

# 2018 Rules Summary

(NCAA + UIL Exceptions)



**Dallas Football Officials Association**



# Objective

- The intent of this guide is to help you understand and familiarize you with the rules pertaining to UIL High School Varsity and Junior High/Middle School games throughout Texas.
- It's important you also read & study the current NCAA Rules and UIL Exceptions to get the best understanding possible on the rules to be used when officiating.

## Disclaimer

The information covered has been condensed and paraphrased to help you understand both the intent and the philosophy of the rules. The current NCAA Rule Book & UIL Exceptions are the final authority.

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- Team A will kickoff from the 40 yard line
- All Team A players, except kicker, must be no more than 5 yards behind A's restraining line from the Ready-For-Play until the ball is kicked
- Team A can keep the ball if they recover kick
  - beyond B's restraining line –OR–
  - after B touches kick –OR–
  - after ball touches ground, official or player beyond B's restraining line (even if it subsequently bounces back)
- Team A must have at least 4 players on either side of kicker when kicked
- Team A player that goes out of bounds and returns (unless forced)
  - 5 yard penalty from Previous Spot or Succeeding Spot where ball belongs to B
- Team A may not block until eligible to touch kick
  - 5 yard penalty from Previous Spot or Succeeding Spot where ball belongs to B

- Penalty for free kick out of bounds (untouched by inbounds Team B) is at Team B's option:
  - 30 yards Beyond Kicking Team Restraining Line, Team B 1<sup>st</sup> & 10 –OR–
  - 5 yards from the Previous Spot and Team A re-kick –OR–
  - 5 yards from the Out of Bounds Spot, Team B 1<sup>st</sup> & 10
- If the result of the play is a touchback or a B player completes a catch after a valid or invalid fair catch signal is made inside his 25-yard line, the ball will be put at the B-25
- If free kick is caught by an airborne in-bounds Team B player who lands out-of-bounds, it is **not** a foul against Team A for kick out-of-bounds
- If free kick is touched by Team B player who is straddling the sideline, or by **any** out of bounds player, the ball becomes dead and it is a foul against Team A for kick out-of-bounds
- Team B right to accept spot of Illegal Touching violation is canceled if a penalty is accepted (penalty acceptance has priority)

- Any Team A foul during a free kick (except Kick Catch Interference) can be enforced from
  - Previous Spot –OR–
  - Dead Ball Spot if Team B has possession at the end of the down –OR–
  - 25 Yard Line if play results in touchback
- A player is not considered to have touched a free kick if
  - He is blocked into the ball by an opponent –OR–
  - An opponent bats the ball into the player
- Game clock starts when ball is legally touched in the field of play
- Team B is prohibited from intentionally aligning three or more players shoulder-to-shoulder for the purpose of blocking [15 yard penalty for Illegal Wedge]
  - Exception - If result is a touchback or Team A was in obvious onside-kick formation, there is no foul

- Scrimmage Kick Formation (allows for numbering exceptions):
  - No Team A player in position to receive a hand-to-hand snap under snapper's legs
  - Must be obvious that a kick will be attempted (inclusive of formation for punts, i.e. "other backs split wide" does not satisfy) and:
    - At least one Team A player 10 or more yards behind NZ, - OR -
    - A potential holder and a potential kicker 7 or more yards behind the NZ for place kick.
- Team A can recover but cannot advance a kick that lands beyond the neutral zone and then bounces back behind the neutral zone
  - If touched by B after the kick goes beyond neutral zone, A would maintain possession
- Ball is dead if kick lands in Team B's end zone (unless touched by B after kick crosses the neutral zone)
- If Team A commits Illegal Touching by batting the ball in Team B's end zone, B may elect a touchback

## Scrimmage Kicks (cont'd)

- Team A player that goes out of bounds and returns (unless forced out)
  - 5 yard penalty from **Previous Spot** or **Succeeding Spot** belonging to B
- Any Team A foul (except Kick Catch Interference) prior to or during a scrimmage kick can be enforced from the **Dead Ball Spot** where it belongs to Team B (except field goal attempts) if the ball crosses the neutral zone
- A player is not considered to have touched a scrimmage kick if
  - He is blocked into the ball by an opponent –OR–
  - An opponent bats the ball into the player
- Blocking below the waist
  - Prohibited by all players (A or B) from the time of the snap (not the kick) if a kick is made
- Team B players in the tackle box who leap into the plane directly above the frame of the body of an opponent to try to block a punt is a 15 yard personal foul, automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down
  - Jumping straight up without breaking that plane or between players is not a foul



