

Penalties & Flags

Understand what to look for – respond to what **you actually see**
When a rule is violated **determine if it deserves a flag**, or a “talking-to” based on

- Did the action have an impact on the play?
- Did it cause an unearned advantage or create an unearned disadvantage?
- Was it a violation involving player safety?
- Was it repetitive or had there been prior “talking-to”?

Never react to what you’ve been told happened – **unless** you’ve personally seen the violation.

Observe the guilty party’s number – **tell yourself** what you’ve seen.

Report to the Referee – Don’t berate the player, **don’t even speak to the fouling player**

Do NOT signal the Referee – **Go to him and TELL him** what you have.

Referee needs to **UNDERSTAND** the following – be as calm as possible and explain:

* **When the foul happened**

Before the snap: (Dead Ball – Will be previous spot)

Simultaneous with the snap: –(Live ball - Will be previous spot)

During the play: (Live ball – Spot depends on whether it’s a running play or loose ball play)

After the play ends: (Dead ball – Subsequent spot)

* **What was the foul? Who fouled (offense or defense) and the player’s number.** (If you can’t get a number try and understand his position. **DON’T GUESS.**)

If there are fouls by both teams, or multiple fouls, make sure the Referee understands that.

* **If there had been a change of possession**, did the foul happen **before or after** possession changed? Who is in possession at the end of the down? Does the team in possession have **“clean hands”**?

* **If it’s a 4th down** – remind the Referee of the current down, **especially if the foul is a dead ball foul.**

* **If there is more than 1 foul**, slow everything down and carefully provide all the details for each foul.

* **Stay with the Referee** as he explains the options to make sure **he understood** ALL of what happened, **exactly** as you do.

* **If there’s a possible miscommunication (or misunderstanding)**, take the Referee aside and **clear it up immediately.**

Multiple Foul: (NF: 10-2-4) when **one team** commits more **than one foul during a down**, it is a Multiple Foul and the offended team may **choose enforcement for any one foul** committed, or decline all fouls. Non-player or Dead –Ball fouls are not coupled with Live –Ball fouls, to create a multiple foul situation. They are enforced separately from the succeeding spot established by the enforcement of any Live-Ball foul.

Double Foul: (NF: 10-2-1) Occurs when **both teams** commit fouls, other than unsportsmanlike, or non-player, during the **same live-ball period** when: a. There is no change of team possession (**COP**), unless all fouls by R are PSK, or
b. There is a (**COP**) and the team last in possession fouls prior to the final COP, unless all fouls by R are PSK, or
c. There is a COP and the team last in possession accepts the penalty for it’s opponents foul at any time during the down.
d. In a, b & c **the penalties cancel and the down is replayed.**

Fouls during a scoring play:

NF:8-2-2: When opponent of the scoring team fouls (other than a succeeding spot foul) during the down in which a TD is scored, and **there in no change of possession**, The scoring team can choose to enforce the penalty:

- On the Try, or;
- On the subsequent KO

NF: 8-2-3: When opponent of scoring team fouls (other than a succeeding spot foul) during the down in which a TD is scored, and **there WAS a change of possession**, And the Foul occurs after the occur AFTER the change of possession, the scoring team can choose to enforce the penalty:

- On the Try, or;
- On the subsequent KO.

NF: 8-2-4: If **EITHER TEAM** commits **unsportsmanlike or non-player foul during TD scoring play**, the opponent may accept results of the play and choose enforcement

- On the Try, or;
- On the subsequent KO.

NF: 2-3-5: If **after a down** in which a TD is scored. **And prior to the initial RFP 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.

- On the Try, or;
- On the subsequent KO

Types of Play (NF: 10-3)

- Loose Ball Play:** a. Free Kick, Scrimmage Kick other than PSK enforcement.
 b. A **legal** forward pass. (illegal pass is a running play)
 c. A backwards pass (including a 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, backwards pass or fumble
- Running Play:** Is any action not included above.

Basic Spots (NF: 10-4)

- Previous Spot:** a. For a foul that occurs simultaneous with the snap.
 b. For a foul that occurs during a Loose Ball Play (See special Enforcement for Roughing the Passer)
 c. For a foul which occurs in a down in which a legal kick occurs and an IW ends the down prior to possession by either team.
- Where the Kick Ends:** When R commits a **PSK foul** (R fouls behind the PSK spot are Spot fouls)
- Where the Run Ends:** is the spot where the related run ends for a foul during a running play.
- Succeeding Spot:** a. Unsportsmanlike foul.
 b. Dead Ball foul
 c. Nonplayer foul.
 d. When the final result is a touchback.

PSK (Post Scrimmage Kick) Enforcement

PSK only applies to **LEGAL Scrimmage kicks** (NF: 2-24-4), made **from a Scrimmage Kick formation** (NF: 2-14-2)

- PSK Foul** (NF: 2-16-2-h): “A foul by “R” (other than illegal substitution or participation) when the foul occurs: **(All must apply)**
- During Scrimmage kick plays**, other than a successful field goal or try.
 - During a scrimmage kick play in which the ball **crosses the expanded neutral zone**.
 - Beyond** the expanded neutral zone.
 - Before** the end of the kick.
 - And “K” will not be next to put the ball in play.

All-but One: Review & Understand “Penalty Enforcement” Rule Book page 78

Refers to the principle that ALL fouls are enforced from their respective basic spot, but one type of foul: a foul by the offense BEHIND what would otherwise be the basic spot. The principle is based on the idea that the offense is entitled to whatever yardage they gain before they foul, but once they foul any additional yardage gained is tainted, so fouls would be enforced from the spot of the foul, when that spot happens to be behind what would otherwise be the basic spot.

<i>Defense fouls ANYWHERE:</i>	<i>Enforce from Basic Spot</i>
<i>Offense fouls BEYOND the Basic Spot</i>	<i>Enforce from the Basic Spot</i>
<i>Offense fouls BEHIND the Basic Spot</i>	<i>Spot foul (Enforce from the spot of the foul)</i>

Special Enforcement Spots (NF: 10-5)

- Free Kick Out of Bounds:** (See NF: 6-1-8) A Free Kick shall not be kicked OOB between the goal lines untouched inbounds by R. Choices for R are: a. Accept a 5 yard penalty from the previous spot and have K re-kick.
 b. Put the ball in play at the **inbounds spot 25 yards beyond the previous spot** (the R 35 yd)
 c. Decline the penalty and put the ball in play at the inbounds spot.
- Kick Catching Interference (KCI):** (See: NF: 6-5-6) For KCI, R may choose either:
 a. A 15 yard penalty from the previous spot and a replay of the down.
 b. Choose to accept an awarded Fair Catch at the spot of the foul.
- Unfair Acts: (NF: 9-9)** The Referee enforces any penalty he considers equitable, including the award of a score.
- Roughing the Passer: (NF: 10-5-5)** Enforcement is from the **end of the last run (after a completed pass)** when that last run ends beyond the NZ and there has been **no change of possession. If the pass is incomplete, or there is a COP, enforcement is from the previous spot.**

Automatic First Down	Loss of Down (Right to repeat the down)
Defensive Pass Interference (NF: 7-5-10)	Offensive Pass Interference (NF: 7-5-10)
Roughing the Passer (NF: 9-4-4)	Illegally handing the ball forward (NF: 7-3-2)
Roughing the Kicker (NF: 9-4-5)	Illegal forward pass (NF: 7-5-2)
Roughing the Snapper (NF: 9-4-6)	Intentional Grounding (NF: 7-5-2-c)
	Illegal Touching (NF: 7-5-13)