side of the neutral zone.

SECTION 33 PLAYS – FOR PENALTY ENFORCEMENT

ART. 1 . . . A loose-ball play is action during:

- a. A free kick or scrimmage kick other than post-scrimmage kick fouls.
- b. A legal forward pass.
- c. A backward pass (including the snap), an illegal kick or fumble made by A from in or behind the neutral zone prior to a change of team possession.
- d. The run or runs which precedes such legal or illegal kick, legal forward pass, backward pass or fumble.

ART. 2 . . . A running play is any action not included in Article 1, including the related run as in 2-41-9a.

SECTION 34 POSSESSION

ART. 1 . . . A ball in player possession is a live ball held or controlled by a player after it has been handed or snapped to him, or after he has caught or recovered it.

ART. 2 . . . A ball in team possession is a live ball which is in player possession or one which is loose following loss of such player possession. A live ball is always in possession of a team.

ART. 3 . . . A change of possession occurs when the opponent gains player possession during the down.

SECTION 35 READY FOR PLAY

Ready for play signifies the referee has signaled the ball may be put in play by a snap or free kick and the 25-second count is to begin.

SECTION 36 RECOVERY

ART. 1 . . . A recovery is gaining possession of a live ball after it strikes the ground. An airborne player has completed a recovery when he first contacts the ground inbounds with the ball in his possession.

ART. 2 . . . A simultaneous recovery is a recovery where there is joint possession of a live ball by opposing inbounds players.

SECTION 37 RULE

A rule is one of the groups of regulations which govern the game. A rule sometimes states what a player may do, but if there is no such statement for a given act (such as faking a kick), it is assumed that he may do what is not prohibited. In like manner, a rule sometimes states or implies that the ball is dead or that a foul is involved. If it does not, it is assumed that the ball is live and that no foul has occurred. If a foul is mentioned, it is assumed that it is not part of a double or multiple foul unless so stated or implied.

SECTION 38 SCRIMMAGE

Scrimmage is the action of the two teams during a down which begins with a snap.

SECTION 39 SHIFT

A shift is the action of one or more offensive players who, after a huddle or after taking set positions, move to a new set position before the ensuing snap.

SECTION 40 SNAP

ART. 1 . . . A snap is the legal act of passing or handing the ball backward from its position on the ground.

ART. 2 . . . The snap begins when the snapper first moves the ball legally other than in adjustment. In a snap, the movement must be a quick and continuous backward motion of the ball during which the ball immediately leaves the hand(s) of the snapper and touches a back or the ground before it touches an A lineman.

ART. 3 . . . The snap ends when the ball touches the ground or any player.

SECTION 41 SPOTS

ART. 1 . . . The basic spot is a point of reference for penalty enforcement. See 10-4.

ART. 2 . . . The enforcement spot is the point from which a penalty is enforced.

ART. 3 . . . The dead-ball spot is the spot under the foremost point of the ball when it becomes dead by rule.

EXCEPTION: See 5-3-4.

ART. 4 . . . The inbounds spot is the intersection of the hash marks and the yard line:

- a. Through the foremost point of the ball when the ball becomes dead in a side zone.
- b. Through the foremost point of the ball on the sideline between the goal lines when a loose ball goes out of bounds.
- c. Through the spot under the foremost point of the ball in possession of a runner when he crosses the plane of the sideline and goes out of bounds.

NOTE: If a penalty measurement leaves the ball in a side zone, the new inbounds spot is fixed by the yard line through the foremost point of the ball after measurement.

ART. 5 . . . The out-of-bounds spot is where the ball becomes dead because of going out of bounds, as in 4-3-1,2,3.

ART. 6 . . . The post-scrimmage kick spot is the spot where the kick ends. R retains the ball after penalty enforcement from the post-scrimmage kick spot when a post-scrimmage foul occurs. Fouls by R behind the post-scrimmage kick spot are spot fouls.

ART. 7 . . . The previous spot is where the ball was last snapped or free kicked.

ART. 8 . . . The spot of a foul is where the foul occurs. If a foul occurs out of bounds, the spot of the foul is at the intersection of the nearer hash mark and the yard line extended on which the foul occurs.

ART. 9 . . . The spot where a run ends is:

- a. Where the ball becomes dead in the runner's possession, but the related

run (related running play) continues until the ball becomes dead or any player gains possession.

- b. Where the runner loses player possession if his run is followed by a loose ball, or
- c. The spot of the catch or recovery when the momentum rule is in effect.

ART. 10 . . . The succeeding spot is where the ball would next be snapped or free kicked if a foul had not occurred. When a foul occurs during a down in which a touchdown is scored, as in Rules 8-2-2, 8-2-3, 8-2-4 and 8-2-5, the succeeding spot may, at the option of the offended team, be the subsequent kickoff.

SECTION 42 TACKLING

Tackling is the use of hands, arms, legs or body by a defensive player in his attempt to hold a runner or to bring him to the ground.

SECTION 43 TEAM DESIGNATIONS

ART. 1 . . . The offense is the team which is in possession of the ball. The opponent is the defense.

ART. 2 . . . A is the team which puts the ball in play. The opponent is B.

ART. 3 . . . K is the team which legally kicks the ball during the down. The opponent is R.

ART. 4 . . . Team designations (A and B, K and R) are retained until the ball is next marked ready for play.

SECTION 44 TOUCHING

Touching refers to any contact with the ball, i.e., either by touching or being touched by it. Touching by a game official in the field of play or end zone is ignored.

SECTION 45 TRIPPING

Tripping is the use of the lower leg or foot to obstruct an opponent, who is not the runner, below the knee.

Rule 3 *Periods, Time Factors and Substitutions*

SECTION 1 LENGTH OF PERIODS

ART. 1 . . . The clock running time for a game shall be 48 minutes for high schools with periods and intermissions as indicated in Table 3-1.

NOTE: By state association adoption, if, at the end of the fourth period, the teams have identical scores, the tie may be resolved if a method has been approved by the state high school association. This may include extending playing time. The overtime is considered

part of the fourth period. An example of an overtime procedure is located in a supplementary section following the rules.

ART. 2 . . . By state association adoption, a point differential may be established whereby if one team has gained the established point differential, the game shall be terminated. A state association may also establish guidelines to use a running clock when the point differential is reached.

ART. 3 . . . A period or periods may be shortened in any emergency by agreement of the opposing coaches and the referee. By mutual agreement of the opposing coaches and the referee, any remaining period may be shortened at any time or the game terminated.

ART. 4 . . . Games interrupted because of events beyond the control of the responsible administrative authority shall be continued from the point of interruption, unless the teams agree to terminate the game with the existing score, or as otherwise provided for by state association adoption.

ART. 5 . . . When weather conditions are construed to be hazardous to life or limb of the participants, the crew of game officials is authorized to delay or suspend the game.

**Table 3-1
TABLE OF GAME CLOCK TIMES**

PERIOD OF TIMING	CLOCK TIME
<u>First Half:</u> First period	12 minutes
Intermission for changing goals	1 minute
Second period	12 minutes
<u>Intermission:</u> When Teams Leave the Field	10 to 20 minutes
15 minutes is normal. It may be increased to a maximum of 20 minutes, provided opponents have been notified no later than 5 minutes prior to the game. By mutual agreement of the opposing coaches, the intermission may be reduced to a minimum of 10 minutes (not including the mandatory warm-up period).	
Mandatory Warm-up Period Following Intermission: (The game officials are responsible for ensuring that there is a three-minute warm-up period posted on the clock and the clock immediately started for use by the coaches immediately after the halftime intermission expires. The head coach is responsible for his team being on the field for mandatory warm-up time at the end of the scheduled halftime intermission.)	3 minutes
<u>Second Half:</u> Third period	12 minutes
Intermission for changing goals	1 minute
Fourth period	12 minutes
Charged Time-outs	1 minute

NOTES:

1. Games involving only students below the 9th grade shall be played in eight-minute periods. By state high school association adoption, games involving combinations of 9th grade students with students in the 8th and/or 7th grades may be played in 10-minute periods.
2. State high school associations may determine the length of halftimes, provided it is not less than 10 minutes and not more than 20 minutes.

SECTION 2 STARTING A PERIOD — HALF

ART. 1 . . . Each half of the game shall be started by a kickoff. Before the scheduled game starting time, the referee, in the presence of the field captains, shall instruct the visiting captain to give a “heads” or “tails” choice before the coin toss. If the coin toss, or simulated coin toss, is held on the playing field, it shall be held three minutes prior to the scheduled game starting time, or as otherwise specified by individual state associations.

ART. 2 . . . At the coin toss or simulated coin toss conducted three minutes prior to the scheduled starting time on the field of play as in 3-2-1, not more than four team members in game uniform (captains) from each team may be present at the coin toss and only one from each team shall be designated as its spokesperson. All other team members in game uniform must remain outside the field of play.

ART. 3 . . . The winner of the toss shall have first choice of options for the first half or to defer and have first choice for the second half. The loser shall have the first choice of options for the half the winner of the toss did not select. The options for each half shall be:

- a. To choose whether his team will kick or receive.
- b. To choose the goal his team will defend.

The team not having the first choice of options for a half shall exercise the remaining option.

ART. 4 . . . Between the first and second and between the third and fourth periods, the teams shall change goals. Team possession, number of the next down, the relative position of the ball and the line to gain remain unchanged.

SECTION 3 ENDING A PERIOD — HALF

ART. 1 . . . Approximately four minutes before the end of each half, the referee shall notify the field captains and their coaches of the time remaining. If time is not out, the referee shall order the clock stopped while he does this. If an electric field clock is the official timepiece, no notification nor stoppage of the clock is required.

ART. 2 . . . If time for any period expires during a down (clock indicates 0:00), play shall continue until the down ends, even if a mechanical signal is allowed to sound.

ART. 3 . . . A period must be extended by an untimed down if during the last timed down of the period, one of the following occurred:

- a. There was a foul by either team and the penalty is accepted, except for those fouls listed in 3-3-4b.
- b. There was a double foul.
- c. There was an inadvertent whistle.
- d. If a touchdown was scored, the try is attempted unless the touchdown is scored during the last down of the fourth period and the point(s) would not affect the outcome of the game or playoff qualifying.

If (a), (b), (c) or (d) occurs during the untimed down, the procedure is repeated.

ART. 4 . . . A period shall not be extended by an untimed down if during the last timed down of the period, one of the following occurs:

- a. When the defense fouls during a successful try/field goal and the offended team accepts the results of the play with enforcement of the penalty from the succeeding spot.
- b. There was a foul by either team and the penalty is accepted for:
 1. unsportsmanlike fouls,
 2. nonplayer fouls,
 3. fouls that specify a loss of down,
 4. fouls that are enforced on the subsequent kickoff as in Rule 8-2-2, 8-2-3, 8-2-4 or 8-2-5; or
 5. fouls for which enforcement, by rule, result in a safety.

NOTE: The score is cancelled in the event of an accepted penalty that specifies a loss of down.

ART. 5 . . . At the end of each period the referee shall hold the ball in one hand overhead to indicate the period has officially ended, after delaying momentarily to ensure that:

- a. No foul has occurred.
- b. No obvious timing error has occurred.
- c. No request for a coach-referee conference has occurred.
- d. No other irregularity has occurred.

ART. 6 . . . If a dead-ball foul occurs after time expires for any period, the penalty shall be measured from the succeeding spot unless 8-2-5 applies.

SECTION 4 STARTING AND STOPPING THE CLOCK

ART. 1 . . . The clock shall start for a period:

- a. If a period begins with a free kick when the kick is touched, other than first touching by K.
- b. If a period begins with a snap, when the ball is legally snapped.

ART. 2 . . . The clock shall start with the ready-for-play signal on a down beginning with a snap if the clock was stopped for any reason other than specified in Rule 3-4-3 or an untimed down:

- a. For an official's time-out, other than when B is awarded a new series or

- either team is awarded a new series following a legal kick.
- b. Because the ball has become dead following any foul provided:
 1. There has been no charged time-out during the dead-ball interval.
 2. The down is not an extension of a period or a try.
 3. The action which caused the down to end did not also cause the clock to be stopped.
 - c. Because of an inadvertent whistle.
- ART. 3 . . .** The clock shall start with the snap or when any free kick is touched, other than first touching by K, if the clock was stopped because:
- a. The ball goes out of bounds.
 - b. B or R is awarded a new series.
 - c. Either team is awarded a new series following a legal kick.
 - d. The ball becomes dead behind the goal line.
 - e. A legal or illegal forward pass is incomplete.
 - f. A request for a charged or TV/radio time-out is granted.
 - g. A period ends.
 - h. A team attempts to consume time illegally.
 - i. The penalty for a delay of game foul is accepted.
 - j. A fair catch is made.
- ART. 4 . . .** The clock shall be stopped when:
- a. The down ends following a foul.
 - b. An official's time-out is taken.
 - c. A charged or TV/radio time-out is granted.
 - d. The period ends.
 - e. The ball is out of bounds.
 - f. A legal or illegal forward pass is incomplete.
 - g. A score or touchback occurs.
 - h. A fair catch is made.
 - i. An inadvertent whistle is sounded.
- ART. 5 . . .** The clock shall not start on first touching by K.
- ART. 6 . . .** When a team attempts to conserve or consume time illegally, the referee shall order the clock started or stopped.
- ART. 7 . . .** The referee shall have authority to correct obvious errors in timing if discovery is prior to the second live ball following the error, unless the period has officially ended as in 3-3-5.

SECTION 5 CHARGED AND OFFICIAL'S TIME-OUTS — INTERMISSIONS

- ART. 1 . . .** Each team is entitled to three charged team timeouts during each half. Unused first half time-outs cannot be used in the second half. Unused second half time-outs cannot be used in overtime.
- ART. 2 . . .** A charged team time-out occurs when the ball is dead and:
- a. The request of either a player or the head coach (or head coach's designee) is legally granted. When a decision on a penalty is pending, a time-out shall not be granted to either team until the captain makes his choice.

NOTE: The head coach's designee shall remain in place for the entire game except in case of emergency.

- b. The repair of faulty player equipment requires the assistance of a team attendant or attendants, or which, without the assistance of a team attendant delays the ready-for-play signal for more than 25 seconds other than as in 3-5-10d.
- c. A time-out is requested and granted for the purpose of reviewing a game official's application of a rule which may have been misapplied or misinterpreted. The time-out remains charged to the requesting team, if no change in the ruling results.

ART. 3 . . . A single charged time-out shall not exceed one minute. The referee shall notify the teams within five seconds after the time-out expires and shall mark the ball ready for play. Charged time-outs shall be reduced in length only if both teams are ready to play prior to the 25-second ready-for-play signal by the referee.

ART. 4 . . . Successive charged time-outs may be granted during the same dead-ball period. An official's time-out may follow a charged time-out if it is for the continuance of a coach-referee conference, or if safety is involved. When a team's permissible charged time-outs for the half have been used, its captain and coach should be notified.

ART. 5 . . . After a team has used its permissible charged time-outs for the half, any subsequent request shall be denied unless it is for:

- a. An apparently injured player who is so designated when the request is made.
- b. Necessary repair to player equipment except as in 3-5-10d.
- c. The review of a possible misapplication or misinterpretation of a rule.

ART. 6 . . . If repair of equipment without the assistance of a team attendant delays the ready-for-play signal for more than 25 seconds, or requires the assistance of a team attendant(s) and the player's team has used all permissible time-outs, the player shall be replaced for at least one down.

ART. 7 . . . An official's time-out (which is not charged to either team) occurs during a dead ball:

- a. For measurement of a possible first down.
- b. When a first down is declared.
- c. Following a change of team possession.
- d. When captains and coaches are notified of the time remaining.
- e. For a player in need of equipment repair.
- f. To dry or change the game ball.
- g. For unusual heat or humidity which may create a health risk to the players.
- h. When a coach-referee conference concerning the misapplication of a rule results in the referee altering his ruling. (See 3-5-11)
- i. After a foul, to administer the penalty.
- j. For any unusual delay in getting the ball marked ready for play.
- k. For a TV/radio time-out that is permitted and granted as authorized by state

association policy.

- I. For a one-minute intermission between the first and second and the third and fourth periods and following a try, successful field goal or safety and prior to the succeeding free kick.

ART. 8 . . . Authorized conferences

- a. An authorized conference may be held during:
 1. a charged time-out;
 2. an official's time-out (3-5-7g, 3-5-7k and 3-5-7l); or
 3. if granted by the referee in 3-5-10.
- b. Only one type of authorized team conference may be used during:
 1. any charged time-out; or
 2. official's time out (3-5-7g, 3-5-7k and 3-5-7l)
- c. Only an Outside Nine Yard Mark Conference may be held in 3-5-8a(3).

ART. 9 . . . Unless the clock is already stopped, an official's time-out shall be taken as soon as the ball becomes dead following a change of team possession or whenever the covering official declares the ball dead, and it appears to him the ball has reached the line to gain.

ART. 10 . . . An official's time-out (which is not charged to either team) occurs, and the player shall be replaced for at least one down, unless halftime or an over-time intermission occurs when:

- a. An apparently injured player is discovered by a game official while the ball is dead and the clock is stopped and for whom the ready-for-play signal is delayed, or for whom the clock is stopped.
- b. Any player who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the game and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health-care professional. (See NFHS Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion, in Appendix B on page 97.)
- c. A game official discovers any player who is bleeding, has an open wound, has any amount of blood on his/her uniform, or has blood on his/her person. The player shall be directed to leave the game until the bleeding is stopped, the wound is covered, the uniform and/or body is appropriately cleaned, and/or the uniform is changed before returning to competition. (See NFHS Communicable Disease Procedures, in Appendix D on page 99.)
- d. The helmet comes completely off during the down without being directly attributable to a foul by an opponent.

ART. 11 . . . A player, directed by his coach or the head coach, may request and be granted a time-out for the purpose of the coach and the referee reviewing a decision which may have resulted from misapplication or misinterpretation of a rule, provided the request is made prior to the time the ball becomes live following the play to be reviewed, unless the period has officially ended. When a time-out is so granted, the referee will confer with the coach at the sideline in

front of his team box in the field of play. If the conference results in the referee altering his ruling, the opposing coach will be notified, the revision made, and the time-out shall be an official's time-out. If the referee's ruling prevails, the time-out remains charged to the team requesting the time-out for the conference.

SECTION 6 BALL READY FOR PLAY AND DELAY

ART. 1 . . . The ball is marked ready for play when, after it has been placed for a down, the referee gives the ready-for-play signal. The 25-second count shall then begin.

ART. 2 . . . Action or inaction which prevents promptness in putting the ball in play is delay of game. This includes:

- a. Failure to snap or free kick within 25 seconds after the ball is marked ready for play.
- b. Unnecessarily carrying the ball after it has become dead or consuming time in failing to unpile at the end of a down.
- c. A coach-referee conference after all the permissible charged time-outs for the coach's team have been used, and during which the referee is requested to reconsider the application of a rule and no change in the ruling results.
- d. Failure to properly wear legal or required player equipment when the ball is about to become live.
- e. Snapping or free kicking the ball before it is marked ready for play.
- f. Any other conduct which unduly prolongs the game.