- **Field Goal**

- If unsuccessful FG attempt is declared dead beyond the neutral zone, ball is returned to **Previous Spot** or **20 Yard Line** (unless touched by Team B after kick crosses neutral zone)
- **Note:** The **Previous Spot** or **20 Yard Line** will also serve as the basic spot for post-scrimmage-kick enforcement under these conditions

- **3-on-1** by Team B on FG or Try Kicks

- Three Team B Players are prohibited from aligning shoulder-to-shoulder in the blocking zone and moving forward together, as a unit, to make contact against a single Team A Player.
  - Live ball foul, five yard penalty on Team B, enforced from the **Previous Spot**

## Offense

- Formation:
  - Team A must have at least 5 linemen wearing numbers 50-79 on the line of scrimmage (exception: scrimmage kick formation). These players are allowed to interlock legs
  - Team A may not have more than 4 players in the backfield
  - One Team A player that is not a lineman may be in motion at the snap as long as he's not moving toward Team B's goal line
- Shift / False Starts: **After huddle** or **shift**, all Team A players must be set for at least one second.
  - If Team A comes to a one second stop and then illegally shifts, it is a live ball illegal shift foul.
  - If Team A does not come to a one-second stop and the ball is legally snapped, it is a dead-ball false start. The play should be shut down

## Defense

- Team B is prohibited from entering the neutral zone causing 'threatened' Team A linemen to react. A Team B player may threaten a maximum of three Team A linemen.
  - Team B player enters directly toward a Team A player, the 2 adjacent linemen are also threatened.
  - Team B player enters in a gap, only those 2 linemen are threatened.
  - Team B player aligned in a stationary position within one yard of the line of scrimmage may not make quick, abrupt or exaggerated actions that are not part of normal defensive player movement.

- **Pass Eligibility Lost**
  - Team A player goes out of bounds (unless forced out and returns immediately)
- **Pass Eligibility Gained (or Regained)**
  - Ball touches Team B player (or official)
- **Pass Interference Restrictions End**
  - Any touching (Team A, Team B or official)
- **Illegal Touching by an originally ineligible player**
  - 5 yards from Previous Spot (not spot of foul) and no loss of down
- **Illegal Touching by an original eligible player who steps out of bounds on his own and becomes an inbounds player**
  - Loss of Down from Previous Spot
- **Team B fouls prior to or during a forward pass includes an automatic first down if:**
  - Pass crossed the neutral zone untouched by Team A or Team B –AND–
  - Team B foul was a contact foul against an eligible receiver –AND–
  - Team B foul occurred beyond the neutral zone –AND–
  - Team B foul occurred before pass was touched

- **A player completes a catch if the following criteria are met:**
  - Secures control of a ball in flight (with hands or arms) **–AND–**
  - Is an inbounds player and touches the ground in bounds with any part of his body **–AND–**
  - Maintains control long enough to perform an act common to the game (such as advance, pitch, hand or protect himself)
    - **Note 1:** *He does not have to perform one of these acts, he must simply control it long enough to have the opportunity*
    - **Note 2:** *The criteria for completing a catch is the same whether in the field of play or end zone. The only difference is that you cannot have a catch/fumble in the end zone (that would be a touchdown)*
- **If a player is going to the ground in the act of completing the catch then:**
  - He must maintain control when he contacts the ground (even on the sideline)
    - **Note 1:** If he loses and regains control of the ball when he hits the ground in the field of play or end zone, it can still be ruled a catch if the ball did not touch the ground
    - **Note 2:** If he loses and regains control of the ball when he hits the ground on the sideline or anywhere else out of bounds, it is an incomplete pass

- Initial Impetus is caused by the player who carries, passes, kicks, fumbles, or snaps a ball from the field of play into the end zone.
- Once the ball is loose, impetus can only be changed if a player
  - Bats the ball after it strikes the ground
  - Kicks the ball (regardless of whether it has struck the ground)
  - Contacts the ball after it has comes to rest
- Muffing a loose ball that is still rolling and batting a ball in flight do not change the original impetus!

