

## The Kicking Game

**Basics:** A kick **BEGINS** when the ball is actually kicked.

A kick **ENDS** (only) **when someone secures possession**, or the play is blown dead.

A **MUFF, BAT, BOBBLE, TOUCH** does NOT end a kick.

**EVERY KICK** that breaks the plane of the Receiver's goal line is a **TOUCHBACK** regardless of who, or how many, times that kick may have been touched on the way to that goal line.

A **KICKER** becomes a kicker when his foot strikes the ball – before that he is a **RUNNER**

An **ILLEGAL** kick must be **INTENTIONAL** and is treated as a **FUMBLE**.

**Free Kicks:** Free Kick lines are **ALWAYS** 10 yards apart.

**(FK)** **Kickoff** is from the **40 YL**.

**Safety** is from **20 YL**.

First Touching applies **ONLY** between FK Restraining lines.

**K** cannot touch kick until it (both) travels 10 yards **AND** touches the ground.

**K** can recover but **NEVER CATCH a FK** (recovery must be **BEYOND** R's Free Kick line. (Sig # 33)

**K** can **RECOVER** a FK, but **NEVER ADVANCE** it (ball is DEAD when recovered)

**K** can **NEVER** score points (in R's End Zone) **WHILE THERE IS A KICK**.

(Recovery would either be in the field of play (**ball is then dead**) or breaking the plane (**Touchback**)

**R** can make a Fair Catch **IN or BEYOND** the Neutral Zone (10 yard FK belt).

### **Mechanics:**

**Linesman:** Ball should pass through your hands before **EVERY FK** – No exceptions.

**Focus on Kick** – is it kicked down into ground, or up into the air (see KCI).

FK, Out of bounds (OOB), touched by R – Ball is placed at the inbounds spot

FK OOB **untouched by R**, - FLAG, penalty against K offering 3 options: (Sig #19)

R can elect to take possession, 1<sup>st</sup> & 10, 25 yards in advance of FK spot.

R can elect to take possession, 1<sup>st</sup> & 10, at the inbounds spot.

R can elect to have K rekick, 5 yards behind the original FK spot.

**Referee:** Be wary of kicked balls reaching the R goal line. Unless there has been **POSSESSION** by R  
And a subsequent **FUMBLE** every KICK, regardless of MUFFS, BATTING, of TOUCHING  
By either team, is a **TOUCHBACK the instant The ball breaks the R goal line plane**.

Cover Catch/ Runner from UMPIRE'S hash mark to YOUR sideline, cover blocking from  
UMPIRE'S hash mark to UMPIRE'S sideline.

**Linesman/Linejudge:** When FK crosses your line drift slowly downfield behind the kick, staying wide,  
Observing blocking. Pick up runner as return comes back towards you on your side, or blockers when  
The runner is away from your side.

**Umpire:** Cover Catch/ Runner, from YOUR hash mark to YOUR sideline. Take blocking from YOUR  
Hash mark to REFEREE'S sideline.

### **Momentum: Exception**

(NF: 8-5-2-Exception) Allows for the possibility a receiver may catch or recover a kick inside his 5 Yd Line and his **momentum carries him into his own End Zone**. If the ball becomes dead in the EZ, or is fumbled OOB from the EZ without returning to the field of play, R will put the ball in play from the spot of the Catch Or recovery. (This would **NOT** be a touchback as the kick ended with possession by either catch or recovery)

### **PSK:**

**Post Scrimmage Kick Enforcement** allows the Receiving team to retain possession of the ball after they Have forced the opponents to kick, even though they commit certain fouls before possession actually changes. The requirements for PSK fouls by the Receiving team are:

- \* Foul must occur during a scrimmage kick play, other than successful FG.
- \* When the Scrimmage kick crosses the expanded NZ.
- \* Foul occurs BEYOND the expanded NZ.
- \* Before the kick ends.
- \* K does not have possession when the down ends and will not put the ball in play

**Scrimmage:** Scrimmage Kick Formation, player 10 yds behind snapper, no player in position to accept direct snap.

**Kicks** Snapper roughing protection in effect.

**Numbering Exception in effect:**

**1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> downs,** Snapper's number not restricted, snapper must be between ends on Line of Scrimmage.  
A is required to have 4 lineman numbered between 49-79.

