

Pre-Game Rules Reminders:

Kicking Tee – 2 inches or less.

No Helmet Coverings.

Shoe cleats – not more than ½ inch.

No slippery or sticky stuff on anything.

Towel – any color except ball or flag – all players DO NOT need to have same color.

Communication devices – no player inside 9yd marks.

Play Cards – only on wrist or arm.

Chop Block – one below waist, one above the waist, with or without delay.

Receiver must get one foot down to complete catch unless carried out of bounds.

Invalid fair catch signal – after ball touches ground or player – 5 yards – PSK.

Illegal fair catch signal – after kick is caught or recovered – 5 yards – basic spot.

Post Scrimmage Kick Foul: by R, during kick, ball crosses Neutral Zone, foul is beyond Neutral Zone, before end of kick, R has ball when play ends. Basic spot is where kick ends.

Free Blocking Zone - 4x3 yards – ball must still be in Zone and the block must occur in the Zone for the following to be legal:

Block Below Waist – in the Zone, by or against any player on line and in Zone at snap.

Block in Back – in the Zone, by offensive linemen against any defensive player, all players in Zone at the snap.

A fumble or backward pass during a running play behind the line of scrimmage is a loose-ball play Previous spot enforcement.

Tripping is always illegal

Periods are 12 minutes – if team is not back on time for halftime intermission -15 yards

3 minute warm-up must always be allowed – don't start clock until both teams are back.

Extend period for: any accepted live-ball penalty that does not include a loss-of-down; fouls on both teams; inadvertent whistle.

Clock starts on the snap after: change of possession; new series for R or K after legal kick.

Unused time-outs in 2nd half cannot be used in overtime - each team gets 1 for each overtime period.

Player must leave for at least one play (cannot use time-out to get him back in game) for:

Apparently injured or bleeding player; player whose helmet comes off with no foul involved
(Exception: Halftime or overtime intermission allows player to return)

A replaced player must leave within 3 seconds if he is the 12th man on the field.

No foul for having 12 men in huddle, but replaced player must leave within 3 seconds.

No foul for breaking the huddle with 12 men as long as 3-second rule is adhered to – however, the Referee must make sure that the replaced player exits the field immediately, without causing the Defense confusion. Confusion = dead ball 5 yard penalty on offense

All substitution fouls with players coming in or out are 5 yds, unless the player actively participates in the play as a 12th man – 15 yards from Basic spot

“Fake” Field Goal or Try:

If the Holder has his knee on the ground & the kicker is in position: after securing the snap the Holder must rise to run, hand off, kick, or pass the ball – if his knee is still on the ground, the ball is dead at that spot.

If the Holder has to rise to catch a bad snap, he may return his knee to the ground immediately and the ball remains alive – he may then again rise to run, hand off, kick, or pass the ball.

If the Holder Muffs or Fumbles the snap and has to lift his knee from the ground to recover the ball, he may not put his knee back down or the ball is dead at that spot.

If the holder takes several steps while retrieving the ball, he may not return his knee to the ground, or the ball is dead at that spot.

Punts and kickoffs are dead when they break the plane of R’s goal line, even with a new force (bat).

When a kicker catches or recovers a scrimmage kick beyond the line of scrimmage, or a free kick anywhere, the ball is dead and cannot be advanced.

If a punt or field goal on 1st, 2nd, or 3rd down is recovered inbounds and behind the line of scrimmage by K, it is K’s ball, 2nd, 3rd, or 4th down. K can also advance the ball if he is not down. A kick recovered by K beyond the LOS (untouched by R) or goes out of bounds, it is R’s ball.

Any touching of a punt or field goal by Team R behind the line is ignored.

1st touching of a kick is ignored if the penalty for a foul during the down is accepted.

Team Free Kick Lines are always 10 yards apart.

K may recover a Free Kick if it has done BOTH of the following in any order:
touched the ground and broken the plane of R’s Free Kick Line.

Free Kick out of bounds options:

Rekick after 5 yard penalty; 25 yards from previous spot; 5 yard tack-on from dead ball spot.

K does not have to be in a scrimmage kick formation to kick the ball, but it may change how the Referee looks at possible roughing the Kicker fouls. The snapper is not protected.

Any kick that breaks the plane of R’s goal line is a touchback, except for a successful FG attempt.

Fair Catch – Free Kick – in or beyond Neutral Zone; Punt or Field Goal – beyond Neutral Zone.

Only the player that signals for a Fair Catch is given protection. Ball is dead if a teammate catches or recovers the kick, but it is not a Fair Catch.

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

Fouls committed by Team K during free or scrimmage kicks (other than Kick Catch Interference) may be enforced as a tack-on penalty at the dead ball spot as long as R is in possession of the ball at the end of the down.

1st, 2nd, and 3rd Down Punts or Field Goals:

Only the snapper, originally positioned between the ends, can have an eligible # - he remains ineligible throughout the down. (Penalty: Illegal numbering – 5 yards)

4th Down Punts or Field Goals:

Up to 5 players, originally positioned between the ends, can have an eligible # - they remain ineligible throughout the down. (Penalty: Illegal numbering – 5 yards)

Player that signals for a fair catch cannot block – 15 yard penalty – PSK.