- **Basic Spot** is normally:
  - **End of Related Run** ...for running plays that end beyond the neutral zone
  - **Previous Spot** ...otherwise
- Offensive Fouls that occur behind the basic spot (but beyond the neutral zone) are enforced from the **Spot of the Foul** (this is the "1" in 3-and-1)
- Offensive Fouls (all contact fouls and illegal touching) that occur behind the neutral zone are enforced from the **Previous Spot**. The only fouls that enforced from behind the neutral zone are:
  - Intentional Grounding
  - Illegal Forward Pass
  - Illegal Batting
  - Illegal Kicking
  - Live-ball UNS Team A foul
- Contact Fouls by Team A in their own end zone result in a safety
- Defensive Fouls are never enforced from behind the neutral zone

- Criteria for Post Scrimmage Kick Enforcement (PSK)
  - Foul occurs during scrimmage kick
  - Ball crosses neutral zone
  - Team B ends with possession
- No PSK on try or extra periods
- PSK does not apply on a successful field goal (penalty is enforced from **Previous Spot**)
- If punt ends in Team B end zone then PSK spot is the **20 Yard Line**
- If unsuccessful FG attempt (untouched by Team B beyond NZ) is declared dead beyond NZ then PSK spot is the **Previous Spot** (if snapped outside the 20 yard line) or **20 Yard Line** (if snapped inside the 20 yard line)
- If Team A bats a kick (punt) in Team B end zone (touchback) and kick is untouched by Team B beyond NZ then PSK spot is the **20 Yard Line**

# Penalty Enforcement when result is a Touchback, Momentum Exception or Safety

- If the result of a play is a **touchback** then
  - The basic spot of enforcement is the 20 yard line
    - Fouls by Team B behind the **20 yard line** are enforced from the **spot of the foul**
    - Fouls by Team B in the **end zone** result in a **safety**
    - Fouls by Team A are enforced from the **20 yard line**
- If the result of a play is the **momentum exception** then
  - The basic spot of enforcement is the momentum spot
    - Fouls by Team B behind the **momentum spot** are enforced from the **spot of the foul**
    - Fouls by Team B in the **end zone** result in a **safety**
    - Fouls by Team A are enforced from the **momentum spot**
- If the result of a play (after a change of possession) is a **safety** then
  - The basic spot of enforcement is the goal line
    - Fouls by Team B result in a **safety**
    - Fouls by Team A are enforced from the **goal line**
- Note: If Team B player fumbles the ball forward from his end zone and the ball goes out of bounds in the field of play then the **touchback / momentum spot** are still in effect (treat as if ball never left end zone).



- During Touchdown
  - Personal fouls by opponents of scoring team and dead-ball unsportsmanlike fouls by either team are enforced on the try or succeeding kickoff (offended team has choice)
- During Dead Ball Interval between Touchdown and Try
  - Personal (or unsportsmanlike) fouls after the touchdown but before the ready for play by either team are enforced on the try or succeeding kickoff (offended team has choice)
  - Fouls after the ready for play are enforced prior to the next snap
- During Try
  - Personal foul and live-ball UNS fouls by Team B – Team A may keep point(s) and have penalty enforced from succeeding spot
  - Live ball fouls penalized as dead ball fouls during the try are enforced on the succeeding kickoff (or succeeding spot in extra periods)
  - Defensive Pass Interference penalties are enforced  $\frac{1}{2}$  the distance if try was attempted from the B3 (declined by rule if try successful)
- During Field Goal
  - Team A cannot keep points and have penalty enforced unless PF or UNS against B. Team A decides if points remain and PF or UNS carries over (including extra periods) or enforce at previous spot and re-play down.

- Team B player fouls after giving a valid or invalid fair catch signal during **free** kick he did not touch
  - 15 yards from **Spot of Foul** (not previous spot)
- Illegal kick beyond neutral zone
  - 5 yards from **Previous Spot** (not spot of foul) and **Loss of Down** and **Ball Becomes Dead**
- Return kick (kick after change of possession)
  - 5 yards from **Spot of Foul** and **Ball Becomes Dead**
- Team A player that goes out of bounds and returns and touches a legal forward pass (unless forced out **OR** pass touches Team B **OR** pass touches official)
  - **Loss of Down** from **Previous Spot** (not all-but-one)
- Personal fouls by the defense during legal forward pass plays completed beyond the neutral zone
  - 15 yard penalty enforced at the end of the last run, **Exception** - Change of possession occurs during the down

