

The Game

I. Lead Ref (L)

- Ref whistles to signal game about to start;
- Check to see if jumpers have both feet in the center circle facing their basket;
- All other players must have feet outside of the center circle and be given space;
- Step into circle and players should “hold their spots.” State what direction each color is heading (opposite their bench to begin game);
- Blow whistle to acknowledge start of game. Throwing official will then toss the ball straight-up and a distance slightly higher than the players can jump;
- The jumpers can touch the ball twice before it strikes the floor. It is the responsibility of both officials to determine whether or not the jump was good (was the ball thrown straight up, did the toss favor one player or another, did any player illegally touch the ball?); and
- Holds the position in the center of the court until ball control is established. Normally assumes trail position.

II. Trail Ref (T)

- Count players on the floor;
- Prepare to start stopwatch once the ball is touched;
- Monitor toss;
- Follows the team in possession of the jump. Normally assumes lead position; and
- Has clock at end each quarter and end of game in a 2-person.

Note: If there is only 1 clock in gym and the Trail back is to the clock, Trail and Lead will communicate for Lead to have clock while Trail has flight of the ball and everything else.

III. Center Ref (C)

- Start point is free throw line extended;
- Backside rebounds;
- Off ball coverage;
- Has clock at end quarters and end of game; and
- Backcourt Transitions he has sideline to sideline, when there is full court pressure.

Note: Trail or Center Official is opposite scorer table are responsible for the clock. If both C and T, indicate the 3 point attempt, T referees the Defense on shooter and stays with the shot; C releases and covers rebounding while C/T should mirror the other officials “good” signal.

IV. Playing the Game

- The “**lead**” official is positioned on the end line under the target basket, and the sideline on his or her side of the court. The “**trail**” official is in the mid court area and has everything else. For an “out of bounds” call, **Lead** has the closest end line and the sideline on his or her side of the court. **Trail** has the other sideline and division line in case the ball goes backcourt. Use box-in method.

V. In-bounding the ball

- The player throwing the ball in must remain in the same spot (within 3 feet); After a made basket the in-bounding team is allowed to run the end line and not maintain a “spot”;
- Never administer a throw - in under a basket; and
- On a throw-in pass, the defense cannot have any part of them cross the boundary line.

VI. In-bounding spots-proper locations

- The throw in spot is nearest spot out of bounds from where the violation, out of bounds, or non-shooting foul occurred. If the throw-in spot is behind a backboard, the throw-in should be made from the free throw line extended.

VII. Administration of Free Throws

When a foul is called and free throws are to be taken, the referee that made the call has immediate responsibilities:

- Signal with a loud, short whistle and raise closed fist. Report foul to benches and report to site supervisor for recording;
- Color;
- Number;
- Announce foul;
- Announce number of shots;
- If call is made by lead official, the other referee will secure the ball, move into lead, and manage lining up the players;
- If call is made by trail official, the other official will secure the ball and retain his or her position on the court under the basket;
- Any player, other than the one shooting free-throws, who does not occupy a marked lane space, must be behind the three point line extended and behind the 3 point line; and
- Defense may choose to not play 4 on the line, but offense cannot play more than 2 plus the shooter on the lines. Space must remain unoccupied. Leave lowest space on both sides of the lane empty. Remind players they cannot enter the lane until the ball makes contact with the rim. If the player shooting the free throw does not hit the rim, it is ruled a violation.

VIII. Non-shooting Foul

When a violation or a non-shooting foul is called, the referee will announce color, spot, and point to the location where the ball will be taken out and report to the site supervisor to record.

- Color
- Number
- Announce foul

IX. What is “Preventative Officiating”?

- Keep from happening.....stop it once observed;
- Be tolerant;
- Know who is involved in the game;
- Stay objective and remain focused;
- Do not take the game personally;
- Decide what violation/foul deserves a call; use common sense; and
- Be polite, do not yell.

X. A few “Preventative Officiating” comments to say:

- “Hands off”;
- “Arms straight up”;
- “Watch your hands”;
- “Don’t reach”;
- “No pushing”;
- Speak to the player(s);
- If coach(s) disagree, advice that player to too emotional at this time and needs a rest.

XI. Advantage/Disadvantage

- Remember, not all contact is a foul, or a reason to blow your whistle. Sometimes it is better to let the kids “play through it”. Let the play develop and finish, then determine if you should make a call, or no-call. You need to determine if there was incidental contact (did contact cause the player to move, was contact violent, did contact disrupt play). Remember all of this has occurred within a split second, you need to be watching the play. Another thing to think about is.... did the player making the contact gain an advantage? If contact is severe, you should always blow your whistle. If contact involves the head or face, blow your whistle, and make the appropriate call; and
- Make sure you see the whole play, as you will be in a better position to make a determination as whether or not you should make a call or not

Tip:** Are you supposed to call every foul? If you blow your whistle every time a foul or violation occurs, the game would never get done. Experience will help you to develop a better sense of the game and what you should call, or not call. **Preventative officiating works.

XII. An example of watching the play unfold completely.

Block/Charge: A player drives to the basket and goes in the air to shoot with a legally established defender (one who has both feet on the floor and is in place prior to the shooter arriving) in the path of the shooter. If the shooter adjusts his position in the air so as to avoid contact with the defender, but still make incidental contact, most of the time, a foul should not be called because neither player gained an advantage. You must consider the position of the defender with regard to the basket (where they are standing directly under the basket). One of the few times the defender can be in a legal position directly under the basket, is when the dribbler takes a path to the basket that is parallel with the baseline. If you decide to call a charge foul, you **MUST** observe the following before making the call:

a. **DO'S:**

Did the player **without** the ball obtain legal position by?