ART. 3 . . . Failure of a team to play within two minutes after being ordered to do so by the referee.

ART. 4 . . . Game management is responsible for clearing the field of play and the end zones at the beginning of each half so play may begin at the scheduled time.

PENALTY: Delay of game – (Arts. 2a,b,c,e,f; 4) – (S7-21); (Art. 2d) – (S7-21-23) – 5 yards; (Art. 3) – forfeiture.

SECTION 7 SUBSTITUTIONS

ART. 1 . . . Between downs any number of eligible substitutes may replace players. Upon meeting the criteria of 2-32-12, replaced players shall begin to leave the field within three seconds.

ART. 2 . . . A player, replaced player or a substitute is required to leave the field at the side on which his team box is located and go directly to his team box.

ART. 3 . . . During the same dead-ball interval, no substitute shall become a player and then withdraw and no player shall withdraw and re-enter as a substitute unless a penalty is accepted, a dead-ball foul occurs, there is a charged time-out or the period ends.

ART. 4 . . . During a down a replaced player or substitute who attempts unsuccessfully to leave the field and who does not participate in or affect the play, constitutes an illegal substitution.

NOTE: Participation by a replaced player or substitute is illegal participation as in 9-6.

ART. 5 . . . An entering substitute shall be on his team's side of the neutral zone when the ball is snapped or free kicked.

ART. 6 . . . During a down, a replaced player or substitute who enters the field, but does not participate, constitutes illegal substitution.

PENALTY: Illegal substitution (Arts. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6) – (S22); (Arts. 1, 2, 3) dead-ball foul – (S7-22); (Arts. 4, 5) live-ball foul – 5 yards; (Art. 6) nonplayer foul – 5 yards (S22)

Rule **4** *Ball in Play, Dead Ball and Out of Bounds*

SECTION 1 PUTTING THE BALL IN PLAY

ART. 1 . . . To start each half and to resume play after a field goal or after a try, the ball shall be put in play by a kickoff.

ART. 2 . . . A free kick shall also put the ball in play:

- a. After a safety.
- b. When a free-kick down is replayed.
- c. When a free kick is chosen following a fair catch, an awarded fair catch, the replay of a down which follows a fair catch or an awarded fair catch.

ART. 3 . . . A snap shall, if elected, put the ball in play when a free kick is not specified.

ART. 4 . . . A snap or free kick shall be made between the hash marks.

ART. 5 . . . After being put in play, the ball remains live until the down ends.

ART. 6 . . . The ball remains dead and a down is not begun if a snap or free kick is attempted before the ball is marked ready for play, or there is an illegal snap, other snap infraction or a dead-ball foul occurs.

SECTION 2 DEAD BALL AND END OF THE DOWN

ART. 1 . . . A game official shall indicate the ball remains dead by sounding his whistle immediately when a foul occurs before a snap or free kick.

ART. 2 . . . The ball becomes dead and the down is ended:

- a. When a runner goes out of bounds, is held so his forward progress is stopped or allows any part of his person other than hand or foot to touch the ground.

EXCEPTIONS:

1. The ball remains live if, at the snap, a place-kick holder with his knee(s) on the ground and with a teammate in kicking position catches or recovers the snap while his knee(s) is on the ground and places the ball for a kick, or if he rises to advance, hand, kick or pass; or
2. The ball remains live if, at the snap, a place-kick holder with his knee(s) on the

ground and with a teammate in kicking position rises and catches or recovers an errant snap and immediately returns his knee(s) to the ground and places the ball for a kick or again rises to advance, hand, kick or pass.

NOTE: The ball becomes dead if the place-kick holder muffs the snap or fumbles and recovers after his knees have been off the ground, and he then touches the ground with other than hand or foot while in possession of the ball.

- b. When a live ball goes out of bounds.
- c. When any forward pass (legal or illegal) is incomplete or is simultaneously caught by opposing players.
- d. When any legal free kick or scrimmage kick:
 - 1. Which is not a scoring attempt or which is a grounded scoring attempt, breaks the plane of R's goal line.
 - 2. Which is a scoring attempt, while in flight touches a K player in R's end zone, or after breaking the plane of R's goal line has apparently failed.

EXCEPTION: If a scoring attempt kick touches an upright, crossbar, a game official or R player in the end zone and caroms through the goal, the touching is ignored and the attempt is successful.
- e. When any loose ball:
 - 1. Is simultaneously caught or recovered by opposing players.
 - 2. Is on the ground motionless and no player attempts to secure possession.
 - 3. Touches, or is touched by, anything inbounds other than a player, substitute, replaced player, a game official, the ground or authorized equipment. In this case the ball will be put in play in accordance with the procedure for an inadvertent whistle as in 4-2-3b.
- f. When the kickers catch or recover any free kick anywhere, and when the kickers catch or recover a scrimmage kick beyond the neutral zone and when the kickers are first (i.e., before any touching by the receivers) to touch a scrimmage kick after it has come to rest beyond the neutral zone and between the goal lines.
- g. Following a valid or invalid fair-catch signal given by any R player when a scrimmage kick or free kick is caught or recovered by any R player beyond, in or behind the neutral zone.
- h. When any score occurs.
- i. During a try if B secures possession or as soon as it is apparent that a kick has failed to score.
- j. When a game official sounds his/her whistle inadvertently.
- k. When the helmet comes completely off a player who is in possession of the ball.

ART. 3 . . . An inadvertent whistle ends the down. Inadvertent whistles are administered as follows:

- a. The down shall be replayed if, during a down or during a down in which the penalty for a foul is declined, an inadvertent whistle is sounded while a legal forward pass or snap is in flight, or during a legal kick.
- b. The team last in possession may choose to either put the ball in play where possession was lost or replay the down if, during a down or during a down in which the penalty for a foul is declined, an inadvertent whistle is sound-

ed while the ball is loose following a backward pass, fumble, illegal forward pass or illegal kick.

- c. The team in possession may choose to either accept the results of the play at the dead-ball spot or replay the down if, during a down or during a down in which the penalty for a foul is declined, an inadvertent whistle is sounded while the ball is in player possession.
- d. The penalty shall be administered as determined by the basic spot and takes precedence over inadvertent whistle administration if, during a down, a live-ball foul occurs prior to the inadvertent whistle and the penalty is accepted.

SECTION 3 OUT-OF-BOUNDS AND INBOUNDS SPOTS

ART. 1 . . . When a loose ball goes out of bounds, the out-of-bounds spot is fixed by the yard line where the foremost point of the ball crossed the sideline. When the ball becomes dead in the field of play because of touching a person who is out of bounds, the out-of-bounds spot is fixed by the yard line through the foremost point of the ball.

ART. 2 . . . When the out-of-bounds spot is between the goal lines, the ball shall be put in play at the nearest hash mark to the inbounds spot unless a forward pass is involved. If the out-of-bounds spot is behind a goal line, it is a safety, field goal or touchback. If the ball touches a pylon, it is out of bounds behind the goal line.

ART. 3 . . . When a runner goes out of bounds, the nearest hash mark is fixed by the yard line through the foremost point of the ball at the time the runner crosses the plane of the sideline.

ART. 4 . . . When the ball becomes dead between the hash marks, play is resumed at the dead-ball spot, unless it is a legal forward-pass incompleteness in which case the ball is returned to the previous spot.

ART. 5 . . . When the ball becomes dead in a side zone or is awarded to a team there or is left there by a penalty, play is resumed at the nearest hash mark. This does not apply to:

- a. A legal forward-pass incompleteness.
- b. A replay due to an inadvertent whistle.
- c. A replayed try.
- d. A free kick or snap which follows a fair catch or awarded fair catch in a side zone.

In (a) and (b), the ball is returned to the previous spot.

ART. 6 . . . Before the ready-for-play signal, A may designate the spot from which the ball is put in play anywhere between the hash marks:

- a. For a try.
- b. For a kickoff.
- c. Following a safety.
- d. Following a fair catch.

- e. Following an awarded fair catch.
- f. Following a touchback.
- g. For the start of each series using an overtime procedure.

ART. 7 . . . When a team may designate the spot along the proper yard line from which the ball is to be put in play, it shall have the same privilege if the down is to be replayed or a dead-ball foul occurs.

Rule 5 *Series of Downs, Number of Down and Team Possession After Penalty*

SECTION 1 SERIES OF DOWNS

ART. 1 . . . The team which next puts the ball in play by scrimmage following a free kick, touchback or fair catch is awarded a series of four consecutively numbered downs in which to advance the ball to the line to gain. Each awarded first down starts a new series of four downs.

ART. 2 . . . A new series of downs is awarded:

- a. After a first, second or third down, a new series of downs shall be awarded only after considering the effect of any act during the down other than non-player or unsportsmanlike conduct fouls by A, and any dead-ball foul by B.
- b. After a fourth down, a new series of downs shall be awarded only after considering the effect of any act during the down, except a nonplayer or unsportsmanlike foul.

ART. 3 . . . When a scrimmage down ends with the ball in the field of play or out of bounds between the goal lines, a new series is awarded to:

- a. A, if the ball belongs to A on or beyond the line to gain.
- b. B, if the ball belongs to B at the end of any down.
- c. B, if at the end of the fourth down, the ball belongs to A behind the line to gain.
- d. The team in possession at the end of the down, if there is a change of team possession during the down, unless the penalty is accepted for a non post-scrimmage kick foul which occurred before the change of possession.
- e. R, if K legally kicks during any scrimmage down and the ball is recovered by R, is in joint possession of opponents, goes out of bounds or becomes dead with no player in possession.
- f. The team in possession at the end of the down, if R is the first to touch a scrimmage kick while it is beyond the expanded neutral zone, unless the penalty is accepted for a non post-scrimmage kick foul which occurred before the kick ended or unless 6-2-7 applies.
- g. R at the spot of first touching by K, if K is first to touch the kicked ball beyond the expanded neutral zone before it is touched beyond this zone by R and before it has come to rest.

ART. 4 . . . Unless first touched by R beyond the neutral zone, if the kickers recover a scrimmage kick in or behind the neutral zone, the ball remains live and belongs to K and the down counts.

ART. 5 . . . When a free-kick down ends with the ball in the field of play or out of bounds between the goal lines, a new series is awarded to:

- a. R at the inbounds spot if R touches the kicked ball before it goes out of bounds.
- b. The team in possession of the ball when the down ends if the ball is recovered beyond R's free-kick line with no first touching by K.
- c. R at the spot of recovery if K recovers the kicked ball before it travels the 10 yards to R's free-kick line and before R has touched the ball.
- d. R if there is joint possession by R and K of a recovered kick.
- e. R at the spot of first touching by K if K is the first to touch the kicked ball before it has gone 10 yards.

ART. 6 . . . In Articles 3g and 5e, the right of R to take the ball at the spot of the first touching by K is canceled if R touches the kick and thereafter during the down commits a foul or if the penalty is accepted for any foul committed during the down.

SECTION 2 DOWN AND POSSESSION AFTER PENALTY

ART. 1 . . . When a penalty is declined, the number of the next down is the same as if the foul had not occurred. If a double foul occurs during a down, the number of the next down is the same as that of the down in which the foul occurred. After a distance penalty, the ball belongs to the team in possession at the time of the foul unless it is a 2-16-2h (post-scrimmage kick) foul. Team possession may then change if a new series is awarded.

ART. 2 . . . When a foul occurs during a scrimmage down and before any change of team possession, and before a receiver is first to touch a scrimmage kick while it is beyond the neutral zone, the ball belongs to A or K after enforcement unless it is a 2-16-2h (post-scrimmage kick) foul. The number of the next down is the same as that of the down during which the foul occurred unless penalty acceptance includes a first down or loss of down, or the enforcement or the advance results in a first down. The loss of down aspect of a penalty has no significance following a change of possession or if the line to gain is reached after enforcement.

ART. 3 . . . When a foul occurs prior to a scrimmage down, or simultaneously with the snap, the number of the next down after enforcement is the same as the number established before the foul occurred, unless enforcement for a foul by B results in a first down.

ART. 4 . . . When a foul occurs prior to or during a free-kick down and before any change of team possession, the down which follows enforcement is a free-kick down, unless following a fair catch or an awarded fair catch, a scrimmage down is chosen for the replay.

ART. 5 . . . Following a foul, a series of downs ends when:

- a. The acceptance of the penalty includes the award of a first down.
- b. Acceptance or declination of any penalty leaves A in possession beyond the line-to-gain.
- c. Declination of any penalty leaves A in possession behind the line to gain after fourth down.
- d. Declination of any penalty leaves B in possession.
- e. There is acceptance or declination of the penalty for any foul which occurs after team possession changes during the down.
- f. R is first to touch a scrimmage kick while it is beyond the neutral zone, unless a non-post-scrimmage kick foul occurs before the kick ends and the penalty is accepted.
- g. Acceptance of a penalty on fourth down which carries a loss of down leaves A in possession behind the line to gain.

ART. 6 . . . After a series of downs ends, a new series with first and 10 yards to gain is awarded unless one of the following is involved: a try; a field goal; or a free kick after a safety, fair catch or awarded fair catch. The first down is awarded to the team in possession when the foul occurs unless, declining the penalty leaves the other team in possession, or as in (c) and (f), accepting or declining the penalty leaves the other team in possession after fourth down. (See 5-2-5c, f)

SECTION 3 THE LINE TO GAIN AND MEASUREMENTS

ART. 1 . . . The line to gain is 10 yards in advance of the ball's foremost point when a new series of downs is awarded. When a new series of downs is awarded, the penalties for all fouls (including nonplayer and unsportsmanlike) committed prior to the ready-for-play signal shall be administered before the line to gain is established. The line to gain then remains fixed until the series ends and a new line to gain is established.

ART. 2 . . . The referee may call for the linesman to bring the official line-to-gain equipment on the field for a measurement. Measurement shall be parallel with the sideline and from a convenient yard line to the yard line through the foremost point of the ball when it became dead. The ball shall be placed with its long axis parallel with the sideline before measurement. The inside edge of the foremost rod marks the line to gain when the traditional yardage chain is used.

NOTE: A measurement may be requested by the captain prior to the ball being marked ready for play, but it may be denied if, in the referee's opinion, it is obvious the line to gain has or has not been reached.

ART. 3 . . . To start a new series of downs, the inside edge of the rod nearest the goal of the team which is to snap the ball is set on the yard line through the ball's foremost point. To start a new series of downs after:

- a. A change of team possession, which does not involve a fourth-down incomplete forward pass, a safety or touchback, the foremost point of the ball at the time it became dead becomes the rear point when the direction

of the offense is changed.

- b. A fourth-down incomplete forward pass, the ball is placed at the previous spot so the rear point becomes the foremost point.
- c. A safety or touchback, the foremost point of the ball is placed on the 20-yard line.

ART. 4 . . . A ball touching the goal-line plane, when it becomes dead is in the end zone, even though it is moving away from the nearer end line and has its foremost point in the field of play.

Rule **6** *Kicking the Ball and Fair Catch*

SECTION 1 THE KICKOFF AND OTHER FREE KICKS

ART. 1 . . . For any free kick, a free-kick line, corresponding to a scrimmage line, is established for each team. These lines are always 10 yards apart. Unless moved by a penalty, K's free-kick line is:

- a. Its 40-yard line for a kickoff.
- b. Its 20-yard line after a safety.
- c. The yard line through the spot of the catch after a fair catch.
- d. The yard line through the spot of an awarded fair catch.

ART. 2 . . . A free kick shall be made from any point between the hash marks and on K's free-kick line. A punt may not be used for a free kick other than after a safety. Once designated, K must kick from that spot. When a punt is used following a safety, the ball must be kicked within one step behind K's free-kick line. In an emergency, such as a pool of water on K's free-kick line, the referee has authority to move the ball to a playable line. In which case, both free-kick lines are moved to compensate.

ART. 3 . . . After the ball is marked ready for play and until it is kicked, no player, other than the kicker and the holder for a place kick may be beyond his free-kick line.

ART. 4 . . . Any receiver may catch or recover a free kick in the field of play and advance, unless any R player has given a valid or invalid fair-catch signal. R may catch or recover a free kick in K's end zone.

ART. 5 . . . If any K player recovers or catches a free kick, the ball becomes dead. It belongs to him unless it is kick-catching interference and R chooses an awarded fair catch or unless it is first touching. Any K player may recover the ball before it goes beyond R's free-kick line if it is touched first by any receiver. Such touching in the neutral zone by R is ignored if it is caused by K pushing or blocking R into contact with the ball or if K muffs the ball into contact with R. Any K player may recover a free kick if it has both touched the ground and goes beyond the plane of R's free-kick line. The two requirements may occur in any order. If a

free kick becomes dead inbounds between the goal lines while no player is in possession, or inbounds anywhere while opponents are in joint possession, the ball is awarded to R.

ART. 6 . . . If any K player touches a free kick before it crosses R's free-kick line and before it is touched there by any R player, it is referred to as "first touching of the kick." R may take the ball at the spot of first touching, or any spot if there is more than one spot of first touching, or they may choose to have the ball put in play as determined by the action which follows first touching. Such touching is ignored if it is caused by R pushing or blocking K into contact with the ball. The right of R to take the ball at the spot of first touching by K is canceled if R touches the kick and thereafter during the down commits a foul or if the penalty is accepted for any foul committed during the down.

ART. 7 . . . A free kick is not repeated unless:

- a. A foul occurs prior to a change of possession and the penalty acceptance requires a replay of the down.
- b. There is a double foul.
- c. There is an inadvertent whistle during the kick.

ART. 8 . . . A free kick shall not be kicked out of bounds between the goal lines untouched inbounds by R. If it is, R has the following choices:

- a. Accept a 5-yard penalty from the previous spot and have K rekick.
- b. Put the ball in play at the inbounds spot 25 yards beyond the previous spot.
- c. Decline the penalty and put the ball in play at the inbounds spot.

ART. 9 . . . If a free kick goes out of bounds between the goal lines touched inbounds by R, the ball is put in play by R at the inbounds spot.

PENALTY: Free-kick infraction (Art. 2) – (S7-19) – 5 yards; encroachment (Art. 3) – (S7-18) – 5 yards; free kick out of bounds (Art. 8) – (S19) – 5 yards and re-kick, or put it in play at the inbounds spot 25 yards beyond the previous spot.

SECTION 2 SCRIMMAGE KICKS

ART. 1 . . . K may punt, drop kick or place kick from in or behind the neutral zone before team possession has changed. It is not necessary to be in a scrimmage kick formation to execute a legal scrimmage kick. K may not punt, drop kick or place kick from beyond the neutral zone. R may not punt, drop kick or place kick.

ART. 2 . . . Any receiver may catch or recover a scrimmage kick in the field of play and advance, unless it is during a try, or unless any R player has given a valid or invalid fair-catch signal. R may catch or recover a scrimmage kick in K's end zone.