- Kick-catching interference (free kick or scrimmage kick)
  - 15 yards from **Spot of Foul** (not previous spot)
  - For a foul on a free kick play behind the B-25-yard line against a player who has given a valid fair catch signal, 15 yards from B-25
    - Receiver gets 1 yard, shoulder-to-shoulder, directly in front of him of which A cannot enter until B touches the ball
    - For free kicks, protection is not provided if the kick strikes the ground more than once.
- Illegal forward handing to teammate who was on the line and did not turn 180 degrees to receive the ball (and must be 2 yards behind line to legally receive ball)
  - 5 yards from **Spot of Foul** and Loss of Down
- Throwing the ball backwards intentionally out of bounds to conserve time
  - 5 yards from **Spot of Foul** and Loss of Down
- Illegal Forward Pass / Intentional Grounding
  - **Spot of Foul** and Loss of Down if thrown to avoid loss of yardage or to conserve time
  - 5 yards from **Spot of Foul** and **Loss of Down** otherwise
  - **Note:** Not a foul if there is an eligible receiver in the area. Receiver does not need an “opportunity to catch the pass”

- Planned loose ball
  - 5 yards from **Previous Spot** and Loss of Down
- Delay of Game Penalty if game clock was running [5 yards]
  - Clock on snap if Scrimmage Kick Formation or Team A intentionally consuming time
  - Clock on ready otherwise

### Restrictions on Offensive Players

#### – At the snap

- Linemen with initial position completely inside the tackle box (except TE) may legally block below the waist inside the tackle box (including initial line play) until the ball leaves the tackle box.
- All other players are allowed to block below the waist only from the front
- Exceptions:
  - Team A players may not block below the waist when the block occurs five yards or more beyond the neutral zone.
  - Backs and other Players outside the tackle box at the snap, or any time after the snap, or in motion at the snap may not block low towards the original position of the ball
  - Once the ball has left the tackle box, no player may block low toward his own end lineAfter the ball leaves the tackle box

**Note:** A block is considered “from the front” if it occurs between “10 o’clock and 2 o’clock” forward of the player being blocked.

### Restrictions On Defensive Players

- Allowed within an area 5 yards on either side of the line of scrimmage from sideline to sideline
- Prohibited against:
  - A player in position to receive a backward pass
  - A pass receiver beyond the neutral zone until a pass is no longer possible by rule

### Free Kick

- Prohibited (both teams) for entire down

### Scrimmage Kick

- Prohibited (both teams) for entire down if Team A kicks the ball

### Change of Team Possession

- Prohibited (both teams) for remainder of down

- A player is prohibited from going out of bounds to block an opponent that is out of bounds
  - The block is illegal if the blocker and the player being blocked are **both** clearly out of bounds at the time of the block.
  - The block is legal if the block starts inbounds and continues across the sideline.
- Enforcement: **The spot of the foul is where the blocker crosses the sideline to go out of bounds to block.** PSK Enforcement could apply.
- **Note:** if the block out of bounds happens during a kick and the block is by a receiving team member, the kicking team player that goes out of bounds on his own may not return inbounds without committing a foul in his own right.

- Offensive Lineman positioned within 5 yards of the middle lineman (blocking zone)
  - Legal in 10x6 Rectangular Area (Blocking Zone)
    - Ball must be in blocking zone (and never left it) at time of clip
    - Player may not leave zone then reenter and clip
    - Contact must be above the knee
    - Blocking zone disintegrates when the ball leaves it.



- Combination Block with or without delay anywhere on the field (except against runner):
  - High/Low
  - Low/High
- Notes:
  1. “Low” means at the thigh or below
  2. High/High and Low/Low combination blocks are legal (no foul),
  3. If defender initiates contact with offender, and then that defender is blocked low, the block is legal (no foul).

- If the offense rushes quickly to the line from the sideline or the huddle:
  - Umpire will cover the ball and allow defense an opportunity to match up
    - If play clock expires it will be a Delay of Game (DOG) foul against Team A
- If the offense is at the line of scrimmage and quickly substitutes and it appears that a quick snap is imminent then the Referee will shut down the play and:
  - Give warning unless play clock expires which would be a DOG on A, 5 yard penalty. Warn the Head Coach that the next occurrence will result in a 15 yard Unsportsmanlike Conduct (UNS) penalty

