

## THE MUSTS FOR ALL OFFICIALS

1. Know the rules!
2. Know the techniques & mechanics for the position(s) that you work.
3. Look the part: Wear the proper uniform! Be in shape! Shave the beard! Get a haircut! Hide the tattoos! A watch is all the jewelry you need! Baseball umpires wear sunglasses, football officials don't!
4. Hustle (Big Brother is watching you!!!)
5. Communicate with coaches, players, & fellow officials

## BASIC SCRIMMAGE PLAY TECHNIQUES & MECHANICS

### Referee:

1. Work on the throwing arm side of QB. At least as wide as tight end (10-12 yards deep)
2. Count offensive players and confirm with umpire. (Signals for 11 & more/less than 11)
3. At the snap, focus on action of tackle on your side.
4. Help with relay to umpire when ball is dead in side zone near or behind LOS.
5. Go to previous spot for ball relay when pass is incomplete down the field.
6. Protect the QB!!!

### Umpire:

1. Know 5 ineligible. Count offensive players & confirm with referee.
2. Work 5-7 yards deep. (10 yards on punts)
3. Pre Snap: Rule on movement of restricted linemen & defensive linemen. (whistle in mouth)
4. Read the guards @ the snap. (spit whistle out)
5. Post Snap: Blowing your whistle is not necessary unless the ball becomes dead at your feet.

### Linesman:

1. On visiting team's sideline. (Let game situation determine how wide you are.)
2. Count players of the team whose sideline you're on.
3. **YOU SET THE REAR STAKE WITH THE BACK OF YOUR FOOT ON EVERY 1<sup>ST</sup> DOWN. (GO BACK TO THE SIDELINE TO DO SO!!)**
4. Stakes should be set 6 feet off the sideline.
5. Use your clip.
6. Indicate LOS by extending your foot; then straddle the neutral zone. (Be wide.)
7. Know eligible receivers.
8. Motion man away from you is your responsibility.
9. Drop, don't throw your beanbag on OB, fumbles, spot where kick ends, etc.
10. Chief communicator to coaching staff on your sideline

### Line Judge:

1. Same as the linesman except for stake responsibilities
2. On home team's sideline
3. If scoreboard clock malfunctions or is unofficial, you are responsible for the game clock.

### Back Judge:

1. In defensive backfield: Take position 18-22 yards downfield or behind deepest defender.
2. Count the defense & confirm with wingmen.
3. Responsible for 25 second play clock (proper technique with raised hand @ 10 seconds, etc.)
4. Know your keys and eligible receiver responsibilities.
5. Work in conjunction with L & LJ on downfield responsibilities.
6. During punts, starting position is on linesman's sideline and slightly ahead of deepest receiver. Adjust if ball is snapped from the far hash mark. (**Bean bag in hand**)

## SCRIMMAGE PLAY PHILOSOPHIES

1. When in question as to a false start or illegal motion, it's a false start.
2. Keep offensive linemen legal & call only when obvious or warning to the player or coach is ignored.
3. If an offensive player lines up with head clearly behind the butt of the center, a foul must be called without a warning.
4. When in question as to whether a wide receiver or slot back is off the line, it is not a foul.
5. Wide receivers or slot backs are on the LOS if there is NO STAGGER between alignments
6. When in question, the runner fumbled, and the ball was not dead.
7. When in question, it's not a TD.
8. A non airborne runner crossing the goal line inside the pylon with the ball crossing outside the pylon extended has scored a TD!

## BLOCKING PHILOSOPHIES

1. If a player is illegally blocked or held "into" making a tackle, no foul should be called unless it's a personal foul.
2. Fouls at the point of attack, in the open field, in the tackle box, or affecting the result of the play should be called.
3. Holds occurring away from the point of attack and having no effect on the play should not be called. Personal fouls must be called.

## GOAL LINE POSITIONING & ZONES (5 Yard Line in)

### Referee:

1. Same as for scrimmage plays. Signal TD to press box side if all requirements are of a TD are met.

### Umpire:

1. Work a little closer on scrimmage plays.
2. Let the wingmen signal TD, and only blow whistle if the ball is dead at your feet.
3. On passes, determine if QB is beyond the LOS.