ART. 3 . . . Any K player may catch or recover a scrimmage kick while it is in or behind the neutral zone and advance, unless it is during a try.

ART. 4 . . . Any K player may catch or recover a scrimmage kick while it is beyond the neutral zone or the expanded neutral zone, provided such kick has

been touched by a receiver who was clearly beyond the neutral zone at the time of touching. Such touching is ignored if it is caused by K pushing or blocking R into contact with the ball or it is caused by K legally batting or muffing the ball into R. Such catch or recovery by K beyond the neutral zone causes the ball to become dead. (See 6-5-6 EXCEPTION)

ART. 5 . . . When any K player touches a scrimmage kick beyond the expanded neutral zone to R's goal line before it is touched beyond the neutral zone by R and before the ball has come to rest, it is referred to as "first touching of the kick" and the place is the "spot of first touching." Such touching is ignored if it is caused by R pushing or blocking K into contact with the ball.

If any K player touches a scrimmage kick in this manner, R may take the ball at the spot of first touching, or any spot if there is more than one spot of first touching, or they may choose to have the ball put in play as determined by the action which follows first touching. The right of R to take the ball at spot of first touching by K is canceled if R touches the kick and thereafter during the down commits a foul or if the penalty is accepted for any foul committed during the down.

ART. 6 . . . The touching of a low scrimmage kick by any player is ignored if the touching is in or behind the expanded neutral zone. The neutral zone shall not be expanded into the end zone.

ART. 7 . . . When any scrimmage kick is out of bounds between the goal lines or becomes dead inbounds between the goal lines while no player is in possession, or inbounds anywhere while opponents are in joint possession, the ball is awarded to R. Following an out-of-bounds kick, the ball is put in play at the inbounds spot unless R chooses a spot of first touching.

PENALTY: Illegal kick (Art. 1) – (S31) – 15 yards.

SECTION 3 TOUCHBACK

ART. 1 . . . It is a touchback if any free kick or scrimmage kick:

- a. Which is not a scoring attempt or which is a grounded three-point field-goal attempt, breaks the plane of R's goal line, unless R chooses a spot of first touching by K.
- b. Which is a three-point field-goal attempt, in flight touches a K player in R's end zone, or after breaking the plane of R's goal line is unsuccessful.

ART. 2 . . . If any free kick or scrimmage kick becomes dead in the kicker's end zone while no player has possession, it is a safety or touchback, as in 8-5-2 and 3.

SECTION 4 SUMMARY OF SCRIMMAGE KICK AND FREE-KICK ACTIVITIES

Table 6-4
RESULT OF ACTIVITIES DURING SCRIMMAGE KICKS AND FREE KICKS

Scrimmage Kick	Free Kick
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Kick recovered beyond the neutral zone may be advanced only by R. Kick recovered in or behind the neutral zone may be advanced by either team. Kick not recovered by either team belongs to R. Kick jointly recovered by R and K belongs to R. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> A kickoff including the kick following a safety, cannot score a field goal. Kick following a fair catch or awarded fair catch may score a field goal. Kick may not be advanced by K. Kick not recovered by either team belongs to R. Kick jointly recovered by R and K belongs to R.
<p>NOTE: K is in team possession during a kick. A kick ends when a player gains possession or when the ball becomes dead by rule. R gains possession of the ball when a player of R catches or recovers the live ball.</p>	
<p>IF THE KICK BECOMES DEAD IN R'S END ZONE</p>	
<p>Touchback in all cases unless a field goal is scored.</p>	
<p>IF THE KICK BECOMES DEAD IN K'S END ZONE</p>	
<p>If the force is:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The kick or any other new force by K. A new force by R. 	<p>Then the ruling is:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Safety, if the kick is out of bounds or K has possession, including when the ball is loose or Touchdown if R is in possession. Touchback, if the kick is out of bounds, or K has possession, including when the ball is loose, or Touchdown if R is in possession.

SECTION 5 FAIR CATCH

ART. 1 . . . Any receiver may signal for a fair catch while any legal kick is in flight. Any receiver who has given a valid or invalid fair-catch signal is prohibited from blocking until the kick has ended.

ART. 2 . . . It is a fair catch and the ball is dead if any receiver gives a valid fair-catch signal, as in Article 1, and he catches a free kick in or beyond the neutral zone to R's goal line, or a scrimmage kick beyond the neutral zone to R's goal line.

ART. 3 . . . Only the receiver who gives a valid signal is afforded protection. If, after a receiver signals, the catch is made by a teammate, it is not a fair catch but the ball becomes dead.

ART. 4 . . . The captain may choose to free kick or snap anywhere between the hash marks on the yard line through the spot of the catch when a fair catch is made or through the spot of interference, when a fair catch is awarded. These choices remain if a dead-ball foul occurs prior to the down, or a foul or an inadvertent whistle occurs during the down and the down is replayed.

ART. 5 . . . No receiver may advance the ball after a valid or invalid fair-catch signal has been given by any R player.

ART. 6 . . . While any free kick is in flight in or beyond the neutral zone to the receiver's goal line or any scrimmage kick is in flight beyond the neutral zone to the receiver's goal line, K shall not:

- a. Touch the ball or R, unless blocked into the ball or R, or to ward off a blocker; or
- b. Obstruct R's path to the ball.

This prohibition applies even when no fair-catch signal is given, but it does not apply after a free kick has been touched by a receiver, or after a scrimmage kick has been touched by a receiver who was clearly beyond the neutral zone at the time of touching.

EXCEPTION: K may catch, touch, muff or bat a scrimmage kick in flight beyond the neutral zone if no player of R is in position to catch the ball.

ART. 7 . . . A receiver shall not give an invalid fair-catch signal.

ART. 8 . . . The runner shall not give an illegal fair-catch signal.

PENALTY: Blocking after giving a valid or invalid signal (Art. 1) – (S40) – 15 yards; delay of game (Art. 5) – (S21) – 5 yards; kick-catching interference (Art. 6) – (S33) – 15 yards. For interference, R may accept a 15-yard penalty from the previous spot and a replay of the down or choose to accept the penalty of an awarded fair catch at the spot of the foul. Invalid or illegal fair-catch signal (Arts. 7, 8) – (S32) – 5 yards.

Rule **7** *Snapping, Handing and Passing the Ball*

SECTION 1 BEFORE THE SNAP

ART. 1 . . . The snapper may be over the ball but his feet must be behind the neutral zone and no part of his person, other than a hand(s) on the ball, may be beyond the foremost point of the ball.

ART. 2 . . . The snapper may lift the ball for lateral rotation but may not rotate end-for-end or change the location or fail to keep the long axis of the ball at right angles to the line of scrimmage.

ART. 3 . . . Following the ready-for-play and after touching the ball, the snapper shall not:

- a. Remove both hands from the ball.
- b. Make any movement that simulates a snap.
- c. Fail to clearly pause before the snap.
- d. Following adjustment, lift or move the ball other than in a legal snap.

ART. 4 . . . An illegal snap or other snap infraction causes the ball to remain dead.

ART. 5 . . . No player, other than the snapper, shall encroach on the neutral zone after the ball is marked ready for play by touching the ball or an opponent or by being in the neutral zone to give defensive signals.

ART. 6 . . . Following the ready-for-play and after the snapper has placed his hand(s) on the ball, encroachment occurs if any other player breaks the plane of the neutral zone.

ART. 7 . . . After the ball is marked ready for play and before the snap begins, no false start shall be made by any A player. It is a false start if:

- a. A shift or feigned charge simulates action at the snap.
- b. Any act is clearly intended to cause B to encroach.
- c. Any A player on his line between the snapper and the player on the end of his line, after having placed a hand(s) on or near the ground, moves his hand(s) or makes any quick movement.

ART. 8 . . . If a false start causes B to encroach, only the false start is penalized.

PENALTY: Encroachment (Arts. 1, 5, 6) – (S7-18); snap infraction (Arts. 2, 3); false start (Art. 7) – (S7-19) – 5 yards.

SECTION 2 FORMATION/POSITION, NUMBERING AND ACTION AT THE SNAP

ART. 1 . . . After the ball is marked ready for play, each player of A who participated in the previous down and each substitute for A must have been, momentarily, between the 9-yard marks, before the snap.

ART. 2 . . . The players on each side of and next to the snapper may lock legs with the snapper, but any other A lineman must have each foot outside the closest foot of the player next to him at the snap. A's players may stand, crouch or kneel.

ART. 3 . . . Of the players of A who are not on their line at the snap only one may penetrate the vertical plane through the waistline of his nearest teammate who is on his line. He must have his hands in position to receive the ball if it is snapped between the snapper's legs but he is not required to receive the snap. Any other player(s) must be in legal position as a back. (See 2-32-3)

ART. 4 . . . A snap shall be such that the ball immediately leaves the hand or hands of the snapper and touches a backfield player or the ground before it touches an A lineman. A scrimmage down must start with a legal snap. An illegal snap causes the ball to remain dead.

ART. 5 . . . Player formation and numbering requirements include:

- a. At the snap, at least seven A players shall be on their line of scrimmage.
- b. At the snap, at least five A players on their line of scrimmage must be numbered 50-79.

EXCEPTIONS:

1. On first, second or third down, when A sets or shifts into a scrimmage-kick formation as in 2-14-2a, the snapper may be a player numbered 1 to 49 or 80 to 99. If Team A has the snapper in the game under this exception, Team A shall have at least four players wearing numbers 50-79 on its line of scrimmage. The snapper in the game under this exception must be between the ends and is an ineligible forward-pass receiver during that down unless the pass is touched by B (7-5-6b).
2. On fourth down or during a kick try, when A sets or shifts into a scrimmage-kick formation, any A player numbered 1 to 49 or 80 to 99 may take the position of any A player numbered 50 to 79. A player in the game under this exception must assume an initial position on his line of scrimmage between the ends and he remains an ineligible forward-pass receiver during that down unless the pass is touched by B (7-5-6b).
- c. Players of the same team shall not participate during the same down while wearing identical numbers.
- d. B players may be anywhere on or behind their line of scrimmage.

ART. 6 . . . After a huddle or shift all 11 players of A shall come to an absolute stop and shall remain stationary simultaneously without movement of hands, feet, head or body for at least one second before the snap.

ART. 7 . . . Only one A player may be in motion at the snap and then only if such motion is not toward his opponent's goal line. Except for the player "under the snapper," as outlined in Article 3, the player in motion shall be at least 5 yards behind his line of scrimmage at the snap if he started from any position not clearly behind the line and did not establish himself as a back by stopping for at least one full second while no part of his body is breaking the vertical plane through the waistline of his nearest teammate who is on the line of scrimmage.

ART. 8 . . . Any A player on his line of scrimmage may not advance a planned loose ball in the vicinity of the snapper.

PENALTY: Illegal formation (Arts. 1, 2, 3) – (S19); illegal snap (Art. 4) – (S7-19); illegal numbering (Art. 5) – (S19); illegal shift (Art. 6) – (S20); illegal motion (Art. 7) – (S20); planned loose-ball infraction (Art. 8) – (S19) – 5 yards.

SECTION 3 HANDING THE BALL

ART. 1 . . . Any player may hand the ball backward at any time.

ART. 2 . . . No player may hand the ball forward except during a scrimmage down before a change of possession, provided both players are in or behind the neutral zone and it is to:

- a. A lineman who has clearly faced his end line by moving both feet in a half-turn and is at least 1 yard behind his line when he receives the ball.

- b. A back or a teammate who, at the snap, was on an end of his line and was not the snapper nor adjacent to the snapper.

ART. 3 . . . During a scrimmage down after a change of team possession, no player may hand the ball forward to a teammate.

PENALTY: Illegal handing (Arts. 2, 3) – (S35-9) – 5 yards – and loss of down. The loss-of-down penalty does not apply when there has been a change of team possession.

SECTION 4 FUMBLE AND BACKWARD PASS

ART. 1 . . . During any down, any player in possession may make a backward pass or may lose player possession through a fumble.

ART. 2 . . . If a fumble or a backward pass is caught or recovered by any player, he may advance.

ART. 3 . . . The ball belongs to the passing or fumbling team unless lost after fourth down if a fumble or a backward pass:

- a. Goes out of bounds between the goal lines; or
- b. Becomes dead inbounds while no player is in possession; or
- c. Becomes dead inbounds while opponents are in joint possession.

ART. 4 . . . If a fumble or a backward pass is out of bounds behind a goal line, the ball belongs to the team defending that goal and the result is either a touch-back or a safety.

SECTION 5 FORWARD-PASS CLASSIFICATION

ART. 1 . . . It is a legal forward pass, if during a scrimmage down and before team possession has changed, a player of A throws the ball with both feet of the passer in or behind the neutral zone when the ball is released. Only one forward pass may be thrown during the down.

ART. 2 . . . An illegal forward pass is a foul. Illegal forward passes include:

- a. A pass after team possession has changed during the down.
- b. A pass from beyond the neutral zone.
- c. A second or subsequent forward pass thrown during a down.
- d. A pass intentionally thrown into an area not occupied by an eligible offensive receiver.
- e. A pass intentionally thrown incomplete to save loss of yardage or to conserve time.

EXCEPTION: It is legal to conserve time by intentionally throwing the ball forward to the ground immediately after receiving a direct hand-to-hand snap.

Table 7-5-2
SUMMARY OF LEGAL AND ILLEGAL FORWARD PASSES

LEGAL FORWARD PASSES	ILLEGAL FORWARD PASSES
From in or behind the neutral zone.	a. After team possession has changed during the down. b. A pass from beyond the neutral zone. c. A pass intentionally thrown into an area not occupied by an eligible offensive receiver. d. A pass intentionally thrown to save loss of yardage or to conserve time. EXCEPTION: It is legal to conserve time by intentionally throwing the ball forward to the ground immediately after receiving a direct hand-to-hand snap. e. A second or subsequent forward pass thrown during a down.

ART. 3 . . . If the penalty for an illegal forward pass is accepted, measurement is from the spot of such forward pass. If the offended team declines the distance penalty, it has the choice of having the down counted at the spot of the illegal incomplete forward pass or (if the illegal forward pass is caught or intercepted) of having the ball put in play as determined by the action which followed the catch.

ART. 4 . . . A forward pass, legal or illegal, is complete and the ball may be advanced when caught by any player of A or B. If a forward pass is caught simultaneously by two opponents, the ball becomes dead and belongs to the passing team.

ART. 5 . . . A forward pass, legal or illegal, is incomplete and the ball becomes dead when the pass touches the ground or goes out of bounds. It is also incomplete when a player in the air possesses the pass and alights so that his first contact with the ground or with anything other than a player or game official is on or outside a boundary. When an incompletion occurs the down counts unless the pass is after a change of possession. If the pass is legal, the passing team next snaps the ball at the previous spot, unless lost after fourth down.

Table 7-5-4, 5
SUMMARY OF COMPLETED AND INCOMPLETED FORWARD PASSES

COMPLETED FORWARD PASS	INCOMPLETED FORWARD PASS
a. Pass caught by the passer's eligible receiver; ball remains live. b. Pass caught by the passer's ineligible receiver; ball remains live. c. Any intercepted pass; ball remains live. d. Pass simultaneously caught by opponents; ball becomes dead.	a. Pass which touches the ground. b. Pass which goes out of bounds. c. Pass possessed by a player who is in the air but first touches the ground out of bounds (Ball becomes dead in all of these cases.)

ART. 6 . . . Pass eligibility rules apply only to a legal forward pass. The following players are eligible pass receivers:

- a. All A players eligible by position and number include those who, at the time of the snap, are on the ends of their scrimmage line or legally behind the line (possible total of six) and are numbered 1-49 or 80-99. (See 7-2-5b EXCEPTION 2)
- b. All A players become eligible when B touches a legal forward pass.
- c. All B players are eligible.
- d. A player who is eligible at the start of the down remains eligible throughout the down.

ART. 7 . . . Pass interference restrictions only apply beyond the neutral zone and only if the legal forward pass, untouched by B in or behind the neutral zone, crosses the neutral zone. Pass interference restrictions are in effect for all A and B players until the ball is touched or the pass is incomplete.

ART. 8 . . . Pass interference restrictions on a legal forward pass begin for:

- a. A with the snap.
- b. B when the ball leaves the passer's hand.

ART. 9 . . . Pass interference restrictions on a legal forward pass end for:

- a. All eligible A players when the pass has been touched by any player.
- b. All ineligible A players when B touches the pass, however it is not pass interference for ineligible A players to use hands and arms in a legal block to ward off an opponent.
- c. All B players when the pass has been touched by any player.
- d. All players when the pass is incomplete.

ART. 10 . . . It is forward-pass interference if:

- a. Any player of A or B who is beyond the neutral zone interferes with an eligible opponent's opportunity to move toward, catch or bat the pass.
- b. Any player hinders an opponent's vision without making an attempt to catch, intercept or bat the ball, even though no contact was made.

ART. 11 . . . It is not forward-pass interference if:

- a. Unavoidable contact occurs when two or more eligibles are making a simultaneous, bona fide attempt to move toward, catch or bat the pass.

- b. Contact by A is immediately made on a B lineman and the contact does not continue beyond the expanded neutral zone.
- c. Contact by B is obviously away from the direction of the pass.

ART. 12 . . . Ineligible A players may not advance beyond the expanded neutral zone on a legal forward pass play before a legal forward pass that crosses the neutral zone is in flight. If B touches the pass in or behind the neutral zone, this restriction is terminated. An ineligible is not illegally downfield if, at the snap, he immediately contacts a B lineman and the contact does not continue beyond the expanded neutral zone.

ART. 13 . . . An ineligible A player has illegally touched a forward pass if he bats, muffs or catches a legal forward pass, unless the pass has first been touched by B.

PENALTY: Illegal forward pass (Arts. 2a,b,c) – (S35); intentional grounding (Arts. 2d,e) –(S36) – 5 yards plus loss of down – (S9). Pass interference (Art. 10) – (S33) – 15 yards and automatic first down if by B, 15 yards plus loss of down if by A – (S9). If the pass interference by either player is intentional, his team shall be penalized an additional 15 yards (S27). Ineligible downfield (Art. 12) – (S37) – 5 yards. Illegal touching (Art. 13) – (S16) – 5 yards plus loss of down.