- **Illegal Substitution (Live Ball Fouls – 5 yards)**
  - 12<sup>th</sup> or more player (either team) running off the field at the snap
  - Substitute (either team) enters and then departs during same dead ball interval
  - Player (either team) departs then re-enters during same dead ball interval
  - 12 or more participating players detected during or after a down is over
- **Illegal Substitution (Dead Ball Fouls – 5 yards)**
  - Substitute (either team) enters from outside of designated team area and enters the formation
  - Team A breaks huddle with 12 or more players
  - Replaced player (either team) does not leave within 3 seconds; departing player must depart on their sideline and proceed to their team area
  - More than 11 players in formation

- Batting a Loose Ball
  - Forward Pass in Flight
    - Legal: Any eligible player in any direction
  - Backward Pass in Flight
    - Legal: Bat backward (can be batted forward by non-passing team)
    - Illegal: Bat forward by passing team [10 yards but no loss of down]
  - Fumble in Flight or Grounded Loose Ball in Field of Play
    - Legal: Bat backward
    - Illegal: Bat forward [10 yards and Loss of Down]
  - Fumble in Flight or Grounded Loose Ball in End Zone
    - Illegal: [10 yards and Loss of Down]
      - Exception: Team A batting a kick in opponent's end zone
- Kicking a Loose Ball
  - Always a foul [10 yards and Loss of Down]

## Try Exceptions

- Fourth-down fumble rule is in effect (on a Team A fumble before change of possession)
- Any personal foul or unsportsmanlike conduct foul by Team B may be enforced from succeeding spot if try is successful.
- Kick Catch Interference penalties are declined (or combined to form offsetting penalties)
- Defensive Pass Interference fouls are enforced  $\frac{1}{2}$  the distance to the goal if the ball was snapped from the 3 yard line.
- If there is a change of possession and both teams foul during the try, the Team B foul will dictate whether the try is replayed:
  - Team B fouls prior to change of possession – Replay Try from Previous Spot (penalties offset)
  - Team B fouls after the change of possession (“clean hands”) – Try ends; no replay
- PSK fouls by Team B (if accepted) are enforced from **Previous Spot**
- After a change of possession, unsportsmanlike conduct fouls, live ball fouls enforced as dead ball fouls and flagrant personal fouls are enforced from the **Succeeding Spot** (i.e., carryover)
- If Team A commits a foul that includes a loss of down, the try ends (no score)

- The ball shall be put in play by the team that scored a six-point touchdown. If a touchdown is scored during a down in which time in the fourth period expires, the try shall not be attempted unless the point(s) would affect the outcome of the game. *(Exception: If the scoring team is ahead by one or two points, they have the option to forego the try).*
  - UIL EXCEPTION: (8-3-2-a) Varsity district games using "positive points" tie breaking criteria will use the following exception:
    - Coaches in the game should inform the referee before the game (pre-game conference) that the game will be played using the UIL "positive points" exception. Failure to notify the referee prior to the coin toss does not negate specific DEC rules relating to "positive points". If notification is given to the referee, the tie game will be played with the following exception to rule 8-3-2-a:
    - If a touchdown is scored during a down in which time in the fourth period expires, the scoring team may elect to play the try down. If the team on defense refuses to play the try down, the Referee may award the number of points the team could have scored had the defense played the try down without the snap of the ball being required.

- If Team B gains possession the play continues but the Team A series will end (A can score on a double change of possession but cannot regain 1st-and-10)
- Only 2-point Try's may be scored from the 3rd extra period on
- Exactly one timeout per team per period (No carryover from regulation to overtime and no carryover across overtime periods)
- If there is a change of possession and both teams foul during the down, the Team B foul will dictate whether the down is replayed:
  - Team B fouls prior to change of possession – Replay down from **Previous Spot** (penalties offset); Team A series continues.
  - Team B fouls after the change of possession (“clean hands”) – Series ends; no replay
- PSK fouls by Team B (if accepted) are enforced from **Previous Spot**
- After a change of possession, unsportsmanlike conduct fouls, live ball fouls enforced as dead ball fouls and flagrant personal fouls are enforced from the **Succeeding Spot** (i.e., carryover)

### **Sideline interferes with official (*Game Administration Interference*)**

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense: Warning
- 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> offense: 5 yard penalty from **Succeeding Spot**
- 4<sup>th</sup> and subsequent offenses: 15 yard penalty from **Succeeding Spot**

### **Sideline interferes with live ball or player (*Illegal Interference*)**

- 15 yard penalty from the **Basic Spot**
  - Referee may enforce any penalty he considers equitable including a score
- Additionally, if the non-player touches a loose ball, the play is immediately dead and inadvertent whistle procedures also apply

### **Sideline interference with an Official (physical interference)**

- Live ball foul treated as a dead ball foul - 15 yards from the succeeding spot; Automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down for Team B fouls; This is a Team charged UNS foul.