**4<sup>th</sup> Down,** Interior linemen numbers not restricted, eligible receiver numbers assuming LOS positions are Ineligible throughout the down.

Snapper with eligible number inside the ends is ineligible.

Snapper with eligible number on end of line REMAINS ELIGIBLE if he is NOT PART of numbering Exception.

**In or Behind the Neutral Zone**

<b>What K Can Do</b>	<b>What R Can do</b>
Catch, Recover & Advance (including another Kick)	Catch, Recover & Advance
Snapper provided with additional protection.	Cannot complete a Fair Catch in or behind NZ (Ball-Dead)

**Beyond the Line**

<b>What K Can Do</b>	<b>What R Can do</b>
All fouls, after ball has been kicked until kick ends— <b>loose ball</b>	Fouls after kick are either PSK or loose ball
Fouls <b>after change of possession are basic spot</b>	Fouls <b>after change of possession are basic spot</b>
K can <b>RECOVER</b> a kick (1 <sup>st</sup> Touching) <b>CAN'T</b> advance it	R can give up right to advance in exchange for Fair Catch
K can <b>CATCH</b> a kick when “no R player is in position to catch the ball (see NF:6-5-6-b-exc) otherwise KCI – <b>Still 1<sup>st</sup> touching.</b>	<b>ANY R player</b> signaling for A Fair Catch (FC) is prohibited from blocking <b>until the kick has ended</b> – includes during a loose ball after a muff.
	When R is first to touch a kick, then muffs it, ball will belong to whoever recovers it.
	Once a FC is made, the <b>play ENDS</b> when any R player makes a catch.
	FC signal after a kick has been grounded – <b>INVALID</b> After a player gains possession is <b>ILLEGAL (Both Sig # 32)</b>

**Fair Catch (FC):** Receiver agrees to forego any opportunity to advance the ball in return for the unmolested opportunity to **CATCH** the kicked ball.

After a valid FC signal, the ball **MUST BE CAUGHT TO BE A FC**, a grounded kick is **RECOVERED, NOT CAUGHT**, therefore **NOT a FC**

Free Kick FC can be made by any receiver **IN or BEYOND** the Neutral zone.  
Scrimmage Kick FC can be made by any receiver **BEYOND** the Neutral zone.

ANY Receiver may signal for a FC when ANY LEGAL kick is in flight  
ANY Receiver who has given a **VALID or INVALID** FC signal is prohibited from blocking **UNTIL THE KICK HAS ENDED.** (Illegal Block- 15 yards signal # )

**VALID** FC Signal: The extending and lateral movement of one arm above the head by ANY R player.

**INVALID** FC Signal: **ANY** signal by a Receiver before the kick is caught or recovered that Does not meet the requirements of a Valid signal.  
After the kick has **TOUCHED A RECEIVER OR THE GROUND.** (Sig # 32)

**ILLEGAL** FC Signal: Any signal given by the runner (after he has possessed the kicked ball) (Sig # 32)  
**NO R Player may advance the ball** after a valid or invalid FC signal has been given by **ANY R player**

**Kick Catching Interference:** (NF:6-5-6) applies to Free Kicks- **In or Beyond NZ**, Scrimmage Kicks- **Beyond NZ**. R players must be Given an unhindered opportunity to catch the ball. K must not obstruct R's path to the airborne ball, whether Or not a FC signal has been given. ( Exception:, K may catch or bat a **SCRIMMAGE KICK** in flight Beyond the NZ **IF NO R PLAYER IS IN POSITION TO CATCH THE BALL.** (Sig # 33)

Free Kick: K can **NEVER** legally touch an untouched **FREE KICK** in flight.