Table 7-5
**SUMMARY OF FOULS THAT CAN OCCUR DURING FORWARD PASS
PLAYS AND THEIR PENALTIES AND ENFORCEMENT SPOTS**

FOUL	PENALTY	ENFORCEMENT SPOT
<p>1. ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS</p> <p>a. Pass after team possession has changed during the down.</p> <p>b. Pass from beyond the neutral zone.</p> <p>c. Pass intentionally thrown into an area not occupied by eligible offensive receiver.</p> <p>d. Pass intentionally thrown to save loss of yardage or conserve time.</p> <p>EXCEPTION: It is legal to conserve time by intentionally throwing the ball forward to the ground immediately after receiving a direct hand-to-hand snap.</p> <p>e. A second or subsequent forward pass during the down</p>	<p>a: Loss of 5 Yards</p> <p>b, c, d and e: Loss of 5 yards and Loss of Down</p>	<p>END OF RUN</p>
<p>2. FORWARD PASS INTERFERENCE</p> <p>Restrictions apply only to a legal pass, untouched by B in or behind the neutral zone which crosses the neutral zone and interference may occur only beyond the neutral zone.</p> <p>a. A hinders B. (Restriction begins with the snap.)</p> <p>b. B hinders A. (Restriction begins when the pass is thrown.)</p> <p>c. Intentional pass interference.</p>	<p>a: Loss of 15 Yards and Loss of Down</p> <p>b: Loss of 15 Yards and First Down</p> <p>c: An Additional 15 Yards</p>	<p>PREVIOUS SPOT</p> <p>“Automatic”</p> <p>SUCCEEDING SPOT</p>
<p>3. INELIGIBLE RECEIVER DOWNFIELD.</p> <p>Ineligible A players may not advance across the expanded neutral zone before a legal forward pass which crosses the neutral zone is in flight unless touched by B in or behind the neutral zone.</p>	<p>Loss of 5 Yards</p>	<p>PREVIOUS SPOT</p>
<p>4. ILLEGAL TOUCHING BY INELIGIBLE</p> <p>A forward pass, batted, muffed or caught by an ineligible A player who is behind, in or beyond the neutral zone.</p>	<p>Loss of 5 Yards and Loss of Down</p>	<p>BASIC SPOT</p>

Rule 8 Scoring Plays and Touchback

SECTION 1 POINT VALUES

The game is won by the team which accumulates the most points. Points are scored as follows for:

Table 8-1

POINT VALUES		
TOUCHDOWN		6 points
FIELD GOAL		3 points
SAFETY	Points awarded to the opponent	2 points
SUCCESSFUL TRY		
a. Touchdown		2 points
b. Field Goal or Safety		1 point
FORFEITED GAME:	Game score is: Offended Team: 1, Opponent: 0. But if offended team is ahead, the score stands.	

SECTION 2 TOUCHDOWN

ART. 1 . . . Possession of a live ball in the opponent's end zone is always a touchdown.

- a. It is a touchdown when a runner advances from the field of play so that the ball penetrates the vertical plane of the opponent's goal line.
- b. It is a touchdown when a loose ball is caught or recovered by a player while the ball is on or behind his opponent's goal line.
- c. It is a touchdown when a backward pass or fumble is declared dead in the end zone of the opponent of the player who threw the backward pass or fumbled while no player is in possession (other than because of an inadvertent whistle).

ART. 2 . . . If an opponent of the scoring team commits a foul (other than unsportsmanlike conduct or a nonplayer foul) during a down in which a touchdown is scored and there was not a change in possession during the down, A may accept the results of the play and choose enforcement of the penalty:

- a. On the try, or
- b. On the subsequent kickoff.

ART. 3 . . . If an opponent of the scoring team commits a foul (other than unsportsmanlike conduct or a nonplayer foul) during a down in which a touch-

down is scored and there was a change of possession during the down, and such foul occurs after the change of possession, the scoring team may accept the results of the play and choose enforcement of the penalty:

- a. On the try, or
- b. On the subsequent kickoff.

ART. 4 . . . If either team commits an unsportsmanlike conduct or a nonplayer foul during a down in which a touchdown is scored, the opponent may accept the results of the play and choose enforcement of the penalty:

- a. On the try, or
- b. On the subsequent kickoff.

ART. 5. . . If after a down in which a touchdown is scored, and prior to the initial ready-for-play signal for the try, either team commits any foul for which the basic spot is the succeeding spot, the offended team may accept the penalty and choose enforcement of the penalty:

- a. On the try, or
- b. On the subsequent kickoff.

SECTION 3 TRY

ART. 1 . . . After a touchdown, the scoring team shall attempt a try during which the ball is snapped from a spot designated by A anywhere between the hash marks on B's 3-yard line, unless moved by penalty. This involves a scrimmage down which is neither numbered nor timed.

EXCEPTION: If a touchdown is scored during the last down of the fourth period, the try shall not be attempted unless the point(s) would affect the outcome of the game or play-off qualifying.

ART. 2 . . . The try begins when the ball is marked ready for play. It ends when:

- a. B secures possession.
- b. It is apparent a drop kick or place kick will not score.
- c. The try is successful.
- d. The ball becomes dead for any other reason.

ART. 3 . . . During a try, A may score two points from what would be a touchdown or one point for a field goal or safety by B under rules governing play at other times during the game.

ART. 4 . . . If during a successful try, a loss of down foul by A occurs, there is no score and no replay.

ART. 5 . . . If during a successful try, a foul by B occurs, A is given the choice of:

- a. Accepting the penalty and replaying the down following enforcement; or
- b. Accepting the result of the play and enforcement of the penalty from the succeeding spot.

ART. 6 . . . If during an unsuccessful try:

- a. A foul by A/K occurs, the penalty is obviously declined, the results of the play stand and there is no replay.

- b. A foul by B/R occurs, and the penalty is accepted, the offended captain shall then choose:
1. To replay the down after enforcement, or
 2. To decline the distance penalty for the foul and replay the down from the previous spot.

ART. 7 . . . If a double foul occurs, the down shall be replayed.

ART. 8 . . . When a try is replayed, the snap may be from any point between the hash marks on the yard line through the spot of the ball.

ART. 9 . . . After a try, the opponent of the scoring team shall designate which team will kick off.

SECTION 4 FIELD GOAL

ART. 1 . . . A field goal is scored as follows:

- a. The field-goal attempt shall be a place kick or a drop kick from scrimmage, or from a free kick following a fair catch, or an awarded fair catch.
- b. The kicked ball shall not touch any player of K beyond the expanded neutral zone or the ground before passing through the goal.
- c. The kicked ball shall pass between the vertical uprights or the inside of the uprights extended and above the crossbar of the opponent's goal.

ART. 2 . . . After a field goal, the opponent of the scoring team shall designate which team will kick off.

ART. 3 . . . If during a successful field goal, a foul by R occurs, K is given the choice of:

- a. Accepting the penalty and replaying the down following enforcement; or
- b. Accepting the result of the play and enforcement of the penalty from the succeeding spot.

SECTION 5 FORCE, SAFETY AND TOUCHBACK

ART. 1 . . . Responsibility for forcing the ball from the field of play across a goal line is attributed to the player who carries, snaps, passes, fumbles or kicks the ball, unless a new force is applied to a grounded backward pass, kick or fumble. The muffing or batting of a pass, kick or fumble in flight is not considered a new force.

ART. 2 . . . It is a safety when:

- a. A runner carries the ball from the field of play to or across his own goal line, and it becomes dead there in his team's possession.

EXCEPTION: When a defensive player intercepts an opponent's forward pass; intercepts or recovers an opponent's fumble or backward pass; or an R player catches or recovers a scrimmage kick or free kick between his 5-yard line and the goal line, and his original momentum carries him into the end zone where the ball is declared dead in his team's possession or it goes out of bounds in the end zone, the ball belongs to the team in possession at the spot where the pass or fumble was intercepted or recovered or the kick was caught or recovered.

- b. A player who is either in the field of play or in his end zone, forces a loose ball from the field of play to or across his goal line by his kick, pass,

fumble, snap or by a new force to a grounded loose ball with his muff or bat or illegal kick (when the penalty is declined), provided the ball becomes dead there in his team's possession (including when the ball is declared dead with no player in possession), or the ball is out of bounds when it becomes dead on or behind their goal line. This does not apply to a legal forward pass which becomes incomplete.

- c. A player on offense commits any foul for which the penalty is accepted and enforcement is from a spot in his end zone; or throws an illegal forward pass from his end zone and the penalty is declined in a situation which leaves him in possession at the spot of the illegal pass and with the ball having been forced into the end zone by the passing team.

ART. 3 . . . It is a touchback when:

- a. Any free kick or scrimmage kick:
 1. Which is not a scoring attempt or which is a grounded three-point field-goal attempt, breaks the plane of R's goal line unless R chooses a spot of first touching by K.
 2. Which is a three-point field-goal attempt, in flight touches a K player in R's end zone, or after breaking the plane of R's goal line is unsuccessful.
- b. Any scrimmage kick or free kick becomes dead on or behind K's goal line with the ball in possession of K (including when the ball is declared dead with no player in possession) and the new force is R's muff or bat of the kick after it has touched the ground.
- c. A fumble is the force, or a muff or bat of a backward pass or a fumble after either has touched the ground is the new force, which sends the ball to or across the opponent's goal line and provided such opponent is in team possession or the ball is out of bounds when it becomes dead on or behind its goal line.
- d. A forward pass is intercepted in B's end zone and becomes dead there in B's possession.

ART. 4 . . . The team whose goal line is involved shall put the ball in play anywhere between the hash marks on its 20-yard line by a snap after a touchback and by a free kick after a safety.

Rule **9** *Conduct of Players and Others*

SECTION 1 HELPING THE RUNNER

An offensive player shall not push, pull or lift the runner to assist his forward progress.

PENALTY: Helping the runner (S44) – 5 yards.

SECTION 2 ILLEGAL USE OF HANDS AND HOLDING

ART. 1 . . . An offensive player (except the runner) shall not:

- a. Use a blocking technique which is not permissible by rule. (See 2-3-2, 3)
- b. Grasp or encircle any teammate to form interlocked blocking.
- c. Use his hands, arms or legs to hook, lock, clamp, grasp, encircle or hold in an effort to restrain an opponent.

ART. 2 . . . The runner may not grasp a teammate.

ART. 3 . . . A defensive player shall not:

- a. Use a technique that is not permissible by rule. (See 2-3-2, 4)
- b. Use his hands to add momentum to the charge of a teammate who is on the line of scrimmage.
- c. Use his hands or arms to hook, lock, clamp, grasp, encircle or hold in an effort to restrain an opponent other than the runner.
- d. Contact an eligible receiver who is no longer a potential blocker.

PENALTY: Illegal use of hands or arms (Arts. 1a, 2, 3a, b, d) – (S42); interlocked blocking (Art. 1b) – (S44); holding (Arts. 1c; 3c) – (S42) – 10 yards.

SECTION 3 ILLEGAL BLOCKING

ART. 1 . . . Blocking by a player either on offense or defense is illegal when it is:

- a. Kick-catching interference.
- b. Forward-pass interference.
- c. A personal foul.

ART. 2 . . . A player shall not block an opponent below the waist except:

- a. In the free-blocking zone when the contact meets the requirements of 2-17.
- b. To tackle a runner or player pretending to be a runner.

ART. 3 . . . A receiver who has given a valid or invalid fair-catch signal shall not block an opponent until the kick has ended.

ART. 4 . . . The kicker or place-kick holder of a free kick may not be blocked before:

- a. He has advanced 5 yards beyond his free-kick line; or
- b. The kick has touched the ground or any other player.

ART. 5 . . . A player shall not clip or block an opponent in the back except:

- a. In the free-blocking zone when the contact meets the requirements of 2-17.
- b. Using hands and arms to contact an opponent above the waist in warding off a blocker, or when attempting to reach a runner, or catch or recover a loose ball which he may legally touch or possess.
- c. To tackle a runner or player pretending to be a runner.

ART. 6 . . . A player shall not chop block.

ART. 7 . . . A player shall not trip an opponent who is not a runner.

ART. 8 . . . No member of the kicking team shall initiate contact (block) an opponent until:

- a. The legal kick has traveled 10 yards; or
- b. The kicking team is eligible to recover a free kicked ball.

Table 9-3-6
COMBINATION BLOCKS

BLOCKER 1	BLOCKER 2	RULING
High	Low	Chop Block
Low	Low	Legal Block
High	High	Legal Block

PENALTY: Kick Catching Interference (Art. 1a, penalize in accordance with 6-5-6); Forward Pass Interference (Art. 1b, penalize in accordance with 7-5-10); Personal Foul (Art. 1c, penalize in accordance with 9-4); Blocking Below the Waist (Art. 2, S40, 15 yards); Blocking After Signal (Art. 3, S40, 15 yards); Blocking Kicker or Place-Kick Holder (Art. 4, S40, 15 yards); Clipping (Art. 5, S39, 15 yards); Blocking in the Back (Art. 5, S43, 10 yards); Chop Block (Art. 6, S41, 15 yards); Tripping (Art. 7, S46, 15 yards); Illegal Block (Art. 8, S40, live ball foul, 10 yards from previous spot).

SECTION 4 ILLEGAL PERSONAL CONTACT

ART. 1 . . . No player or nonplayer shall fight.

ART. 2 . . . No player or nonplayer shall intentionally contact a game official.

ART. 3 . . . No player or nonplayer shall:

- a. Swing the foot, shin or knee into an opponent, nor extend the knee to meet a blocker.
- b. Charge into or throw an opponent to the ground after he is obviously out of the play, or after the ball is clearly dead either in or out of bounds.
- c. Pile on any player who is lying on the ground.
- d. Hurdle an opponent.
- e. Position himself on the shoulders or body of a teammate or opponent to gain an advantage.
- f. Throw a helmet to trip an opponent.
- g. Make any other contact with an opponent which is deemed unnecessary and which incites roughness.
- h. Grasp an opponent's face mask, any edge of a helmet opening, chin strap, or a tooth and mouth protector attached to the face mask.
- i. Initiate illegal helmet contact. (butt block, face tackle or spear)

NOTE: Illegal helmet contact may be considered a flagrant act. Acts to be considered flagrant include, but are not limited to:

1. Illegal helmet contact against an opponent lying on the ground,
 2. Illegal helmet contact against an opponent being held up by other players, and/or
 3. Illegal helmet-to-helmet contact against a defenseless opponent.
- j. Strike an opponent with his fist, locked hands, forearm or elbow, nor kick or knee him.

- k. Grab the inside back or side collar of the shoulder pads or jersey of the runner and subsequently pull (backward or sideward) that opponent to the ground (Horse-collar), even if possession is lost. The horse-collar foul is enforced as a live-ball foul.

ART. 4 . . . Roughing the passer. Defensive players must make a definite effort to avoid charging into a passer, who has thrown the ball from in or behind the neutral zone, after it is clear the ball has been thrown. No defensive player shall charge into the passer who is standing still or fading back, because he is considered out of the play after the pass.

ART. 5 . . . Running into or roughing the kicker or holder. A defensive player shall neither run into the kicker nor holder, which is contact that displaces the kicker or holder without roughing; nor block, tackle or charge into the kicker of a scrimmage kick, or the place-kick holder, other than when:

- a. Contact is unavoidable because it is not reasonably certain that a kick will be made.
- b. The defense touches the kick near the kicker and contact is unavoidable.
- c. Contact is slight and is partially caused by movement of the kicker.
- d. Contact is caused by R being blocked into the kicker or holder by K.

ART. 6 . . . Roughing the snapper. A defensive player shall not charge directly into the snapper when the offensive team is in a scrimmage-kick formation.

ART. 7 . . . No defensive player may use the hand(s) to slap the blocker's head.

ART. 8 . . . Unintentional contact between a nonplayer and a game official in the restricted area while the ball is live.

PENALTY: Fighting, intentionally contacting a game official, striking, kicking or kneeling. (Arts. 1, 2, 3j) – (S38-47) – 15 yards and disqualification. If a coach is the offender in Article 2, see 9-8 Penalty for disqualification procedure. Other personal fouls (Arts. 3a through g) – (S38) – 15 yards; incidental grasping (Art. 3h) – (S45) – 5 yards; grasping and twisting, turning or pulling the face mask or helmet opening (Art. 3h) – (S38, 45) – 15 yards; illegal helmet contact (Art. 3i) – (S24) – 15 yards; illegal horse-collar (Art. 3k) – (S38, S25) – 15 yards. Roughing passer (Art. 4) – (S34) – 15 yards and a first down from the dead ball spot when the dead ball spot is beyond the neutral zone and A has possession of the ball at the end of the down, and there has been no change of team possession, or otherwise 15 yards and first down from previous spot; running into kicker/holder (Art. 5) – (S30) – 5 yards from the previous spot; roughing kicker or holder (Art. 5) – (S38, S30) – 15 yards and first down from the previous spot; roughing snapper (Art. 6). – (S38) – 15 yards and first down from the previous spot. Slap to the head (Art. 7) – (S38) – 15 yards. Unintentional contact with a game official in the restricted area. Nonplayer foul (Art 8) – (S38-29). For the first offense, 15 yards from the succeeding spot. For the second offense (S38-29-47) – 15 yards from the succeeding spot and disqualification of the head coach. Disqualification also if any foul is flagrant – (S47).

SECTION 5 NONCONTACT UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT BY PLAYERS

ART. 1 . . . No player shall act in an unsportsmanlike manner once the game officials assume authority for the contest. Examples are, but not limited to:

- a. Baiting or taunting acts or words or insignia worn which engenders ill will.
NOTE: The NFHS disapproves of any form of taunting which is intended or designed to embarrass, ridicule or demean others under any circumstances including on the basis of race, religion, gender or national origin.
- b. Using profanity, insulting or vulgar language or gestures.
- c. Any delayed, excessive or prolonged act by which a player attempts to focus attention upon himself.
- d. Using disconcerting acts or words prior to the snap in an attempt to interfere with A's signals or movements.
- e. Kicking at the ball, other than during a legal kick.
- f. Leaving the field between downs to gain an advantage unless replaced or unless with permission of a game official.
- g. Refusing to comply with a game official's request.
- h. Using tobacco or smokeless tobacco.

ART. 2 . . . When the ball becomes dead in possession of a player, he shall not:

- a. Intentionally kick the ball.
- b. Spike the ball into the ground.
- c. Throw the ball high into the air or from the field of play or end zone.
- d. Intentionally fail to place the ball on the ground or immediately return it to a nearby game official.

PENALTY: Unsportsmanlike conduct (Arts. 1, 2) – (S27) – (S7-27) – if dead ball, 15 yards. Also disqualification if flagrant – (S47). In Article 1a, the player must remove the offending item before he is allowed to participate. The second unsportsmanlike foul results in disqualification. (See 9-8 PENALTY)

SECTION 6 ILLEGAL PARTICIPATION

ART. 1 . . . Prior to a change of possession, or when there is no change of possession, no player of A or K shall go out of bounds and return to the field during the down unless blocked out of bounds by an opponent. If a player is blocked out of bounds by an opponent and returns to the field during the down, he shall return at the first opportunity.

ART. 2 . . . No player shall intentionally go out of bounds during the down and:

- a. Return to the field;
- b. Intentionally touch the ball;
- c. Influence the play; or
- d. Otherwise participate.

ART. 3 . . . No replaced player, substitute, coach, athletic trainer or other attendant shall hinder an opponent, touch the ball, influence the play or otherwise participate.