### **Coach enters field to question, protest, or in disagreement (excessive manner)**

- 15 yard penalty from the **Basic Spot**
  - This unsportsmanlike conduct foul counts as one of the two leading to disqualification from the game.
  - If the Head Coach disqualifies himself – they may designate a new Head Coach



### Roughing the Passer

- No foul if defender is legally/illegally blocked into passer
- Foul if unabated defender forcibly hits a passer at the knee area or below. “Forcibly hitting” includes rolling into or lunging into. No foul for “conventional” tackle by defender grappling/wrapping without forcible contact with head or shoulders.

### Roughing the Kicker

- No foul if defender is blocked into kicker (legally or illegally)
- No foul for Roughing the Kicker (or Running into Kicker) if kicker is outside tackle box (more than 5 yards wide from position where ball was snapped). However other personal fouls still apply.
- If Player B1 touches the kick and Player B2 illegally contacts the kicker, it is still a foul against Team B. Only the player that touches is exempt from roughing/running into penalties.

## Unsportsmanlike Conduct

- Non-contact fouls such as Taunting, Excessive Celebration, Disrespecting an official
- Dead-ball contact fouls such as pushing, shoving, and striking that occur clearly after the ball is dead and is not a part of game action as well as using forcible contact to push or pull an opponent off the pile
- Contacting an official (plus ejection)
- Team-A rushing a substitution to gain an advantage for 2nd time (1st offense is a warning)
- Are considered 'common' fouls (live ball or dead ball)
- Team A live ball fouls are enforced via 3 and 1 enforcement
- Team B fouls include an automatic first down
- When in doubt, it is a dead-ball foul
- Ejection: Two UNS fouls on player or coach.

## Personal Fouls

- Automatic first down (if foul against defense)
- Contact fouls such as:
  - Late Hits
  - Fighting (plus ejection)
    - If a player's unsportsmanlike act (such as taunting) causes opponent to physically retaliate it is considered fighting and both players are ejected

## Defenseless Player / Targeting

The following players are considered **Defenseless** and are given *targeting* protection:

- *Passer* - player in the act or just after throwing a pass
- *Receiver* - player in act of completing a catch who has not had an opportunity to protect himself
- *Kicker* - player in the act of kicking or after kicking the ball (protection continues for remainder of down)
- *Returner* – player attempting to catch or recover a kick
- *Prone* – player on the ground
- *Passive* – *player obviously out of the play*
- *Blind-sided* – *player who receives a blind-side block*
- *Downed* – *runner already in grasp of opponent where forward progress is stopped*
- *Quarterback* – *quarterback any time after a change of possession*
- *Sliding Ball Carrier* – *runner that’s obviously given himself up and is sliding feet-first*

If any **Defenseless** player is **targeted**, it is a 15 yard penalty and the offending player is disqualified. **Targeting** is:

- **Making forcible** contact to the head or neck area of a defenseless opponent with the head, forearm, helmet or shoulder –**OR**–
- **Making forcible** contact with the crown of the helmet against a defenseless opponent

- No defensive player can run forward from beyond the neutral zone and **leave his feet or leap into the plane directly above the frame of the body of an opponent** to attempt to block a field goal or try. It is not a foul if the player was aligned in a stationary position within one yard of the line of scrimmage when the ball was snapped. It no longer matters if the player lands on another player or not.
- No defensive player attempting to block, bat or catch a kick may step, jump, stand on a teammate, place hands on teammate to get additional height (leverage), be picked up, elevated, propelled or pushed by a teammate.
- No defensive player who is inside the tackle box can leap into the plane directly above the frame of the body of an opponent in an attempt to block a punt
  - It is not a foul if the defensive player tries to block the punt by jumping straight up without attempting to leap over the opponent or if a defensive player attempts to leap through or over the gap between players.