- Getting to the spot first without contact;
- Have both feet touching the floor;
- Initially facing the opponent;
- The defender may move laterally, at an angle or backwards to maintain position;
- The defender may duck, turn, or use slight movement to absorb the shock; and
- The player with the ball must get their head and shoulders past the front torso of the defensive player.

b. **DONT'S**

- The defender may not extend an arm, shoulder, hip, leg or lean into the path of an opponent and cause contact (blocking);
- A defender may not move into the path of an opponent after the opponent is in the air; and
- A defender may not bend over (tuck) to absorb the shock.

XIII. Verticality

- A defender has established a legal position with their hands straight up and the ball handler leaves the floor to shoot, making slight contact with the defender. You probably should not call a foul since neither player has been disadvantaged.

***Tip:** There is no such call as **OVER THE BACK**. Contact must occur between the players. Watch the play, if the taller player is behind a shorter one, ask yourself: did the player behind jump straight up, did they push to get into position; is the player in front making contact with the player behind? If you are going to make a call, the correct foul is a push. This can be difficult as there will be times where a player is considerable taller than their opponent. **Do not** penalize the taller player.*

XIV. Fouls

- The hand is considered part of the ball when the hand is in contact with the ball. This includes holding, dribbling, passing, or even during a try for goal. Striking a ball handler or a shooter on that player's hand is incidental contact and not a **foul**, no matter how loud it sounds; and
- "**Reaching-in**" is not a foul. There must be contact to have a foul. If contact does occur, it is either a **holding foul** or an **illegal use of hands foul**. When a player, in order to stop the clock, does not make a legitimate play for the ball, holds, pushes, or grabs away from the ball, or uses undue roughness, the foul is an **intentional foul**.

XV. Incidental Contact

- Not all contact is a foul, contact will occur in many situations and contact which occurs unintentionally or appears to be equal in nature, should be considered legal. Use your best judgment and be consistent.

XVI. Live Ball

The ball becomes live when:

- Jump ball- when the ball leaves the officials hand;
- When the ball is at the disposal of the thrower; and
- When the ball is at the disposal of the free thrower.

XVII. Dead Ball

The ball becomes dead when:

- A goal is made;
- A player control foul; and
- A violation by the free thrower.

XVIII. Front Court vs. Back Court

- There is NO back court violation on an out of bounds play. When attempting a throw-in, a player may receive the ball in the back court.

XIX. Jump Ball

- Is used to start play at the beginning of the game and is also used in other situations to determine which team controls the ball, most often in the case of a “held ball”. The jump ball determines the tone of the game and can make an impression on the players and coaches.

XX. Rebounding...To obtain or maintain legal rebounding position, a player may not:

- Displace, charge, or push an opponent;
- Extend shoulders, hips, knees, or extend the arms or elbow fully or partially in a position other than vertical so that the freedom of movement of an opponent is hindered when contact with the arms/elbows occurs; and
- Every player is entitled to a spot on the floor, provided the player get there first without illegally contacting an opponent.

XXI. Screening

- When a player uses arms, hands, or shoulders to force through a screen or to hold or push a screener, it is a foul;
- When contact results because a player sets a screen while moving, it is a foul;
- When a screener takes a position so close to a moving opponent that the opponent cannot avoid contact by stopping or changing direction, it is a foul; and
- When a player sets a screen outside the visual field of a stationary opponent and does not allow this opponent a normal step to move, it is a foul (a player who is screened within their visual field is expected to avoid contact).

XXII. Coach and Bench Decorum

- It is important for officials to communicate with coaches and it is appropriate for this to occur on occasion during the game. It is okay for coaches and players to ask questions provided it is done in a courteous and respectful manner. However, if a player or coach begins to move towards unsportsmanlike comments or behavior, then it is imperative that the official be firm. Sometimes a warning is appropriate.

XXIII. Sportsmanship, what is your role?

- The term “sportsmanship” may be a philosophy of many leagues, but it is not always acknowledged or used on a regular basis. Sportsmanship should be followed by the coaches, players, table crew, on-site coordinator, and YOU;
- By rule, good sportsmanship is strongly encouraged and is to be enforced.
- **Here are a few things you can do to promote good sportsmanship:**
 1. Take control of a player or coach that uses inappropriate behavior, foul, or abusive language. Do not avoid the matter as this could send the message that the behavior is acceptable;
 2. Give praise where needed. If you equally acknowledge ALL of the players on the floor, you will project a positive “up-beat” image for all to follow; and
 3. Compliment examples of good sportsmanship: if a player compliments an opponent on a nice shot, move, etc.

XXIV. End of the Game

- Shake hands with coaches and players; and
- Leave the floor together and briefly review the game. Keep the communication between you and your partner to a whisper (there are little ears around that hear everything). Keep things positive. Mentally go over any situations and leave the game in the gym. Make notes regarding players, coaches, parents etc.

XXV. In Summarization

- We have all have watched a basketball game in person or on TV, no matter the skill level. We often comment about an official's missing a call or calls being questioned. Well, you are now that official. What's your call?
- Put time and effort into being the best official you can be;
- Be sure you fully understand the fundamental rules of the game. Regardless of what age group, the basic fundamentals of the game apply. Rules are in place to protect the players and to ensure that neither team gains nor unfair advantage;
- **Communication** is the key to successful officiating;
- On court experience will help with the mastery and the understanding of all the rules. This takes time and do not get discouraged. Getting things correct in game situations is tougher than understanding on paper, but it begins with understanding the rules first before applying on the court;
- Before each game, review the rules for the level you are officiating. If you need clarification, ask;
- You will earn respect of those involved in the contest if you know the rules, how to properly apply them and put fun and safety first; and
- **Safety of the children must be first and foremost.**