ART. 4 . . . It is illegal participation:

- a. When any player, replaced player, substitute, coach, athletic trainer or other attendant enters and participates during a down.
- b. If an injured player is not replaced for at least one down; unless the half-time or overtime intermission occurs.
- c. To have 12 or more players participating at the snap or free kick.
- d. To use a player, replaced player, substitute, coach, athletic trainer or other attendant in a substitution or pretended substitution to deceive opponents at or immediately before the snap or free kick.
- e. For a player to be lying on the ground to deceive opponents at or immediately before the snap or free kick.
- f. For a disqualified player to re-enter the game.

PENALTY: Illegal participation (Arts. 1, 2, 3, 4a [live-ball, basic spot]) – (Arts. 4b-f [live-ball, previous spot]) – (S28) – 15 yards.

SECTION 7 ILLEGAL KICKING AND BATTING

ART. 1 . . . No player shall intentionally kick the ball other than as a free or scrimmage kick.

ART. 2 . . . No player shall bat a loose ball other than a pass or a fumble in flight, or a low scrimmage kick in flight which he is attempting to block in or behind the expanded neutral zone.

EXCEPTION: A K player may bat toward his own goal line a grounded scrimmage kick which is beyond the neutral zone and may also bat toward his own goal line a scrimmage kick in flight beyond the neutral zone, if no R player is in position to catch the ball.

ART. 3 . . . Any pass in flight may be batted in any direction, by an eligible receiver unless it is a backward pass batted forward by the passing team.

ART. 4 . . . A ball in player possession shall not be batted forward by a player of the team in possession.

PENALTY: Illegal kicking or batting (Arts. 1, 2, 3, 4) – (S31) – 15 yards.

SECTION 8 NONCONTACT UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT BY NONPLAYERS

ART. 1 . . . No coach, substitute, athletic trainer or other team attendant shall act in an unsportsmanlike manner once the game officials assume authority for the contest. Examples are, but not limited to:

- a. Using profanity, insulting or vulgar language or gestures.
NOTE: The NFHS disapproves of any form of taunting which is intended or designed to embarrass, ridicule or demean others under any circumstances including on the basis of race, religion, gender or national origin.
- b. Attempting to influence a decision by a game official.
- c. Disrespectfully addressing a game official.
- d. Indicating objections to a game official's decision.
- e. Using any illegal communication equipment as outlined in 1-5-3c(2) and 1-6.
- f. Holding an unauthorized conference.

NOTE: Between downs, communications between players and coaches near the sideline are not an unauthorized conference.

- g. The failure of a team to:
 1. Be ready to start the first half;
 2. Be on the field following the conclusion of the halftime intermission or be ready to start the second half at the conclusion of the mandatory warm-up period and;
 3. Comply with the restrictions of 3-2-2 at the coin toss or simulated coin toss.
- h. Failure of the head coach, following verification, to have his player(s) wear or use legal and/or required equipment.
- i. Being on the field except as a substitute or replaced player. (See 3-7-6; 9-6-4a)
- j. Using tobacco or smokeless tobacco.
- k. Being outside the team box, but not on the field. (See 9-8-3)
- l. A substitute leaving the team box during a fight.

ART. 2 . . . Three attendants, none of whom is a coach, may enter the field to attend their team during a charged time-out or a TV/radio time-out, during the one-minute following a try, a successful field goal or safety, and prior to the succeeding free kick, between periods and during an official's time-out for unusual heat and humidity. During a time-out for injury, the coach and/or such attendants as may be deemed necessary by the referee may, with permission, enter to attend the injured player(s). In no other case, except as in 2-6, shall any nonplayer other than an entering substitute enter without the referee's permission.

ART. 3 . . . A nonplayer shall not be outside his team box unless to become a player or to return as a replaced player. A maximum of three coaches may be in the restricted area. No player, nonplayer or coach shall be in the restricted area when the ball is live.

PENALTY: Nonplayer fouls (Art. 1a through j) – (S27), (S7-27 if dead ball) – 15 yards. Nonplayer fouls charged to the Head Coach (Art. 1g and 1h) – (S27), (S7-27 if dead ball) – 15 yards. Nonplayer foul (Art. 2) – (S19) – 5 yards, unless repeated – or unsportsmanlike – (S27) – 15 yards. (Arts. 1k, 3) – (S15) – First offense-warning. (S7-29) – Second offense – 5 yards, each subsequent offense – (S7-29-27) – 15 yards. (Art. 1l) – (S27-47) – 15 yards and disqualification. (Arts. 1, 2, 3) Any single flagrant foul is disqualification. A second unsportsmanlike foul with a 15-yard penalty results in disqualification. (See 9-5 PENALTY) A disqualified member of the coaching staff shall be removed from the stadium area and be prohibited from any further contact, direct or indirect, with his team during the remainder of the game. For failure to comply, the referee may forfeit the game.

SECTION 9 UNFAIR ACTS

ART. 1 . . . A player or nonplayer or person(s) not subject to the rules shall not hinder play by an unfair act which has no specific rule coverage.

ART. 2 . . . No team shall repeatedly commit fouls which halve the distance to the goal line.

ART. 3 . . . No player shall hide the ball under a jersey.

ART. 4 . . . No player shall use a kicking tee in violation of Rule 1-3-4.

ART. 5 . . . Neither team shall commit any act which, in the opinion of the referee, tends to make a travesty of the game.

PENALTY: Unfair act – the referee enforces any penalty he considers equitable, including the award of a score – (S27). Repeated fouls (Art. 2) – the game may be forfeited. Hiding the ball under a jersey, (Art. 3)(S27) – 15 yards basic spot. Using illegal kicking tee, (Art. 4), (S27) – 15 yards basic spot.

NOTE: The penalties in Rules 9-9-3 and 9-9-4 are not charged to the coach or player for the purpose of unsportsmanlike conduct disqualifications.

Rule **10** *Enforcement of Penalties*

SECTION 1 PROCEDURE AFTER A FOUL

ART. 1 . . . When a foul occurs during a live ball, the referee shall, at the end of the down, notify both captains. He shall inform the captain of the offended team regarding the rights of penalty acceptance or declination and shall indicate to him the number of the ensuing down, distance to be gained, and status of the ball for each available choice. The distance penalty for any foul may be declined. If the penalty is declined or if there is a double foul, there is no loss of distance. In case of a double foul, the captains are not consulted since the penalties offset. The captain's choice of options may not be revoked. Decisions involving penalties shall be made before any charged time-out is granted either team.

ART. 2 . . . When a foul occurs during a dead ball between downs or prior to a free kick or snap, the covering official shall not permit the ball to become alive. The referee shall notify the captains, and the captain of the offended team will be presented with the options and the effect of acceptance or declination on the down and distance to be gained. The captain may accept or decline the penalty.

ART. 3 . . . When a live-ball foul by one team is followed by a dead-ball foul by the opponent, the penalties are administered separately and in the order of occurrence.

ART. 4 . . . When the same team commits a live-ball foul followed by one or more dead-ball fouls, all fouls may be penalized.

ART. 5 . . . Enforcement of a penalty cannot take the ball more than half the distance from the enforcement spot to the offending team's goal line. If the prescribed penalty is greater than this, the ball is placed halfway from the spot of enforcement to the goal line.

ART. 6 . . . The following fouls by A include loss of the right to replay a down:

- a. Illegally handing the ball forward.
- b. Illegal forward pass.
- c. Forward pass interference.
- d. Illegal touching of forward pass by an ineligible.

ART. 7 . . . The following fouls by B give A an automatic first down:

- a. Roughing the kicker or holder.
- b. Roughing the passer.
- c. Roughing the snapper.
- d. Forward pass interference.

SECTION 2 DOUBLE AND MULTIPLE FOULS

ART. 1 . . . It is a double foul if both teams commit fouls, other than unsportsmanlike or nonplayer, during the same live-ball period in which:

- a. There is no change of team possession, unless all fouls committed by R are post-scrimmage kick fouls, or
- b. There is a change of team possession, and the team in possession at the end of the down fouls prior to final change of possession unless all fouls committed by R are post-scrimmage kick fouls, or
- c. There is a change of possession and the team in final possession accepts the penalty for its opponent's foul at any time during the down.

In (a), (b) or (c), the penalties cancel and the down is replayed.

ART. 2 . . . If each team fouls during a down in which there is a change of team possession and the play does not have a post-scrimmage kick foul, the team last gaining possession may retain the ball, provided:

- a. the foul by the team last gaining possession is not prior to the final change of possession, and
- b. the team last gaining possession declines the penalty for its opponent's foul(s), other than a nonplayer or unsportsmanlike foul.

In this case, the team that was not last in possession has no penalty options until the team last in possession has made its penalty decision on the fouls prior to the change of possession. After that decision by the team last in possession, the team not last in possession may decline or accept the penalty by the team last in possession or choose which foul to have enforced in the case that the team last in possession committed more than one foul following the change.

ART. 3 . . . If each team fouls during a down in which there is a change of possession and all R fouls are post-scrimmage kick fouls, then R may retain the ball, provided R declines the penalty for K's foul(s), other than a nonplayer or unsportsmanlike foul. In this case, the team that was not last in possession has no penalty options until the team last in possession has made its penalty decision. After that decision by the team last in possession, the team not last in possession may decline or accept the penalty by the team last in possession or choose which foul to have enforced in the case that the team last in possession committed more than one foul following the change.

ART. 4 . . . When two or more live-ball fouls (other than nonplayer or unsportsmanlike) are committed during the same down by the same team (multiple fouls), only one penalty may be enforced. The offended captain may choose which one shall be administered, or the captain may decline all penalties. When a team commits a nonplayer or unsportsmanlike foul during that same down, it is administered from the succeeding spot as established by the acceptance or declination of the penalty for the other foul.

ART. 5 . . . Penalties for dead-ball fouls are administered separately and in the order of their occurrence. A dead-ball foul is not coupled with a live-ball foul or another dead-ball foul to create a double or multiple foul.

ART. 6 . . . A foul during a try is not paired with a dead-ball foul to create a double or multiple foul.

SECTION 3 TYPES OF PLAY

ART. 1 . . . A loose-ball play is action during:

- a. A free kick or scrimmage kick, other than those defined in 2-33-1a.
- b. A legal forward pass.
- c. A backward pass (including the snap), illegal kick or fumble made by A from in or behind the neutral zone and prior to a change of team possession.

NOTE: The run(s) which precedes such legal or illegal kick, legal forward pass, backward pass or fumble is (are) considered part of the action during a loose-ball play.

ART. 2 . . . A running play is any action not included under Article 1, other than those defined in 2-33-1a.

ART. 3 . . . The end of the run is:

- a. Where the ball becomes dead in the runner's possession.
- b. Where the runner loses possession if his run is followed by a loose ball.
- c. The spot of the catch or recovery when the momentum rule is in effect.

SECTION 4 BASIC SPOTS

ART. 1 . . . If a foul occurs during a down, the basic spot is determined by the action that occurs during the down. This is the basic spot for penalty enforcement.

ART. 2 . . . The basic spot is the previous spot:

- a. For a foul which occurs simultaneously with the snap or free kick.
- b. For a foul which occurs during a loose ball play, as defined in 10-3-1. See 10-5-5 for special enforcement on roughing the passer.
- c. For a foul which occurs during a down in which a legal kick occurs and an inadvertent whistle ends the down prior to possession by either team.

ART. 3 . . . The basic spot is the spot where the kick ends when R commits a post-scrimmage kick foul (2-16-2h). R fouls behind the post-scrimmage kick spot are spot fouls.

ART. 4 . . . The basic spot is the spot where the related run ends for a foul which occurs during a running play as defined in 10-3-2.

ART. 5 . . . The basic spot is the succeeding spot:

- a. For an unsportsmanlike foul.
- b. For a dead-ball foul.
- c. For a nonplayer foul.
- d. When the final result is a touchback.

NOTE: The succeeding spot may, at the option of the offended team, be the subsequent kickoff as in 8-2-2, 8-2-3, 8-2-4 and 8-2-5.

ART. 6 . . . The basic spot is the 20-yard line for fouls by either team when the opponent of the team in possession at the time of the foul is responsible for forcing the ball across the goal line of the team in possession, and the related run ends in the end zone and is followed by a loose ball, regardless of where the loose ball becomes dead.

ART. 7 . . . The basic spot is the goal line for fouls, which are committed during running plays by the opponent of the team in possession at the time of the foul when the team in possession is responsible for forcing the ball across its own goal line, and the related run ends in the end zone and is followed by a loose ball, regardless of where the loose ball becomes dead.

SECTION 5 SPECIAL ENFORCEMENT RULES

ART. 1 . . . The following fouls have special enforcement provisions and options for the offended team:

- a. Free kick out of bounds untouched by R. (see 6-1-8)
- b. Kick-catching interference. (see 6-5-6)
- c. Unfair acts. (see 9-9)
- d. A foul by the opponent of the scoring team on a successful try. (see 8-3-5)
- e. A foul by the opponents of the scoring team on a successful field goal. (see 8-4-3)
- f. Fouls that occur during or after a touchdown scoring play. (see 8-2-2, 8-2-3, 8-2-4 and 8-2-5)
- g. Roughing the passer. (see 9-4-4)
- h. Roughing the kicker or holder (see 9-4-5)
- i. Roughing the snapper (see 9-4-6)

ART. 2 . . . The enforcement spot for any foul by the defense is the goal line when the run ends in the end zone and would result in a safety.

ART. 3 . . . The score is nullified if the penalty is accepted for a foul, other than nonplayer or unsportsmanlike, by A which occurs during a down resulting in a successful try, field goal or touchdown.

ART. 4 . . . If the offensive team throws an illegal forward pass from its end zone or commits any other foul for which the penalty is accepted and measurement is from on or behind its goal line, it is a safety.

ART. 5 . . . The enforcement spot is the dead ball spot for roughing the pass-

er when the dead ball spot is beyond the neutral zone and there has been no change of team possession.

ART. 6 . . . A disqualified player shall be removed.

SECTION 6 ENFORCEMENT SPOTS, ALL-BUT-ONE PRINCIPLE

Unless otherwise listed in Section 4 and 5, a penalty for a foul occurring during a play is enforced from the basic spot with the exception of a foul by the offense which occurs behind the basic spot during a loose ball play or running play. This particular foul is enforced from the spot of the foul.

FOOTBALL PENALTY

ENFORCEMENT

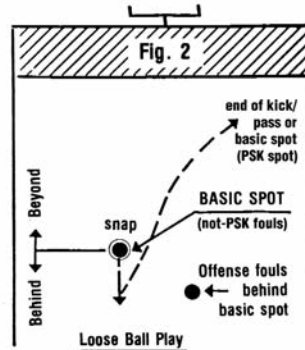
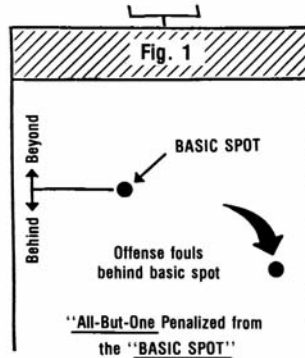
Enforcement provisions apply to all player fouls. These provisions are not complicated by exceptions or special penalties. By learning a few fundamentals, game officials will master the principles of penalty enforcement quickly and without difficulty.

Enforcement philosophy is based on the fact that a team is given the advantage of the distance which is gained without assistance of a foul. It is assumed that the only foul which would give this aid is a foul by the offense behind the basic spot. Therefore, all fouls but this one, that is a foul by the offense behind the basic spot, are penalized from the basic spot unless the spot is otherwise specified by rule. This one foul is penalized from the spot of the foul. Whenever the ball is live, one of two types of plays is in progress, that is, either a loose-ball play (Fig. 2) or a running play (Figs. 3 and 4). The type of play has no significance unless a foul occurs. If a foul does occur, the game officials must know whether it was during a loose-ball play or during a running play, because this immediately determines the basic spot of enforcement unless the spot is otherwise specified by rule.

A loose-ball play is action during:

1. A free kick or scrimmage kick other than those defined in 2-33-1a.
2. A legal forward pass.
3. A backward pass (including the snap), illegal kick or fumble made by A from in or behind the neutral zone prior to a change of team possession.

A loose-ball play includes the run(s) which precede such legal or illegal kick, legal forward pass, backward pass or fumble.



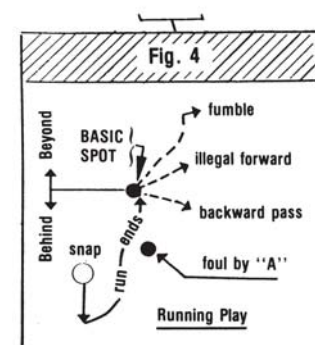
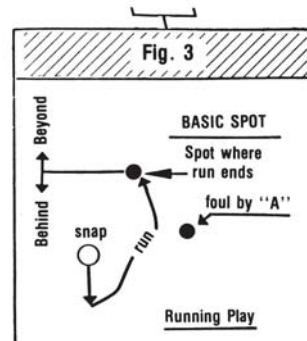
If a foul occurs during a loose-ball play, the basic spot is the post-scrimmage kick spot as defined in 2-41-6 if a PSK foul (2-16-2h) occurs; the dead ball spot for roughing the passer as in 9-4-4; or the previous spot if these do not apply. **Play:** K1 punts and between the time of the snap and the time the kick ends, there is a foul by R or K. **Ruling:** The foul is during a loose-ball play, and the previous spot (the same as the spot of the snap) is the basic spot for K's fouls. For R's foul, PSK rules may apply.

A running play is any action which is not a loose-ball play.

1. In or behind the neutral zone in either of the following:
 - a. It includes a run not followed by a loose ball.
 - b. A run followed by an illegal forward pass.
2. Beyond the neutral zone:
 - a. It includes a run.
 - b. A run followed by a loose ball, including an illegal forward pass or illegal kick. A run ends when a runner loses possession but the related running play continues until the ball becomes dead or some player again gets possession.

If a foul occurs during a running play, the basic spot is the spot where the run ended. If the runner does not lose possession, the ball becomes dead when the run ends. **Play:** A1 runs to B's 30 where he is downed. During the run there is a foul by A. **Ruling:** The foul is during a running play and the basic spot for enforcement is the spot where the run ended unless the spot is otherwise specified by rule. All fouls except one are penalized from this spot. The foul illustrated is enforced from the spot of the foul, since it is behind the basic spot.

A loose ball may be part of a running play and should not be confused with a loose-ball play. If a foul were to occur (during a running play) while the ball was loose, the basic enforcement spot is the spot where the related run ended, as for any running play. **Play:** A1 receives the snap and runs to B's 30. His run ends when he fumbles, throws an illegal forward pass, or throws a backward pass. Between the time A1 gets possession and the time the loose ball ends, there is a foul by B or A. **Ruling:** The backward pass, fumble or illegal pass by A are not part of the run itself. However, they are part of the entire play, which is a running play. The basic enforcement spot for a foul which occurs during any part of the running play, including the run or while the ball was loose during the play, is the spot where the run ended. When the foul is by the offensive team during the run and the spot of the foul is behind the basic spot, the penalty is from the spot of the foul.