- All players are prohibited from grabbing the inside back collar of the shoulder pads, jersey, nameplate area, or the inside collar of the side of the shoulder pads or jersey, and immediately pulling the ball carrier down.
- Exceptions:
  - Does not apply to a ball carrier or potential passer who is inside the tackle box
  - Reminder: The tackle box disintegrates once the ball leaves it

Any player whose helmet comes completely off, other than as a direct result of a foul, must leave the game for the next down (unless offending team call timeout)

- Game clock will be stopped:
  - Immediately if the player is the ball carrier
  - After the down if any other player
  - Play clock set to 40 if player is on defense -or- Play clock set to 25 if player is on offense

Player who loses helmet must not continue to participate in the play unless it is in the immediate action in which he is engaged

- 15 yard foul personal foul
- Contact against player is a foul unless in immediate action (15 yard personal foul, automatic 1st down if by Team B prior to change of team possession)

- Equipment:
  - Knee pads must be covered by pants and knee pads and pants must cover the knee
  - Jerseys must be tucked; Jerseys that are taped, tied or knotted are illegal
  - Players cannot have non-jerseys un-tucked and cannot have stomach exposed.
  - All team members must wear socks or leg coverings that are identical in color, design and length
  - Cleats that are longer than ½ inch are illegal (player wearing illegal cleats is DQ'ed by rule)
  - Umpire must inspect/approve tape or bandage on hand, wrist, forearm or elbow
  - Visible bandannas are illegal
  - Eye shields, **Eyeglasses, and goggles** that are not clear are illegal unless a player has been issued a current UIL medical exemption form approved by the UIL. It must be presented to the Referee prior to the game in order for the player to wear it.
  - Gloves may be of any color
  - Towels (no smaller than 4" x 12" and no larger than 6" x 12") may be of school color and may contain school name, school initials and/or mascot insignia. Towels may not contain numbers.
  - Player must leave game for at least 1 down until fixed or else use a timeout. Can be fixed without leaving game or using a timeout if becomes illegal during down
- Numbering:
  - A player that changes his jersey number during the game must report the change to the Referee.
  - Two players wearing the same number are not allowed to play the same position during the game.
    - 15 yard penalty for Unsportsmanlike Conduct

## Ready for play versus Snap

- Runner out of bounds / Backward Pass out of bounds / Fumble backwards out of bounds
  - *Snap*
- Fumble forward out of bounds
  - *Ready* – regardless of clock status (*return ball to spot of fumble*)
- Team B ends down in possession of ball and no scoring (TD, FG, Safety) occurred
  - *Snap* – if Team B is next to snap the ball
  - *Ready* – if enforcement of a Team B penalty results in Team A retaining possession (*Exception: Snap if scrimmage kick down*)
- Start on Snap - If during last 2:00 of the half, game clock is stopped to administer a penalty by the team ahead (or tied) at the option of the offended team

## Minimum time for another play

- If game clock is stopped and will start on the ready
  - *With three or more seconds remaining in quarter, the ball can be grounded and there may be another play.*
  - *With two seconds or less seconds remaining in the quarter, there is time for only one play.*



- Generally, the play clock will be reset to **40 seconds** and start at the end of each event below unless noted otherwise. This includes:
  - Ball dead inbounds or out of bounds (even if a first down is awarded)
  - Incomplete Pass
  - Injury Timeout for Team B player (play clock starts after injured player is cleared from playing area)
  - Helmet off Team B player not due to foul (play clock starts on referee signal)
  - After a touchdown prior to the try
  - After a free kick and prior to the down following the free kick down
- Play clock will be set to **25 seconds** if ball is not ready to be snapped when play clock reads 25
- The play clock countdown will be reset to **25 seconds** if one of the following occurs:
  - Start of Period (or start of series in Extra Periods)
  - Free Kick
  - Try for Point
  - Change of Possession
  - Timeout
    - Charged Team or Media Timeout
  - Injury Timeout for Team A player
  - Helmet off Team A player
  - Other Administrative Stoppage

## Inadvertent Whistle

- Sounded while ball in player possession
  - Team in possession may take ball at the spot (down counts) or replay the down from previous spot
- Sounded while ball is loose following backward pass, fumble or illegal forward pass
  - Team in possession may take ball at end of run (down counts) or replay the down from previous spot
- Sounded during legal forward pass, scrimmage kick or free kick
  - Replay down from previous spot
- Sounded while Team B is in possession on try or in extra periods
  - Down ends. No replay
- Penalty enforcement (accepted penalty) or accepting the spot of Illegal Touching (on a kick) take precedence over the inadvertent whistle procedure