

General Officiating Guidelines

- Don't be afraid to tell a coach or captain that you did not see what they saw
- Be sure to tell the coach what the penalty was and who it was on
- Echo every whistle you hear, even if it is inadvertent
- Try not to focus just on the ball-carrier, but on the whole play
- Misses can be explained, but never guesses.
- No chatting with coaches, players, or fans even if you are family friends
- Plan on being criticized, it is a part of it, but know how to deal with it
- Present the proper image of confidence in your calls, but not cockiness
- Answer reasonable questions. If asked politely, then answer politely. If you are being yelled at or barked at ignore them or get the ref supervisor
- Stay cool and collected, do not try to resolve issues with coaches or players. Just inform them of your decision

Mechanics

- Whistle, use it only when necessary. Remember that every time you blow your whistle during the last minute of the game the clock stops
- Voice, strong, pleasant, firm and controlled
- Talk, too much talk leads to trouble. Be brief, but courteous to players and coaches requests
- Calls, make sure you know exactly what penalty you are calling.
- Position, there is no magic spot, get to the best possible spot to make the call or no-call. This requires good teamwork
- Anticipation, be ready for a change of direction or a penalty at all times
- Appearance, always look alert. Don't stand with your hands in your pockets or on your hips.
- Hustle, there is no excuse for lack of hustle.
- Your partner, communicate with your partner. If a rule needs interpretation, consult each other and then the ref supervisor as last resort.

Worksheet

- Pre game
 - o Do I meet with team captains prior to game
 - o Do I confer with the timer before the game
 - o Do I know who has ball for the second half
 - o Do I start my game on time
 - o Do I check player equipment before game
 - o Do I set-up the playing field
- After the game
 - o Do I make sure I have all the equipment
 - o Do I sign out to get credit for the games and to get paid

- Do I and my fellow refs discuss any possible problems or concerns that occurred during our game
- If necessary, do I pick up endzones

Duties and Responsibilities

- Oversight and control of game
- Start game at specified time
- Spot ball, whistle into play, and count play clock
- Announce penalty options to coach of offended team and proceed with his/her choice
- Watch for illegal procedure and motion
- Move with the play – stay deep enough to be out of the way
- Watch for illegal blocking and illegal use of the hands
- Keep game clock
- Keep accurate count of downs

Diagrams of positioning

- 3 ref system, get helpers
 - Individual Responsibilities
 - JR Ref at rush line - watch and call penalties
 - SR Ref 1 on line of scrimmage – 7 second pass clock and play clock and penalties
 - SR Ref 2 on other side for penalties and game clock

Game Play Notes

- Highlight a few areas
 - 3 downs for every league except 1st grade
 - No run zones (except 1st grade)
 - 5 players on the field
 - Fair play rules – must play 50% of game, if over 7 players no one player may play every play
 - Clock – two 22 minute halves
 - 2 minute warning stoppage
 - Play clock is 30 seconds (40 seconds for 1st and 2nd grades)
 - Extra points 1 point for 5 yard line (pass only) 2 points for 10 yard line (rush or pass)
 - Safeties are 2 points
 - Coaches on playing field – only to set up for 3rd - 5th and all time for 1st and 2nd
 - Live ball and dead ball
 - Neutral zone infraction is a dead ball on both offense and defense
 - Inadvertent whistle
 - Where ball was when whistle blew or replay from line of scrimmage
 - Quarterback can not cross the line of scrimmage with the ball
 - Player can pass after a handoff
 - Flag guarding

- Leaping, diving, jumping, but spinning is ok
- NO BLOCKING AT ANY POINT!
 - Offensive players must stop their motion once the ball has crossed the line
- Shirts must be tucked in
- Shovel passes are allowed, but only beyond the line of scrimmage
- 7 second pass clock
 - Play is dead if not thrown in 7 seconds
 - Return ball to line of scrimmage
- One foot in bounds to make a reception
- Simultaneous possession goes to the offense
- Interceptions can be returned for touchdowns
- Rush line
 - 10 yards away
 - after hand off rush line goes away
 - Penalties
 - Leaving early
 - Not starting at rush line
 - Cross line before snap
- Flag pulling
 - It is illegal to attempt to strip the ball
 - If flag falls inadvertently, ball is down upon possession
 - Defensive player may not intentionally pull flag of player without ball
 - No flag guarding
- Snapping ball
 - Traditional, shotgun, direct handoff, or underhand
 - Ball must start on the ground
- Ball carriers must attempt to avoid defenders
- Games must not end on a defensive penalty (they can be declined)

Penalties

- Your job to study and learn the rules
- High light a few
 - Have kids read

Quiz

- 20 question quiz – open notes