FOOTBALL FUNDAMENTALS**I. POSSESSION**

1. A live ball is always in possession of a team.
2. A live ball is in player possession or is loose.
3. A loose ball is in possession of the team whose player was last in possession.
4. A player in possession of a live ball is a runner.
5. A player cannot fumble before gaining possession.
6. No foul causes loss of the ball.
7. After a distance penalty, the ball belongs to the team which was in possession at the time of the foul according to applicable rules. Team possession may then change if a new series is awarded.
8. Possession of a live ball in the opponent's end zone is always a touchdown.

II. DOWNS

1. A down begins when the ball becomes live and ends when it becomes dead.
2. Whether the next down will be first is determined at the time the ball becomes dead and after considering the effect of any act, except a nonplayer or unsportsmanlike foul, which occurred during the down.
3. If R is first to touch a scrimmage kick beyond the neutral zone, a new series will be awarded the team in possession at end of the down, unless there was a foul before the kick and the penalty was accepted, or there was a double foul or there was an inadvertent whistle during the kick following the touching by R.
4. The only defensive fouls which automatically cause a first down are pass interference, roughing the kicker or place-kick holder, roughing the passer and roughing the snapper.
5. If the penalty is accepted for any live ball foul by either team during the last timed down of a period, the period must be extended by an untimed down, except for unsportsmanlike fouls, nonplayer fouls, fouls that specify a loss of down, or fouls as specified in Rule 3-3-4.
6. No series can ever start on a down other than first.

III. DEAD BALL

1. A game official's whistle seldom kills the ball. It is already dead by rule.
2. No live-ball foul causes the ball to become dead.
3. A dead ball may become live only by a legal snap or free kick.
4. Catching is always preceded by touching of the ball; thus, if touching causes the ball to become dead, securing possession of the ball has no significance.

IV. KICKS - GENERAL

1. A kick always ends as soon as any player secures possession.
2. Any R player may catch or recover a kick and advance unless a valid or invalid fair-catch signal has been given by any R player.
3. If a legal kick is caught in or beyond the neutral zone to R's goal line on a free kick and beyond the neutral zone to R's goal line on a scrimmage kick by a receiver after he has signaled for a fair catch, it is a fair catch and the ball becomes dead as soon as it is caught.
4. A fair catch may be made of any free kick which is in or beyond the neutral zone to R's goal line or a scrimmage kick which is beyond the neutral zone to R's goal.
5. Any kick which is not a scoring attempt becomes dead when it breaks the plane of R's goal line.
6. No kick may legally be batted unless it is an attempt to block the kick in or behind the neutral zone, or if a grounded scrimmage kick which is beyond the neutral zone is batted by K toward his own goal line, or if a scrimmage kick in flight beyond the neutral zone is batted by K toward his own goal line or caught by K when no player of R is in position to catch the ball.
7. First touching of a kick by K is always ignored if the penalty is accepted for a foul during the down.

V. FREE KICKS

1. The rules for the three free kicks are the same. Exception: a kickoff or a free kick following a safety cannot score a field goal.
2. Free-kick lines are always 10 yards apart.

3. A free kick is not repeated unless a foul occurs prior to change of possession and the penalty acceptance requires a replay of the down or there was a double foul.

VI. SCRIMMAGE KICKS

1. Touching of a low scrimmage kick by any player is ignored if it occurs in or behind the expanded neutral zone. Such touching may cause the ball to go out of bounds.
2. A scrimmage kick recovered in or behind the neutral zone may be advanced by K or R.

VII. PASSES

1. A player who is eligible at the start of the down remains eligible throughout the down.
2. Offensive interior linemen are prohibited from advancing beyond the neutral zone only during a forward pass which crosses the neutral zone, but may advance after the pass is in flight.
3. A handed ball is not a pass.
4. Any pass in flight may be batted in any direction by an eligible receiver unless it is a backward pass batted forward by the passing team.
5. A forward-pass interference foul can occur only beyond the neutral zone.

VIII. BLOCKING

1. Blocking by either team is permissible, unless it is kick-catching interference or pass interference, a personal foul or an illegal block.

IX. FOULS

1. No live-ball foul causes the covering official to sound his whistle immediately.
2. A live-ball foul followed by a foul by the opponents after the ball becomes dead is not paired as a double foul.
3. It is a foul to bat any loose ball which has touched the ground, except K may bat a grounded scrimmage kick which is beyond the neutral zone toward his own goal line and may bat a scrimmage kick in flight beyond the neutral zone toward his own goal line when no player of R is in position to catch the ball.
4. A foul during a try is not paired with a dead-ball foul to make a double or multiple foul.
5. A double foul results only when both teams commit fouls, other than unsportsmanlike or nonplayer, during the same live-ball period or if team possession changed during the down and the foul by the team in final possession was prior to the change or if there were a change of possession and the team in final possession accepted the penalty for its opponent's foul.
6. While it is possible to have several running plays during a down, with each one having its own basic spot of enforcement (where the related run ended), there can only be one loose-ball play during a down.

X. PENALTY MEASUREMENT

1. The distance penalty for any foul may be declined.
2. Penalties are either 5, 10 or 15 yards.
3. Any live-ball foul is penalized according to the all-but-one enforcement principle except:
 - a. Fouls which occur simultaneously with the snap.
 - b. A foul by the opponents of the scoring team during a successful try, field goal or touchdown when the score is accepted.
 - c. A nonplayer or unsportsmanlike foul.
 - d. Roughing the passer when the dead ball spot is beyond the neutral zone and there has been no change of team possession.
4. Penalty enforcement for any dead ball, nonplayer or unsportsmanlike foul is from the succeeding spot unless the foul occurs on a scoring play and the scoring team chooses enforcement on the kickoff per 8-2-2, 8-2-3, 8-2-4 or 8-2-5
5. The penalty for any one of the five illegal passes is a loss of 5 yards and the down is counted except for a forward pass following change of team possession.
6. The penalty for offensive pass interference includes the loss of down.
7. No penalty directly results in a safety, but if a distance penalty is enforced from behind the offender's goal line toward his end line, it is a safety.

8. The penalty for a live-ball foul by the defensive team is administered from the basic spot, except when that spot is in the end zone.
9. The loss of down aspect of a penalty has no significance following a change of possession or if the line to gain is reached after enforcement.

2012 POINTS OF EMPHASIS

CONCUSSIONS, CONTACT TO AND WITH THE HELMET, HELMET TECHNOLOGY AND PROPER HELMET FITTING

Once again, the NFHS Football Rules Committee has chosen to emphasize the head and helmet as a point of emphasis for the 2012 season. Concerns continue about 1) concussion and the risks of initiating contact with and to the helmet; 2) contact initiated above the shoulders, particularly contact to the helmet, both by the person receiving the contact, and the person delivering the contact; and 3) proper helmet fitting. Game officials, coaches, administrators and players involved in the game must continue to be diligent as it relates to all of these aspects.

Concussions

Concussions continue to be a focus of attention in football at all levels of competition. The NFHS has been at the forefront of national sports organizations in emphasizing the importance of concussion education, recognition and proper management.

Discussion of proper concussion management at all levels of play in all sports has led to the adoption of rules changes and concussion-specific policies by multiple athletic organizations, state associations and school districts. Coaches and game officials need to become familiar with the signs and symptoms of a concussed athlete so that appropriate steps can be taken to safeguard the health and safety of participants.

Athletes must know that they should never try to “tough out” a suspected concussion. Teammates, parents and coaches should never encourage an athlete to “play through” the symptoms of a concussion. In addition, there should never be an attribution of bravery associated with athletes who play despite having concussion signs or symptoms. The risks of such behavior must be emphasized to all members of the team, as well as all coaches and parents. If an athlete returns to activity before being fully healed from an initial concussion, the athlete is at an increased risk for a repeat concussion. A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain has a chance to recover from the first can slow recovery or increase the chance for long-term problems. In rare cases, a repeat concussion can result in severe swelling and bleeding in the brain that can be fatal. Governing bodies at all levels of play continue to review and revise playing rules and encourage practices that decrease the risk of concussion. Among the most concerning data from the past several high school football seasons is that concussions continue to account for a high percentage of the injuries reported and that more than half of all concussions were a direct result of helmet-to-helmet contact!

All coaches should undergo education and utilize available professional development tools regarding the signs and symptoms of concussion and the proper management of athletes with a suspected concussion. The NFHS offers the free course “Concussion in Sports: What You Need to Know” that is available at www.nfhslearn.com. The free course is a brief and user-friendly resource not just for coaches, but also for students, parents and other interested persons. Many states have developed their own education programs. It is incumbent upon coaches to lead by example in recognizing the seriousness of all suspected concussions.

Contact to and with the Helmet

Over the years, the NFHS Football Rules Committee has repeatedly emphasized the need to KEEP THE HEAD OUT OF FOOTBALL because of the potential for catastrophic head and neck injuries. The committee – in its publications for review by coaches and game officials – has specifically targeted some form of helmet review or illegal helmet contact emphasis 24 times since 1980. In the past few years, all levels of football have increased the focus on decreasing the risk of concussion, and it is widely conceded that one of the biggest steps in this effort is to eliminate direct helmet-to-helmet contact and any other contact both with and to the helmet.

Any initiation of contact with the helmet is illegal; therefore, there must be a focus on enforcing the existing rules. These rules include fouls such as butt blocking, face tackling and spearing (all of which are illegal helmet contact fouls) as well as other acts prohibited by the provisions regarding unnecessary roughness. These types of contact, such as blows to the head by the defender, initiating contact to the head, and helmet-to-helmet contact are all unnecessary to the playing of the game. When in doubt, contact to or with the helmet should be ruled a foul by game officials.

Helmet Technology and Proper Helmet Fitting

The heightened concern about concussions and the variety of football helmets available have led participants and coaches to seek a helmet that they believe will best protect a player from concussion. While many new football helmets incorporate innovative materials and designs, no existing football helmet is “concussion proof.” Therefore, it is incumbent upon athletic administrators, coaches, game officials, parents and participants to understand the limitations of all protective equipment, including the helmet. Everyone must realize that a combination of best practices, including but not limited to, repeated instruction on proper tackling and blocking techniques, proper helmet fitting and equipment tracking/recertification procedures, and proper and consistent officiating, are the keys to limiting injury risk and must be emphasized within each program.

Proper helmet fit has been a concern in recent years as anecdotal and documented reports of players having helmets completely dislodged during games continue to mount. To emphasize this point, the NFHS Football Rules Committee has passed a rule for the 2012 season that will require the athlete to leave the game for a single play if the helmet comes off during live ball action, unless the removal is due to a foul by the defense. If no foul is called, then the player must be removed. It is imperative that the athletes take an active role in the proper fitting, wear and use of the helmet and realize the “comfort” shortcuts are not permitted.

Every football helmet manufacturer provides various helmet-fitting pamphlets with each helmet sold, detailing how to properly fit the helmet. If the helmet-fitting pamphlets or other football helmet-related instructions are missing, please contact the respective football helmet manufacturer.

HEAT ACCLIMATIZATION AND PREVENTING HEAT ILLNESS

Exertional Heatstroke (EHS) is the leading cause of preventable death in high school athletics. Athletes participating in high-intensity, long-duration or repeated same-day practices during the summer months or other hot-weather days pose the greatest risk. Football has received the most attention because of the number and severity of exertional heat illness-

es. Notably, the National Center for Catastrophic Sports Injury Research reports that 35 high school football players died of EHS between 1995 and 2010. EHS also results in thousands of emergency room visits and hospitalizations throughout the nation each year.

In the spring of 2012, the NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) will release a new position statement “Heat Acclimatization and Heat Illness Prevention.” The position statement is intended to provide an outline of “Fundamentals” and may be used as a guiding document by member state associations. Also, the NFHS will release a 20-minute free online course “A Guide to Heat Acclimatization and Heat Illness Prevention” at www.nfhslearn.com, regarding this life-threatening topic. Further and more detailed information will be found within the NFHS online course, as well as the 4th Edition of the NFHS Sports Medicine Handbook, the NFHS SMAC position statement “Recommendations for Hydration to Minimize the Risk for Dehydration and Heat Illness” and other resources.

The new position statement and online course are intended to reduce the risk and incidence of EHS and the resulting deaths and injuries. The NFHS recognizes that various states and regions of the country have unique climates and an assortment of resources, and that there is no “one-size-fits-all” optimal acclimatization plan. However, the NFHS and the NFHS SMAC strongly encourage member state associations to incorporate all of the “Fundamental Musts” into any heat acclimatization plan to improve athlete safety. In addition, the online “A Guide to Heat Acclimatization and Heat Illness Prevention” should be required viewing for all coaches.

Heat Acclimatization and Heat Illness Prevention Keys for Coaches

1. Recognize that Exertional Heatstroke (EHS) is the leading preventable cause of death among high school athletes.
2. Know the importance of a formal pre-season heat acclimatization plan.
3. Know the importance of having and implementing a specific hydration plan, keeping your athletes well hydrated, and providing ample opportunities for, and encouraging, regular fluid replacement.
4. Know the importance of appropriately modifying activities in relation to the environmental heat stress and contributing individual risk factors (e.g., illness, obesity) to keep your athletes safe and performing well.
5. Know the importance for all staff to closely monitor all athletes during practice and training in the heat, and recognize the signs and symptoms of developing heat illnesses.
6. Know the importance of, and resources for, establishing an emergency action plan, practicing the aspects of that plan, and promptly implementing it in case of suspected EHS or other medical emergency.

Fundamentals of a Heat Acclimatization Plan

1. Physical exertion and training activities should begin slowly and continue progressively. An athlete cannot be “conditioned” in a period of only two to three weeks.
2. Keep each athlete’s individual level of conditioning and medical status in mind and adjust activity accordingly. These factors directly affect heat illness risk.
3. Adjust intensity (lower) and rest breaks (increase frequency/duration), and consider reducing uniform and protective equipment, while being sure to monitor all players more closely as conditions are increasingly warm/humid, especially if there is a

- change in weather from the previous few days.
4. Athletes must begin practices and training activities adequately hydrated.
 5. Recognize early signs of distress and developing exertional heat illness, and promptly adjust activity and treat accordingly. First aid should not be delayed!
 6. Recognize more serious signs of exertional heat-related distress (clumsiness, stumbling, collapse, obvious behavioral changes and/or other central nervous system problems), immediately stop activity and promptly seek medical attention by activating the Emergency Medical System. On-site rapid cooling should begin immediately.
 7. An Emergency Action Plan with clearly defined written and practiced protocols should be developed and in place ahead of time.

HURDLING

In 2012, the committee had requests to change the hurdling rule and eliminate it as a foul. By definition: *"Hurdling is an attempt by a player to jump (hurdle) with one or both feet or knees foremost over an opponent who is contacting the ground with no part of his body except one or both feet."* This is an Illegal Personal Contact Foul (NFHS Football Rule 9-4-3d) and carries a 15-yard penalty. Recently, national and local media have identified some of these plays at the collegiate and professional levels as "spectacular feats" and glorified the individual's athletic ability instead of pointing out the heightened potential for harm. Little regard has been given to the fact that attempting to "hurdle" a defender increases the risk of injury to both the hurdler and tackler! The NFHS SMAC requested that this rule not be changed and backed up its request by showing several incidences where players were severely injured while attempting this act! The NFHS Football Rules Committee concurred with the SMAC and did not change the hurdling rule. In addition, to focus on the dangers associated with hurdling, it has been included as a Point of Emphasis for the 2012 season. The emphasis on this illegal act supports the committee's ongoing attempt to minimize the risk of injuries in high school football. Coaches must teach their players of the inherent dangers associated with this illegal act, and game officials must call it when observed.

ILLEGAL BLOCKING BELOW THE WAIST

In high school football, there are very specific rules regarding the time and circumstances when blocking below the waist is legal. There continues to be problems with game officials not enforcing these restrictions on who can block, who can be blocked and where/when these blocks can occur. In order for a block below the waist to be legal, the following criteria must be met:

1. Both players must be lined up in the free-blocking zone at the snap and on the line of scrimmage. The free-blocking zone is defined as 3 yards on either side of the line of scrimmage and 4 yards either side of the ball.
2. The contact/block must occur in the free-blocking zone.
3. The ball must still be in the free-blocking zone.

The NFHS Football Rules Committee wants to emphasize several examples where it is important to enforce this rule. When a team is lined up in shotgun formation, the restrictions on blocking below the waist begin the moment that the ball leaves the free-blocking zone. Because a shotgun quarterback is usually positioned more than 3 yards behind the line at the snap, when the ball is snapped the ball very quickly leaves the zone and there-

fore, the only legal blocks below the waist have to be initiated simultaneously with the snap.

Another common example of an illegal block below the waist is when running backs, who line up in the backfield, are “cut” by defenders on sweeps or on roll-out passes. This is clearly a violation of the blocking- below-the-waist rule because it occurs by a player who was not originally on the line of scrimmage and occurs outside the free-blocking zone.

Remember, players on the line of scrimmage and in the free-blocking zone at the time of the snap can legally block below the waist, but only if the free-blocking zone still exists because the ball has not left the zone. The rule applies equally to the offense and the defense.

ILLEGAL SHIFTS INVOLVING THE QUARTERBACK

As today’s offensive formations continue to become more complex, it must be stressed to all coaches and game officials the need to eliminate illegal shifts involving the quarterback. Whenever any player on the offensive team moves to a new position after the ready-for-play signal and before the snap, it is a shift (NFHS Football Rule 2-39). Coaches and game officials must recognize that certain movements by quarterbacks must also be penalized as illegal shifts.

There are several examples of movements by the quarterback that would be considered an illegal shift, such as when all offensive players immediately get into their stance and then the quarterback receives the snap as soon as he/she gets their hands under center. This is illegal because the quarterback needs to be set for one second prior to the snap after the linemen going into stance as this is, in fact, a shift. An illegal-shift foul also occurs when the quarterback first sends a player in motion and after the player is in motion, the quarterback then goes under center to receive the snap.

When all other offensive players are set, movements by the quarterback, other than slightly moving a foot to start another player in motion, must be followed by a pause of one second by everyone on the offense to be considered a legal shift. If the offense is allowed to execute illegal shifts or other movements, teams will gain an advantage not intended by the rules and will disrupt the desired balance between offense and defense.

IMPROPER UNIFORMS

These issues can be grouped into two general categories. Not properly wearing mandatory player equipment and wearing illegal equipment/adornments.

Not Properly Wearing Mandatory Player Equipment:

Pants not covering the knee – Over the years, the NFHS Football Rules Committee has repeatedly emphasized that player equipment must be worn for the protection of the athletes. One piece of player equipment that continues to be inconsistently enforced is the football pants and the required protection of the knee. The committee is encouraging a renewed focus by both coaches and game officials to make sure that pants are worn properly to completely cover the knee. Coaches need to make sure that equipment handed out to players is properly fitted and continues to properly fit throughout the season. Game officials need to recognize when mandatory equipment is not being worn properly and most importantly, game officials must penalize these acts consistently throughout the game, regardless of the situation and regardless of anyone’s feelings about the rule as compared to other levels of football.