Free Kick Holder/Kicker cannot be blocked until he advances 5 yards down the field, or the kick has touched either the ground or a player – 15 yard penalty – previous spot.

K players cannot block R players on a Free Kick until:

The kick has traveled 10 yards, or the kick has been touched by a Team R player, or a Team R player initiates the block – 10 yards, previous spot or tack-on at dead ball spot if R is in possession at the end of the down – Enforce 10 yds previous or tack-on.

Inadvertent Whistle:

While a legal forward pass or a legal kick is in flight – replay the down;

While the ball is loose following a backward pass, fumble, illegal forward pass, or illegal kick - the team last in possession has the choice to put the ball in play where possession was lost or to replay the down;

While a player has possession of the ball, the team in possession has the choice to put the ball in play at the dead ball spot or to replay the down;

If a live ball foul occurs prior to an inadvertent whistle and the penalty is accepted, the penalty is enforced from the basic spot and the inadvertent whistle is ignored.

Team A may ask for the ball to be spotted anywhere between the hash marks:

For a Try; For a Kickoff; Following a Safety; Following a Fair Catch or Awarded Fair Catch; Following a Touchback; For the start of any series in Overtime.

The back of the ball becomes the front of the ball when a new series is awarded to Team B and the spot of the next snap is the same as the previous play. (Move the box)

Snapper's helmet cannot be beyond the front end of the ball. He may rotate the ball laterally but not end-to-end.

After ready-for-play the snapper cannot remove both hands from the ball.

Encroachment can only occur after the snapper has placed his hand(s) on the ball and the RFP signal has been given.

Non-Player outside team box or more than 3 coaches in the restricted area:

1st - Warning, 2nd - 5 yards, 3rd - 15 yards – Unsportsmanlike – charged to head coach.

A Fumble or Backward Pass can be advanced by either team.

Passer must have both feet in-or-behind the NZ when the ball is released.

Only one forward pass allowed during a down, including a forward shovel pass in the backfield.

Penalty for Illegal Forward Passes: 5 yards from the spot of the foul plus loss of down.

All A players become eligible when B touches a Legal Forward Pass.

Pass Interference can only happen beyond the NZ when a Legal Forward Pass crosses the NZ.

Illegal Touching on A: If the ineligible A player Bats, Muffs or Catches a Legal Forward Pass.

Penalty for Illegal Touching: 5 yards from the previous spot plus loss of down.

Touchdown plays - penalties

Touchdown scored, opponent commits live-ball foul, no change of possession on play; options:

Enforce penalty on try or on kickoff (exception: overtime).

Touchdown scored, opponent commits live-ball foul, change of possession on play; options:

If Foul was before change of possession, must decline penalty to take score;

If Foul was after change of possession:

Enforce penalty on try or on kickoff (exception: overtime)

Touchdown scored, either team commits unsportsmanlike or non-player foul, offended team has choice of enforcing penalty on try or on kickoff. (exception: overtime)

If after a Touchdown is scored and prior to the ready-for-play either team commits a foul, the offended team has choice of enforcing the penalty on the try or on the kickoff.

Only Team A can score on a TRY

Trys - penalties

Successful Try, foul by A – replay down.

Successful Try, Loss of Down foul by A – no score and no replay.

Successful Try, Foul by B – options for Team A:

Accept penalty and replay down, or take the points and enforce penalty at succeeding spot.
(also applies in overtime)

Unsuccessful Try, foul by A/K – no score and no replay.

Unsuccessful Try, foul by B/R – options for Team A:

Accept penalty enforcement and replay down, or decline yardage and replay down.

Double Foul on a Try – Down is replayed.

Field Goals – penalties:

Successful Field Goal, Foul by R – options for Team K:

Accept penalty and replay down, or take the points and enforce penalty at succeeding spot (also applies in overtime)

Successful Field Goal, Foul by K – options for Team R:

Accept penalty & replay down.

Momentum Rule for Team B/R – Between 5 yard line & goal line – ball dead in end zone – return it to the spot of the interception, catch or recovery, 1st and 10 for Team B/R

No player can position himself on the shoulders or body of a teammate or opponent to gain an advantage – 15 yards – basic spot

A player whose helmet has come off may not continue to participate – 15 yards – basic spot

Hitting a player whose helmet has come off – 15 yards – basic spot

Defensive Foul – using disconcerting acts or words prior to the snap in an attempt to interfere with Team A's signals or movements – 5 yards, disconcerting act – dead ball foul – signal #23

UNS & Non Player Fouls:

If both teams commit unsportsmanlike, nonplayer or dead-ball personal fouls, the distance penalty for an equal number of 15-yard unsportsmanlike, nonplayer or dead-ball personal fouls will offset. Any remaining penalties will be enforced separately and in the order of occurrence.

NEW ENFORCEMENT: (from 2023 – Rule 10-4)

The basic spot is the previous spot (except fouls by an offensive player in his own end zone) for:

- d. A foul by A or B when the run or related run ends behind the line of scrimmage where there is no change of possession.
- e. A foul by A that occurs behind the line of scrimmage when the run or related run ends beyond the line of scrimmage.
- f. A foul by A that occurs beyond the line of scrimmage when the run or related run ends behind the line of scrimmage; and
- g. A foul by A or B when the run or related run ends behind the line of scrimmage before a change of possession.

It is a Safety when: 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.