### Linesman & Line Judge:

1. Same position as scrimmage play
2. Be ready to pinch hard if a dive.
3. At the snap: **GET TO THE GOAL LINE & work backward.** (Reverse Mechanics)
4. Be alert for pass and act accordingly.

### Back Judge:

1. Snap on or inside the 10 yard line: Be on the end line.
2. Responsibility is end line from sideline to sideline.
3. Work in conjunction with L & LJ on passes.

## BASIC FORWARD PASS TECHNIQUES & MECHANICS

### Referee:

1. Maintain 10-12 yard cushion between you and QB to keep you out of the way.
2. Let rushers know when the QB has released the ball.
3. Be prepared to rule on intentional grounding (Confer with other officials for help.)
4. Rule on forward or backward passes.
5. Go to previous spot on incomplete passes downfield. (Take relay from umpire/wingmen.)
6. Watch action on the QB after change of possession.
7. Protect the QB!!! (He is a defenseless player)
8. Read # 7 again!!!!

### **Umpire:**

1. Move toward the LOS when you read pass.
2. Be aware of passes crossing neutral zone.
3. Holding & chop blocking by interior offensive lineman
4. Pivot & rule on low trajectory, short or trapped passes.
5. Look for ineligible downfield.
6. Assist in ball relay on downfield passes.

### **Linesman & Line Judge:**

1. When you read pass, watch action of nearest eligible lineman in pass protection until the ball is thrown.
2. Line Judge should remain on the LOS until ball leaves the area.
3. Linesman moves 5 yards downfield and observes action up to 15 yards beyond LOS & has short pass responsibility.
4. Both L & LJ have responsibility for bracketing pass receivers between you and the BJ.
5. You're primarily responsible for legality of pass near the LOS. (backward or forward.)

### **Back Judge:**

1. Responsible for action on your designated receiver from the snap until it's necessary to release him to cover other action in your zone.

### **DEFENSIVE PASS INTERFERENCE PHILOSOPHIES** (All involve physical contact.)

1. Early contact by defender who is not playing the ball is DPI.
2. Playing through the back of a receiver to get to the ball is DPI.
3. Grabbing or restricting a receiver's arm or body as he attempts to receive the ball is DPI.
4. Extending an arm (arm bar) across the body of a receiver, thus restricting him is DPI.
5. Cutting off or riding the receiver out of the path of the ball by making contact is DPI.
6. Hooking a receiver in an attempt to get the ball, which causes the receiver's body to turn is DPI.

### **OFFENSIVE PASS INTERFERENCE PHILOSOPHIES**

1. Receiver pushes or shoves off, thus creating SEPARATION in attempt to catch the pass.
2. Driving through a defender who has established position on the field
3. Blocking downfield before a forward pass crosses the neutral zone.

### **NOT OFFENSIVE PASS INTERFERENCE**

1. OPI not called if passer is legally grounding the ball.
2. OPI not called if overthrown screen pass lands beyond expanded LOS (up to 3 yards) and linemen are blocking downfield.

### **OTHER PASSING SITUATION PHILOSOPHIES**

1. When determining if untouched pass is beyond LOS, the neutral zone is expanded 1 yard.
2. Except when spiking the ball: THE QB MAY THROW THE BALL ANYWHERE IF HE IS NOT UNDER PRESSURE!!!
3. When in question, the ball crossed the neutral zone extended if the passer is outside the tackle box & throws the ball away.
4. When in question, an interception that may be inside the opponent's 1 yard line is a touchback.
5. If passer legally throws ball away, there is no penalty for ineligible players downfield.

## BASIC PUNT TECHNIQUES & MECHANICS

### Referee:

1. Position is slightly in front of & to the side of the punter's kicking foot, & wider than the tight end.
2. Position should allow you to see the kick and "protectors" at the same time.
3. Kicker is a defenseless player. Watch for "roughing" or "running into".
4. Warn kicker if he is on or outside the end line before the snap.
5. OB downfield kick in the air is your responsibility. (raised arm & chop)

### Umpire:

1. 8-10 yards off the LOS
2. Watch action on snapper by defensive player.
3. Watch for the "pull & shoot technique" by the defense.
4. Turn toward return area after players go past you.
5. Be alert for a "jailbreak" to the line judge's side

### Linesman:

1. Hold position until after kick crosses the neutral zone.
2. Cover runner in your area.
3. Clean up behind play if LJ has the runner.
4. Look for referee's signal if punt is OB in the air on your sideline.