Wearing Illegal Equipment/Adornments:

1. Uniform Adornments – Common violations or issues include:
 - A. Wearing a tinted eye shield – For purpose of injury prevention and recognition, eye shields attached to the helmets must be clear without the presence of any tint and constructed of a molded rigid material.
 - B. Wearing towels that exceed the allowed specifications – One, white, unmarked moisture-absorbing towel can be worn. Towel width is a minimum of 4 inches and maximum of 18 inches, while the length is a minimum of 12 inches and a maximum of 36 inches.
 - C. Wearing sweatbands at an improper location – Moisture-absorbing sweatbands of any color are allowed to be worn as long as they are worn on the wrist, beginning at the base of the thumb and extending no more than 3 inches toward the elbow.
 - D. Wearing bicep bands, neck bands and leg bands – Any moisture-absorbing or other band worn on any other area of the body beside the wrist, other than for medical reasons, is considered an illegal uniform adornment.
 - E. Uncovered shoulder, rib and back protectors – These protectors are to be fully covered by the jersey in order to be legal.
 - F. Altered knee and ankle braces – As long as knee and ankle braces are unaltered and worn as intended by the manufacturer's original design, no additional padding is required. If any alterations are done from the manufacturer's design and production, or the brace is worn in a manner other than allowed by rule, the brace is illegal.
 - G. Wearing jewelry – Any jewelry other than religious and medical alert medals is considered illegal. Religious medals must be taped and worn under the uniform and medical-alert medals must be taped and may be visible.
 - H. Illegal pads and padding – Hard and unyielding items (guards, casts, braces, etc.) on the hand, wrist, forearm, elbow or upper arm are illegal unless padded with a closed-cell, slow-recovery foam padding no less than ½-inch thick.
 - I. Helmets not secured properly – Helmets must be secured by a properly fastened chinstrap with at least four attachment points.

Coaches and game officials need to be cognizant of the adornments worn by the players, and game officials need to consistently enforce the rules regarding illegal equipment and adornments to prevent further problems from developing with player safety and sportsmanship.

COMMENTS ON THE 2012 RULES CHANGES

RESTRICTIONS HAVE BEEN REMOVED FOR CORPORATE ADVERTISING AND MARKINGS ON THE FIELD OF PLAY (1-2-3h, 1-2-3i NEW): The committee cleared the way for State Associations and their member schools to place corporate advertising and/or commercial markings on the field of play. This advertising is not permitted to obstruct the yard lines, hash marks or nine-yard marks. If needed, shadow lines may be utilized to ensure the visibility of the required marks. Previously, advertising was only allowed in the end zones and outside the field.

FOOTBALL GLOVES MUST MEET THE NOCSAE TEST STANDARD STARTING IN 2013 (1-5-2b):

The implementation date for the NOCSAE test standard on football gloves was delayed for one year. Beginning with the 2013 season, all football gloves must meet the NOCSAE test standard at the time of manufacture, unless made of unaltered plain cloth.

PLAY CARDS MUST BE WORN ON THE WRIST (1-5-3c(8) NEW): The committee expanded the list of illegal equipment to include play cards that are not worn on the wrist. The committee had received concerns about players wearing these cards in a location other than the wrist.

BLOCKING-BELOW-THE-WAIST RULES REVISED (2-3-7): Under a longstanding interpretation, it was not a foul for a player to block below the waist if the hand(s) of the opponent was first contacted below the waist. This revision changes that interpretation and stipulates that such action is a foul.

DEFINITION OF A CATCH REVISED (2-4-1): Previously, the covering official could have ruled that an airborne player attempting to catch the ball would have come down inbounds, but was prevented from doing so because of contact by an opponent. The revision stipulates that in order to be ruled a catch, a player is required to establish possession of the ball and contact the ground inbounds while maintaining possession, regardless of the opponent's action.

PLAYER REQUIRED TO BE REMOVED IF HELMET COMES OFF DURING THE DOWN (3-5-10d): The committee reviewed data gathered from multiple states regarding the frequency of helmets coming off during the down. Based on this review, the committee approved a rule change stipulating that if any player's helmet comes off during the down, and it is not due to a foul by the opponent, that player must leave the game for at least one down (unless halftime or an overtime intermission occurs). In such circumstances, an officials' time-out occurs.

RESTRICTIONS ADDED TO BLOCKING ON FREE KICKS (9-3-8 NEW): The committee changed the rule to prohibit members of the kicking team from initiating contact (blocking) against members of the receiving team until the ball has broken the plane of the receiving team's restraining line, or until the kicking team is eligible to recover the free-kick. Kicking team members are permitted to block if blocked by members of the receiving team prior to either of these conditions being met.

ILLEGAL PERSONAL CONTACT PENALTY HAS BEEN REVISED (9-4-3h): With this change, the foul for grasping the face mask has been expanded to include grasping the tooth and mouth protector attached to the face mask.

HORSE-COLLAR RULE HAS BEEN MODIFIED (9-4-3k): The committee clarified the rule by adding the direction in which the opponent was pulled to give guidance to game officials.

RESOLVING TIED GAMES

Each state association, in accordance with Rule 3-1-1, may adopt a procedure by which it allows games tied after the fourth quarter to be resolved. The following is one possible procedure which would allow for ties to be broken. This procedure may be accepted as written, amended, or rejected, in whole or part, by each member state association.

An overtime period is untimed play after a regulation game has ended with the score tied. During an overtime period each team has an opportunity for an offensive series of downs. However, an overtime period may include only one offensive series of downs if the defensive team scores a safety or touchdown.

3-1: When the score is tied at the end of the fourth period, the referee will instruct both teams to return to their respective team boxes. There will be a three-minute intermission during which both teams may confer with their coaches. All game officials will assemble at the 50-yard line, review the overtime procedure, and discuss how penalties, if any, including any carry-over penalties from the regulation contest will be assessed to start the overtime procedure. (See 8-3-5,6) At the end of the intermission, the linesman will go to the team on the side of the field where the line to gain equipment is located and the line judge will go to the other team. They will inform the coaches of any special penalty enforcements that apply.

3-2-1: At the coin toss in the center of the field the visiting-team's captain shall be given the privilege of choosing "heads" or "tails" before the coin is tossed. The winner of the toss shall be given his choice of defense or offense first, or of designating the end of the field at which the ball will be put in play for this set of downs. The loser will have his choice of the other options. The referee will indicate the winner of the toss by placing a hand on his shoulder. To indicate which team will go on offense, the referee will have that captain face the goal toward which his team will advance and indicate this with the first-down signal. The other team captain will face the offensive captain with his back toward the goal he will defend.

3-5-1: Each team shall be permitted one time-out during each overtime period (a series for A and a series for B). The team scoring the greater number of points in the overtime shall be declared the winner. The final score shall be determined by totaling all points scored by each team during both regulation time and overtime periods.

5-1-1: To start the overtime, the offensive team shall put the ball in play, first and goal, on the defensive team's 10-yard line or succeeding spot if carry-over penalty has been administered (15-yard line for six-player football) anywhere between the hash marks. The first offensive team shall have a series of four downs. That series shall be terminated by any score by the offensive team or if the defensive team has possession of the ball.

If the team on offense scores a touchdown, it is entitled to the opportunity for a try unless the points would not affect the outcome of the game or playoff qualifying.

A field-goal attempt is permitted during any down.

If the defensive team gains possession, the ball becomes dead immediately and the offensive team's series of downs is ended.

After the first team on offense has completed its series of downs, the first team on defense will become the offensive team with the ball in its possession at the same 10-yard line anywhere between the hash marks. The same end of the field will be used for possessions by both teams during the two sets of downs to ensure equal game conditions and conserve time.

If the score remains tied after each team has been given one series of downs in an overtime period, then the procedure shall be repeated with other overtime periods until a game winner is determined. In this case, there shall be an intermission of two minutes. At the subsequent meeting of team captains, the loser of the overtime coin toss will be given first choice of the options. If additional overtime periods are required, then first options will be alternated with no coin toss.

5-1-3: If a safety is scored by the offensive team, the succeeding spot will be the 10-yard line in possession of the team that was on defense, provided the defensive team has not had its series of downs (the temporary overtime score is: Team A-2; Team B-0).

When the defensive team gains possession of the ball, the down and series immediately end for the offensive team.

5-2-1: The offensive team shall be awarded a new series of downs when any one of the following occurs:

- a. Penalty for defensive pass interference is accepted.
 - b. Offensive team recovers a scrimmage kick (field-goal attempt) between the goal lines after it has been touched first by the defensive team beyond the neutral zone.
 - c. Defensive team is guilty of roughing the kicker, place-kick holder, snapper or passer.
- 5-3-1:** The line to gain is always the goal line regardless of whether or not a penalty enforcement places the ball more than 10 yards from the goal line to start a new series.
- 8-1:** If the defensive team scores a safety or touchdown, the game is ended.
- 8-3:** No try will be attempted if the winner of the game has been determined.
- 10-4-3a:** Post scrimmage kick enforcement is not applicable in this procedure.

RESOLVING TIED GAMES INTERPRETATIONS

(For those state associations utilizing the procedure as written)

3.1.1 SITUATION A: On fourth down in overtime play, A scores a touchdown. After the score, but before the try, B1 commits an unsportsmanlike foul. **Ruling:** The penalty is enforced from the succeeding spot on the try. Nonplayer fouls, nonplayer unsportsmanlike fouls and dead-ball fouls are penalized on the succeeding spot.

3.1.1 SITUATION B: During the last timed down of the fourth period A1 advances for a touchdown making the score B-22 and A-20. On the try A2 passes complete to A3 in the end zone. Following the try B1 commits an unsportsmanlike foul. **Ruling:** The penalty for the foul by B1 after the successful try will be administered from the succeeding spot to begin overtime play. **Comment:** In this situation the referee should explain to the captains at the time of the coin toss the fact the penalty will be administered on the first series of downs in the overtime. The place from which the ball will be put in play for each team could have an effect on the choice made by the winner of the toss.

3.1.1 SITUATION C: When the regulation game ends in a tie, the teams use the recommended tie-breaking procedure. A wins the toss and elects to take the ball. A1 scores on the third down. After A1 crosses the goal line: (a) A2 clips B1; or (b) B1 strikes A2. **Ruling:** Dead-ball fouls in both (a) and (b). The score counts and the penalties in both (a) and (b) are enforced on the try, because that is the succeeding spot.

3.1.1 SITUATION D: On third and 4 in overtime play, B recovers a fumble or intercepts a pass. **Ruling:** The down ends as soon as B1 recovers or intercepts. In both cases the series of downs is ended for A.

3.1.1 SITUATION E: On third and 6 in overtime play Team A attempts a field goal. The attempt is not successful and B recovers on the 1-yard line. **Ruling:** The down ends when B1 recovers. The series is ended for A.

3.1.1 SITUATION F: The fourth quarter ends during a scoring play. During the successful 2-point try, B9 is called for pass interference. A accepts the result of the play, which ties the score and chooses to have the penalty assessed at the succeeding spot. **Ruling:** This is correct. Since A, by rule, can choose succeeding spot enforcement, and the try was successful, A will likely take enforcement at the succeeding spot to begin overtime. Game officials must be certain to explain the options clearly, not only during penalty administration, but also during the overtime coin toss.

3.1.1 SITUATION G: In overtime play with third and goal from B's 4-yard line, B1 interferes during a forward pass. **Ruling:** If the penalty is accepted it will be first and goal for A on B's 2-yard line.

3.1.1 SITUATION H: In overtime play on second down from the 8-yard line, B1 commits pass interference. **Ruling:** First down for A on the 4-yard line if the penalty is accepted.

3.1.1 SITUATION I: (a) On second; or (b) fourth down and 9, A1 interferes on an incomplete forward pass. **Ruling:** In (a) it is A's ball third down from its 24-yard line. In (b) B will decline the penalty and take the ball on the 10-yard line.

3.1.1 SITUATION J: At the end of the regulation game the score is tied, 7-7. It was previously announced that the recommended tie-breaking procedure would be followed. Immediately after the last down of the fourth period A1 strikes B1. **Ruling:** A1 will be disqualified and may not participate during the overtime period. The penalty for A1's foul will be administered from the succeeding spot. If B is the first to put the ball in play it will be from the 5-yard line. If A is the first to put the ball in play it will be from the 25-yard line.

3.1.1 SITUATION K: At the beginning of the overtime, A wins the toss and elects to go on offense. On first down, B1 intercepts a pass, but then fumbles and A1 recovers. **Ruling:** The ball became dead and A's series ended immediately when B1 intercepted. A1 recovered a dead ball. B will put the ball in play to start its series of four downs, first and goal from anywhere between the inbound lines on the 10-yard line.

3.1.1 SITUATION L: During the last timed down of the fourth period, A scores a touchdown to make the score 14-13. During the successful kick try, B1 roughs the kicker/holder. **RULING:** If A accepts the score, the penalty is enforced to start the overtime, if an overtime is played. If A accepts the penalty, the try will be replayed from the 1½-yard line. (2-41-10; 8-3-5)

3.1.1 SITUATION M: During an overtime period, it is fourth and goal from the 6-yard line. During A's unsuccessful field-goal attempt, B1 charges into the place-kick holder. **RULING:** It will be first and goal for A at the 3-yard line following enforcement of the roughing penalty which also includes an automatic first down.

3.1.1 SITUATION N: Following a scoreless first overtime period, the captain of B chooses to play the second overtime period at the opposite end of the field. **RULING:** This is permissible, as it is one of the options to begin each overtime period.

3.1.1 SITUATION O: During the first overtime period, A chooses to go on offense first and scores a touchdown on the third play of the series. During the successful kick try, the holder is roughed by B1. A accepts the successful kick try. **RULING:** Since A accepted the result of the play, B will be penalized from the succeeding spot. B will start its overtime series from the 25-yard line after the penalty for roughing the holder is enforced. (10-5-2)

3.1.1 SITUATION P: In overtime play with fourth and goal from B's 24-yard line, B1 interferes during a legal forward pass. **RULING:** First down and goal for A on the 12-yard line if the penalty is accepted.

3.1.1 SITUATION Q: During the first overtime period, Team A: (a) scores on its first series; or (b) is stopped short of the goal line on its first series. Following the first series, Team A huddles near its sideline with all players from the previous play remaining inbounds. Team B reports to the 10-yard line of scrimmage ready to begin its series. Team A remains at the sideline when the ready for play is blown by the referee. **RULING:** In (a), because there was a score, there is a one-minute intermission after the try. In (b), the series begins immediately following the change of A and B to respective sides of the line of scrimmage without a break. The covering official should not allow the ball to be put in play, and should assess a delay of game foul on Team A to prevent a travesty. (3-5-7f, 3-6-2f)

NINE-, EIGHT- AND SIX-PLAYER RULES DIFFERENCES

PREFACE: When "11 players" is used in the rules book it should be understood 11 would be replaced with the number of players participating (nine, eight, six).

NINE-PLAYER

RULE 1: Each team has nine players. The field is 80 yards between goal lines and 40 yards wide with 48 feet 4 inches side zones. Seven-yard marks, 12 inches in length and 4 inches in width, shall be located 7 yards from each sideline. The 7-yard marks shall be marked so that at least each 10-yard line bisects the 7-yard marks. These marks shall not be required if the field is visibly numbered. If on-the-field numbers are used, the tops of those numbers shall be 7 yards from the sideline. By state association adoption, the 11-player field may be designated as official, and the dimensions of the field may be altered.

RULE 2: The free-blocking zone is a square area extending laterally 3 yards either side of the spot of the snap and 3 yards behind each line of scrimmage.

RULE 2: The Outside Nine Yard Mark and Between Nine Yard Mark Conferences shall be held outside or between the seven yard marks, respectively.

RULE 6: K's free-kick line is its 30-yard line and R's free-kick line is the 40.

RULE 7: a. At least five A players shall be on the line at the snap and may have any legal jersey number.
b. After the ball is marked ready for play, each player of A who participated in the previous down, and each substitute for A must have been, momentarily, between the 7-yard marks, before the snap.
c. Each A player (regardless of jersey number) who at the snap was on the end of the scrimmage line (total of two) and each A player who was at the snap was legally behind the scrimmage line (possible total of four) is eligible. There are no numbering requirements.

RULE 10: The basic spot for a foul as in 10-4-6 shall be the 15-yard line.

EIGHT-PLAYER

GENERAL: Eleven-player rules are used for eight-player football with the following modifications.

RULE 1: Each team has 8 players. The field is 80 yards between goal lines and 40 yards wide with 15-yard side zones. Seven-yard marks, 12 inches in length and 4 inches in width, shall be located 7 yards from each sideline. The 7-yard marks shall be marked so that at least each 10-yard line bisects the 7-yard marks. These marks shall not be required if the field is visibly numbered. If on-the-field numbers are used, the tops

of those numbers shall be 7 yards from the sideline. By state association adoption, the 11-player field may be designated as official, and the dimensions of the field may be altered.

RULE 2: The free-blocking zone is a square area extending laterally 3 yards either side of the spot of the snap and 3 yards behind each line of scrimmage.

RULE 2: The Outside Nine Yard Mark and Between Nine Yard Mark Conferences shall be held outside or between the seven yard marks, respectively.

RULE 6: K's free-kick line is its 30-yard line and R's free-kick line is the 40.

- RULE 7:**
- At least five A players shall be on their line at the snap and may have any legal jersey number.
 - After the ball is marked ready for play, each player of A who participated in the previous down, and each substitute for A must have been, momentarily, between the 7-yard marks, before the snap.
 - Each A player (regardless of jersey number) who at the snap was on an end of the scrimmage line (total of two) and each A player who at the snap was legally behind the scrimmage line (possible total of three) is eligible.

RULE 8: On the eight-player field, the ball is snapped after a touchback and is free kicked after a safety from the 15-yard line.

RULE 10: The basic spot for a foul as in 10-4-6 shall be the 15-yard line.

SIX-PLAYER

GENERAL: Most six-player football rules are the same as for the 11-player game.

RULE 1 and 2: Offense must advance 15 yards instead of 10 in four downs.

RULE 1: Each team has 6 players. The field is 80 yards between goal lines and 40 yards wide with 15-yard side zones. Seven-yard marks, 12 inches in length and 4 inches in width, shall be located 7 yards from each sideline. The 7-yard marks shall be marked so that at least each 10-yard line bisects the 7-yard marks. These marks shall not be required if the field is visibly numbered. If on-the-field numbers are used, the tops of those numbers shall be 7 yards from the sideline. By state association adoption, the 11-player field may be designated as official, and the dimensions of the field may be altered.

RULE 2: The free-blocking zone is a square area extending laterally 3 yards either side of the spot of the snap and 3 yards behind each line of scrimmage.

RULE 2: The Outside Nine Yard Mark and Between Nine Yard Mark Conferences shall be held outside or between the seven yard marks, respectively.

RULE 2 and 7: Unless the ball is kicked or forward passed, it may not be advanced across the line of scrimmage until after a direct handoff or clear pass has been made by the snap receiver (If a violation occurs, ball is returned to previous spot and the down counts). If a forward pass is thrown to the snapper, it must travel at least 1 yard in flight.

RULE 3: Length of quarters—10 minutes; between quarters—2 minutes; between halves—15 minutes.

RULE 6: K's free-kick line is its 30-yard line and R's free-kick line is the 40.

RULE 7: At least three A players shall be on their line of scrimmage at the snap and may have any legal jersey number.

- RULE 7:**
- After the ball is marked ready for play, each player of A who participated in the previous down, and each substitute for A must have been, momentarily, between the 7-yard marks, before the snap.
 - Ball may be handed in any direction during a kickoff down and during a scrimmage down after a direct handoff, clear pass, a legal forward pass or kick has been made.
 - If a fumble occurs before there has been a direct handoff or clear pass and if a player of A recovers it, he may not carry it beyond the line.
 - When a passer catches his own pass it is ruled as incomplete unless it was touched by any B player.
 - All players are eligible to catch a forward pass, except that a pass is ruled incomplete when caught by the passer (7-5-4).

RULE 8:

- Field goal counts 4 points. Try for point 2 points if successful through place or drop kick and 1 point if successful by pass or scrimmage.

b. On the six-player field, the ball is snapped after a touchback and is free kicked after a safety from the 15-yard line. Overtime: To start an overtime the ball will be put in play first and goal on B's 15-yard line.

RULE 10:

- If B fouls during a successful kick try, the penalty is automatically enforced from the succeeding spot.
- The basic spot for a foul as in 10-4-6 shall be the 15-yard line.

PENALTY SUMMARY

	Reference	Signal
LOSS OF 5 YARDS		
1. Failure to properly wear mandatory player equipment during down.....	1-5-6	27-23
2. Delay of game	3-6-2d; 6-5-5	7-21
3. Failure to properly wear mandatory player equipment just before snap	3-6-2d	7-21-23
4. Illegal substitution	3-7	22
5. Free-kick infraction.....	6-1-2	7-19
6. Encroachment	6-1-3; 7-1-1, 5, 6	7-18
7. Free kick out of bounds.....	6-1-8	19
8. Invalid or illegal fair-catch signal	6-5-7, 8	32
9. Snap infraction	7-1-2, 3	7-19
10. False Start	7-1-7	7-19
11. Illegal formation.....	7-2-1, 2, 3	19
12. Less than seven players on A's line or numbering violation.....	7-2-5	19
13. Illegal shift or illegal motion	7-2-6, 7	20
14. Planned loose-ball infraction.....	7-2-8	19
15. Illegally handing ball forward (also loss of down)	7-3-2, 3	35-9
16. Illegal forward pass (by A; also loss of down)	7-5-2	35-9
17. Illegal forward pass (by B).....	7-5-2	35
18. Intentional grounding (also loss of down)	7-5-2c, d	36-9
19. Ineligible receiver illegally downfield	7-5-12	37
20. Illegal touching (also loss of down)	7-5-13	16-9
21. Helping runner	9-1	44
22. Incidental grasping of face mask (or helmet opening or the chin strap)	9-4-3	45
23. Running into kicker/holder	9-4-5	30
24. Sideline interference.....	9-8-1k	7-29
25. Attendant illegally on field	9-8-2	19
26. Nonplayer outside of the team box, but not on field	9-8-3	7-29
LOSS OF 10 YARDS		
1. Illegal blocking technique	9-2-1a; 9-2-3a	42
2. Interlocked blocking	9-2-1b	44
3. Holding.....	9-2-1c; 9-2-3c,e	42
4. Runner grasping a teammate.....	9-2-2	42
5. Illegal use of hands or arms	9-2-1a; 9-2-2; 9-2-3a, b, d	42
6. Illegal block in the back.....	9-3-5	43
LOSS OF 15 YARDS		
1. Unsportsmanlike conduct by player or nonplayer	1-5-2, 3, 5; 9-5, 9-8-1	27
2. Illegally kicking or batting ball	6-2-1; 9-7	31
3. Illegal block after valid or invalid fair-catch signal.....	6-5-1; 9-3-3	40
4. Kick-catching interference.....	6-5-6	33
5. Forward-pass interference (loss of down if by A - give signal 33 and 9; also first down if by B). If intentional an additional 15 yards	7-5-10	33
6. Illegal block below waist or on free-kicker or holder	9-3-2, 4	40
7. Clipping	9-3-5	39
8. Chop block	9-3-6	41
9. Tripping	9-3-7	46
10. Illegal personal contact outside restricted area.....	9-4-3	38
11. Charging into an opponent obviously out of the play.....	9-4-3	38
12. Grasping an opponent's face mask (or any helmet opening or the chin strap).....	9-4-3	38-45
13. Butt block, face tackle or spear.....	9-4-3	24
14. Horse-collar.....	9-4-3	38-25
15. Roughing passer (also first down).....	9-4-4	34
16. Roughing kicker or holder (also first down)	9-4-5	38-30
17. Roughing snapper (also first down)	9-4-6	38
18. Slapping blocker's head	9-4-7	38
19. Illegal personal contact in restricted area	9-4-8	38-29
20. Illegal participation	9-6	28
21. Sideline interference (third and subsequent)	9-8-1k, 3	7-29-27
22. Nonplayer illegally on field	9-8-3	27
23. Unfair acts	9-9	27
DISQUALIFICATION ASSOCIATED WITH CERTAIN 15-YARD PENALTIES		
1. Fighting by player or nonplayer.....	9-4-1	38-47
2. Intentionally contacting a game official.....	9-4-2	38-47
3. Striking, kicking, kneeling	9-4-3	38-47
4. Any act if unduly rough or flagrant (give proper signal and follow with 47).....	9-4	47
5. A second unsportsmanlike foul by player or nonplayer	9-5, 8	27-47
6. A substitute leaving team box during a fight.....	9-8-11	27-47



OFFICIAL FOOTBALL SIGNALS



<p>1 Ball ready for play *Untimed down</p>	<p>2 Start clock</p>	<p>3 Time-out Discretionary or injury time-out (followed by tapping hands on chest)</p>		
<p>4 TV/radio time-out</p>	<p>5 Touchdown, Field goal, Point(s) after touchdown</p>	<p>6 Safety</p>	<p>7 Dead ball foul, Touchback (move side to side)</p>	
<p>8 First down</p>	<p>9 Loss of down</p>	<p>10 Incomplete forward pass Penalty declined No play, no score Toss option deferred</p>	<p>11 Legal touching of forward pass or scrimmage kick</p>	<p>12 Inadvertent whistle</p>
<p>13 Disregard flag</p>	<p>14 End of period</p>	<p>15 Sideline warning</p>	<p>16 First touching Illegal touching</p>	
<p>18 Encroachment</p>	<p>19 False start Illegal formation</p>	<p>20 Illegal shift (2 hands) Illegal motion (1 hand)</p>	<p>21 Delay of game</p>	<p>22 Substitution infraction</p>



OFFICIAL FOOTBALL SIGNALS



23 Failure to wear required equipment 	24 Illegal helmet contact 	25 Illegal horse-collar tackle 	27 Unsportsmanlike conduct Noncontact foul 	28 Illegal participation
29 Sideline interference (Face press box) 	30 Running into or Roughing kicker or holder 	31 Illegal batting/kicking (Followed by pointing toward toe for kicking) 	32 Invalid fair catch Illegal fair catch signal 	33 Forward pass interference Kick catching interference
34 Roughing passer (Face press box) 	35 Illegal pass/forward handing (Face press box) 	36 Intentional grounding 	37 Ineligible downfield on pass 	38 Personal foul
39 Clipping 	40 Blocking below waist Illegal block 	41 Chop block 	42 Holding/obstruction Illegal use of hands/arms 	43 Illegal block in the back
44 Helping runner Interlocked blocking 	45 Grasping face mask or helmet opening 	46 Tripping 	47 Disqualification 	

PlayPic® PlayPics courtesy of Referee magazine. Note: Signal numbers 17 and 26 is for future expansion.

National Federation of State
High School Associations



Mission Statement

The National Federation of State High School Associations serves its members, related professional organizations and students by providing leadership for the administration of education-based interscholastic activities, which support academic achievement, good citizenship and equitable opportunity.

We Believe

Participation in education-based interscholastic athletics and performing arts programs:

- Enriches each student's educational experience.
- Promotes student academic achievement.
- Develops good citizenship and healthy lifestyles.
- Fosters involvement of a diverse population.
- Promotes positive school/community relations.
- Is a privilege.

The NFHS:

- Promotes and protects the defining values of education-based interscholastic activity programs in collaboration with its member state associations.
- Serves as the recognized national authority on education-based interscholastic activity programs.
- Serves as the pre-eminent authority on competition rules for education-based interscholastic activity programs.
- Promotes fair play and seeks to minimize risk for student participants through the adoption of national competition rules and delivery of programs and services.
- Delivers quality educational programs to serve the changing needs of state associations, school administrators, coaches, officials, students and parents.
- Provides professional development for NFHS member state association staff believing that cooperation among state associations advances their individual and collective well-being.

National Federation of State
High School Associations



Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion

A concussion is a traumatic brain injury that interferes with normal brain function. An athlete does not have to lose consciousness (be “knocked out”) to have suffered a concussion.

Common Signs and Symptoms of Concussion Include:

- headache
- fogginess
- difficulty concentrating
- easily confused
- slowed thought processes
- difficulty with memory
- nausea
- lack of energy, tiredness
- dizziness, poor balance
- blurred vision
- sensitive to light and sounds
- mood changes – irritable, anxious or tearful
- appears dazed or stunned
- confused about assignment
- forgets plays
- unsure of game, score or opponent
- moves clumsily
- answers questions slowly
- loses consciousness
- shows behavior or personality changes

Suggested Concussion Management:

1. No athlete should return to play (RTP) or practice on the same day of a concussion.
2. Any athlete suspected of having a concussion should be evaluated by an appropriate health-care professional that day.
3. Any athlete with a concussion should be medically cleared by an appropriate health-care professional prior to resuming participation in any practice or competition.
4. After medical clearance, RTP should follow a step-wise protocol with provisions for delayed RTP based upon return of any signs or symptoms.

For further details please see the “NFHS Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion” at www.nfhs.org.

January 2011

National Federation of State
High School Associations



Equipment Guidelines

1. Each NFHS sports rules committee is responsible for recommending the official playing rules to the NFHS Board of Directors for adoption. The committee is not responsible for testing or approving playing equipment for use in interscholastic sports. Equipment manufacturers have undertaken the responsibility for the development of playing equipment that meets the specifications established by the committee. The NFHS urges manufacturers to work with the various independent testing agencies to ensure the production of safe products. Neither the NFHS nor the applicable NFHS sport rules committee certifies the safety of any sport equipment. Only equipment that meets the dimensions and specifications in the NFHS sport rules may be used in interscholastic competition. While the committee does not regulate the development of new equipment and does not set technical or scientific standards for testing equipment, the committee may, from time to time, provide manufacturers with guidance as to the equipment-performance levels it considers consistent with the integrity of the game. The committee reserves the right to intercede to protect and maintain that integrity.

2. Each NFHS sport rules committee suggests that manufacturers planning innovative changes in sports equipment submit the equipment to the applicable NFHS sport rules committee for review before production.

National Federation of State
High School Associations



General Guidelines for Sports Hygiene, Skin Infections and Communicable Diseases

Proper precautions are needed to minimize the potential risk of the spread of communicable disease and skin infections during athletic competition. These conditions include skin infections that occur due to skin contact with competitors and equipment. The transmission of infections such as Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) and Herpes Gladiatorum, blood-borne pathogens such as HIV and Hepatitis B, and other infectious diseases such as Influenza can often be greatly reduced through proper hygiene. The NFHS SMAC has outlined and listed below some general guidelines for the prevention of the spread of these diseases.

Universal Hygiene Protocol for All Sports

- Shower immediately after every competition and practice.
- Wash all workout clothing after each practice.
- Wash personal gear (knee pads and braces) weekly.
- Do not share towels or personal hygiene products (razors) with others.
- Refrain from full body (chest, arms, abdomen) cosmetic shaving.

Infectious Skin Diseases

Strategies for reducing the potential exposure to these infectious agents include:

- Athletes must be told to notify a parent or guardian, athletic trainer and coach of any skin lesion prior to any competition or practice. An appropriate health-care professional should evaluate any skin lesion before returning to competition.
- If an outbreak occurs on a team, especially in a contact sport, all team members should be evaluated to help prevent the potential spread of the infection.
- Coaches, officials and appropriate health-care professionals must follow NFHS or state/local guidelines on "time until return to competition." Participation with a covered lesion may be considered if in accordance with NFHS, state or local guidelines and the lesion is no longer contagious.

Blood-Borne Infectious Diseases

Strategies for reducing the potential exposure to these agents include following Universal Precautions such as:

- An athlete who is bleeding, has an open wound, has any amount of blood on his/her uniform, or has blood on his/her person, shall be directed to leave the activity (game or practice) until the bleeding is stopped, the wound is covered, the uniform and/or body is appropriately cleaned, and/or the uniform is changed before returning to activity.
- Athletic trainers or other caregivers need to wear gloves and take other precautions to prevent blood or body fluid-splash from contaminating themselves or others.
- In the event of a blood or body fluid-splash, immediately wash contaminated skin or mucous membranes with soap and water.
- Clean all contaminated surfaces and equipment with disinfectant before returning to competition. Be sure to use gloves when cleaning.
- Any blood exposure or bites to the skin that break the surface must be reported and immediately evaluated by an appropriate health-care professional.

Other Communicable Diseases

Means of reducing the potential exposure to these agents include:

- Appropriate vaccination of athletes, coaches and staff as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).
- During times of outbreaks, follow the guidelines set forth by the CDC as well as State and local Health Departments.

For more detailed information, refer to the "Infectious Disease and Blood-borne Pathogens" and "Skin Disorders" sections contained in the NFHS Sports Medicine Handbook.

Revised and Approved in 2010

National Federation of State
High School Associations



Guidelines on Handling Contests During Lightning Disturbances

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a default policy to those responsible for making decisions concerning the suspension and restarting of contests based on the presence of lightning. The preferred sources from which to request such a policy for your facility would include your state high school association and the nearest office of the National Weather Service.

Proactive Planning

1. Assign staff to monitor local weather conditions before and during events.
2. Develop an evacuation plan, including identification of appropriate nearby shelters.
3. Develop criteria for suspension and resumption of play:
 - a. When thunder is heard, or a cloud-to-ground lightning bolt is seen, the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play and take shelter immediately.
 - b. Thirty-minute rule. Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or flash of lightning is witnessed prior to resuming play.
 - c. Any subsequent thunder or lightning after the beginning of the 30-minute count, reset the clock and another 30-minute count should begin.
4. Hold periodic reviews for appropriate personnel.

For more detailed information, refer to the "Guidelines for Lightning Safety" contained in the NFHS Sports Medicine Handbook.

Reviewed and Approved in 2010

National Federation of State
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Coaches Code of Ethics

The function of a coach is to educate students through participation in interscholastic competition. An interscholastic program should be designed to enhance academic achievement and should never interfere with opportunities for academic success. Each student should be treated with the utmost respect and his or her welfare should be considered in decisions by the coach at all times. Accordingly, the following guidelines for coaches have been adopted by the NFHS Board of Directors.

The coach shall be aware that he or she has a tremendous influence, for either good or ill, on the education of the student and, thus, shall never place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest ideals of character.

The coach shall uphold the honor and dignity of the profession. In all personal contact with students, officials, athletic directors, school administrators, the state high school athletic association, the media, and the public, the coach shall strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct.

The coach shall take an active role in the prevention of drug, alcohol and tobacco abuse.

The coach shall avoid the use of alcohol and tobacco products when in contact with players.

The coach shall promote the entire interscholastic program of the school and direct the program in harmony with the total school program.

The coach shall master the contest rules and shall teach them to his or her team members. The coach shall not seek an advantage by circumvention of the spirit or letter of the rules.

The coach shall exert his or her influence to enhance sportsmanship by spectators, both directly and by working closely with cheerleaders, pep club sponsors, booster clubs, and administrators.

The coach shall respect and support contest officials. The coach shall not indulge in conduct which would incite players or spectators against the officials. Public criticism of officials or players is unethical.

The coach should meet and exchange cordial greetings with the opposing coach to set the correct tone for the event before and after the contest.

The coach shall not exert pressure on faculty members to give students special consideration.

The coach shall not scout opponents by any means other than those adopted by the league and/or state high school athletic association.

National Federation of State
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Officials Code of Ethics

Officials at an interscholastic athletic event are participants in the educational development of high school students. As such, they must exercise a high level of self-discipline, independence and responsibility. The purpose of this Code is to establish guidelines for ethical standards of conduct for all interscholastic officials.

Officials shall master both the rules of the game and the mechanics necessary to enforce the rules, and shall exercise authority in an impartial, firm and controlled manner.

Officials shall work with each other and their state associations in a constructive and cooperative manner.

Officials shall uphold the honor and dignity of the profession in all interaction with student-athletes, coaches, athletic directors, school administrators, colleagues, and the public.

Officials shall prepare themselves both physically and mentally, shall dress neatly and appropriately, and shall comport themselves in a manner consistent with the high standards of the profession.

Officials shall be punctual and professional in the fulfillment of all contractual obligations.

Officials shall remain mindful that their conduct influences the respect that student-athletes, coaches and the public hold for the profession.

Officials shall, while enforcing the rules of play, remain aware of the inherent risk of injury that competition poses to student-athletes. Where appropriate, they shall inform event management of conditions or situations that appear unreasonably hazardous.

Officials shall take reasonable steps to educate themselves in the recognition of emergency conditions that might arise during the course of competition.

Officials shall maintain an ethical approach while participating in forums, chat rooms and all forms of social media.

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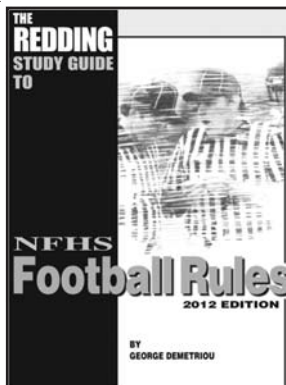
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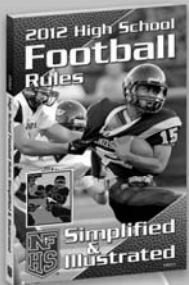
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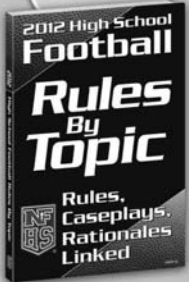


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