### Line Judge:

1. Release slowly downfield when ball crosses the neutral zone.
2. The entire sideline, end line to end line is yours.
3. Same as L on 3 & 4

### Back Judge:

1. Observe action in front of ball.
2. Observe 1<sup>st</sup> touching, interference, & action by and on punt receiver(s).
3. Beanbag the spot where the kick ends.
4. Be alert for OB kick in your area.

## PUNT PLAY PHILOSOPHIES

1. Illegal block on fair catches can be called, but not if it is not in the area of the fair catch.
2. If play is a touchback, and illegal block is slight, it should not be called.
3. Any blocks that are personal fouls should always be called.

## FIELD GOAL & XTRA POINT TECHNIQUES & MECHANICS

### Referee:

1. Face the potential holder & at least 5 yards to the side.
2. Be prepared to assist on vacated sideline of LJ if a run to that side.
3. Roughing or running into kicker and holder is your call.
4. Mirror signal of LJ & BJ to the press box side.
5. Be prepared for blocked kicks plus change of possession and possible return.

### Umpire:

1. Starting position is wide favoring the LJ's side.
2. Same as #2 for Referee

### Linesman:

1. Your sideline: Responsible for legality of snap.
2. Responsible for entire LOS.
3. Get to goal line if a run.
4. If kick is blocked, know if it crossed the neutral zone.

### **Line Judge:**

1. Starting position is 5-7 yards deep behind upright on your side
2. Adjust position to rule on kick.
3. If kick is outside your upright, give “sweeping” signal away from upright.
4. If it’s a run, move along the endline to the sideline and then to goal line.

### **Back Judge:**

1. Same position as LJ’s only behind upright on linesman’s side
2. Same as # 2 & #3 for LJ
3. If ball strikes crossbar, you are responsible for the result.
4. Same as #4 for LJ
5. Sound whistle when ball is dead.

### **FIRST DOWN MEASUREMENTS: (POSITIONS & TECHNIQUE)**

1. Linesman: Has the clip which should be positioned on back edge of yard line
2. Umpire: Takes forward stake when linesman/stake crew approaches him with chains
3. Line Judge: Places foot at the back edge of line where clip will be placed
4. Back Judge: Places hand on ball to secure it from moving. Should take kneeling position in front of ball
5. Referee: Determine whether it’s a first down or short. If ball is outside the hash mark and short, move to in bounds mark and re-spot.

### **END OF PERIOD (Crew Responsibilities)**

1. Referee & Umpire: Record yard line, down, distance on game card and proceed to other end of field. (Referee has the ball.)
2. Line Judge: Get proper yard line and field position and immediately proceed to corresponding yard line at other end of field to mark spot for R & U.
3. Back Judge: In charge of down marker. Proceed with the crewman holding down marker to corresponding yard line at opposite end of field.
4. Linesman: Grab clip, REVERSE THE CHAINS, & proceed to corresponding yard line @ the other end of field.

### **FULL TIMEOUT POSITIONING & RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Referee: In offensive backfield
  2. Umpire: Over the ball
  3. Linesman & Line Judge: Take positions with their respective teams near sideline.
  4. Back Judge: In middle of field behind defensive backfield. You are responsible for timing the timeout and notifying the referee when 30 seconds remain.
- All: Responsible for recording period, time, kind & number of timeout.  
Suggestion: Parade Rest looks good!

**ALL OFFICIALS REMINDER:** Mirror any signal when necessary: Ex.: Wind the clock; Stop the clock. (The clock operator, coaches, and your crewmates need to know!!!)

**SUPPLEMENTARY SIGNAL CHART**



**Receiver off the line/Five seconds left on play clock**



**11 players**



**No catch: Receiver out of bounds**



**Unbalanced line**



**Pass juggled**



**Fourth-down fumble rules apply**



**Reset play clock to 25 seconds  
(Use both hands to have play  
clock reset to 40 seconds)**



**Ball dead/  
start play clock/10 seconds left  
on play clock**



**Recount players**



**More than one receiver  
off the line**



**Catch**



**Substitution in progress  
TV timeout**



**10 players on the field**