



Key Points - Football

REFEREE:

- On Free Kicks: Referee is on the goal line in the middle of the field.
- The referee shall be 12-14 yards deep and just outside the normal tight end position, on the right side of QB on a scrimmage play. The ready-for-play signal shall be given at this position when needed.
- Gives ready signal and all clock start signals with shoulders parallel to the line of scrimmage.
- The referee and umpire shall count Team A players on every down. They should use a straight arm and fist to indicate 11 players. Hold the signal to verify with the umpire.
- Starts clock or gives ready when down box is set. Do not wait for chains.
- Maintains a consistent tempo.
- The tempo does not change in a hurry-up offense.
- Referee should "freeze their feet" (especially on running plays) and watch. Read, react, and maintain the proper angle with good space.
- DJ/LJ will help with the spot on tackles for loss, including sacks. Referees, don't worry about the spot, officiate players.
- Gives both preliminary and final signals on penalties that are not obvious.
- Do not consult the captain or give a preliminary signal when a choice is obvious.
- The only scoring signal to the press box the Referee gives is on a safety. No signal on a TD, FG, or extra point.
- 8-10 yards to the side and 2 yards behind the kicker on scrimmage kicks, field goals, and tries.

UMPIRES

- On Free Kicks: On R's free-kick line on the opposite side from the BJ, 2 yards outside the sideline.
- On plays where the referee gives the ready, back out to your position.
- Do not chase the ball when the play ends between the sideline and hash. Waits at the hash to spot the ball after the relay.
- Confirm with the wing officials that the ball is spotted properly.
- Mirror positioning with the Referee on punts.
- Work sideline to sideline, retrieving the ball during 2-minute offense. Place the ball by picking up the spot from the opposite wing.
- Place the ball on the ground approximately 10 seconds after the ball is dead with a live play clock.
- Anticipate an onside kick on every free kick. Determine if the kick is a pop-up kick and shut it down if so ruled.
- On free kicks, hold at the 50-yard line until players cross your face before moving onto the field to officiate (not when the ball is kicked).
- On scrimmage plays, line up in the offensive backfield to the left of the center with the right foot in line with the left tackle's left foot.

DOWN JUDGE AND LINE JUDGE:

- On Free Kicks: Initially positioned at the pylon, 2 yards outside the pylon. Adjust as needed.

- Use an extended arm with a fist to indicate that a wideout is off the line of scrimmage. No signal if on the LOS. If the receiver asks, tell them what they are (on or off). Don't tell them where you think they should be.
- Hold the line on scrimmage play for running or passing; don't bail. Read the play; if the play develops your way, allow the play to go in front of you. The opposite wing can float at this point.
- When the ball is snapped between the 10 and 7 going in, move to the 5 and proceed to the goal line as necessary.
- When the ball is snapped between the 7-yard line and the goal line going in, move to the goal line immediately at the snap and adjust accordingly. Communicate with all crew members who are covering the goal line and the end line.
- When the ball is snapped between the GL and the 5-yard line going out, move to the GL immediately and adjust accordingly.
- Moves parallel to the sideline, then squares off.
- Officials should wind the clock on plays that end near the sideline to avoid confusion about whether the play ended in bounds or out of bounds when short of the line to gain.
- When a play makes the line-to-gain, the covering official should use the stop-the-clock signal.
- Keep your head up when coming in to mark forward progress, and only use one foot (downfield foot) to mark the spot.
- During the play, float downfield in the white. Come on to the field at the conclusion of the play to officiate. Have presence.
- If close to first down come in hard-to-sell spot and call for the ball. Measure from this spot.
- Wing closest to the ball spots the ball. Use cross-field mechanics when necessary.
- Stop the clock first on out of bounds, then get to the spot and turn & officiate out of bounds as necessary.
- Help with the spot on tackles for loss, including sacks. Referees, don't worry about the spot, officiate players.
- Wings should spot the ball 90% of the time. Wing should run in to sell the spot when necessary and always use the "forward foot" (towards the goal line) to mark the spot.
- Confirm with the umpire that the ball is spotted properly before returning to your position.
- On scrimmage kicks the wing official opposite the chains releases on the snap. Wing official on the chain side releases when the ball crosses the LOS.

BACK JUDGE:

- On Free Kicks: the BJ handles the ball, gives it to the kicker, and moves to a position 2 yards outside the sideline on K's free kick line, on the same side as the chain gang.
- On free kicks moves onto the field between the 9-yard mark (numbers) and hash after the ball is kicked.
- Shall count all Team B players on every down. Use a straight arm and fist to indicate 11 players. Don't need to coordinate with R/U.
- The back judge should be approximately 20 yards deep on scrimmage plays. If the ball is snapped on the 15-yard line and in, position yourself on the end line.
- Raises his arm when 10 seconds remain in the 40/25-second count, then gives a visible signal the last 5 seconds. These signals are not needed when there is a visible play clock.
- Does not allow a potential pass receiver to get behind the BJ.
- Don't come up too quickly on punts; see the catch, then officiate in front of the runner.
- Back Judge should have a bean bag in hand on all scrimmage kicks and needs to always mark the "end of the kick." Never bean bag forward progress.
- If a player is removed for a down, record helmet off #, injured #, and equipment #.

- Maintain a good pace with the play clock. However, the delay of game penalties should be clear and obvious to everyone.

ALL OFFICIALS:

- General athletic and professional appearance is important. All caps should be fitted. No Jackets - even when very cold (use quality undergarments, and you will stay even warmer than with jackets). Gloves are OK.
- Strive for perfection on every play for every game. No one is perfect, but that goal will lead to improvement and will make the game better. Play-off game assignments will take care of themselves. On Free Kicks: All officials, with the exception of the referee, should be 2 yards outside of the sideline.
- Be an athlete! A crouch is okay but be ready to move and officiate.
- When a ready signal is required, all officials shall raise their hand with the next down and drop when the referee blows the ready-for-play whistle. The Down Judge is the quarterback in this process verify with the down box before raising your hand.
- Officiate your area of responsibility at the snap, then move to zone coverage.
- General rule for officials is to stay back and slow down. You can usually see more from a distance. Signal professionally - incomplete or "no good" sign should be given at chest level.
- Only BLOW THE WHISTLE ONCE. Do not be in a hurry to whistle. When the play starts, the whistle should not be in the mouth- there is time to put the whistle in and then blow it. You're better off being slow on the whistle rather than too fast.
- No mirroring of signals or whistles. Only the covering officials shall have a stop-the-clock signal (including the dead ball signal) or whistle. You should only have a whistle if you see the football.
- Movement of officials: As a play ends, the officials should be moving - "pinch or accordion" in on the play, being careful not to be guarding "air," but moving in under control, while observing all action. "Guard pressure."
- Use an underhand toss as opposed to running in - use a short triangle to bring in the ball from the sidelines. Referees- you are encouraged to be involved in the relay or spotting of the football.
- Rarely should there be more than two flags on any play. Officiate your own area - -work as a team of 5. If there are too many flags on the same play, too many eyes are watching the same action.
- The official who makes the call reports to the Referee, and one of the other officials needs to "cover" the flag, making sure that no one moves it or picks it up. Cover the deadball spot as well.
- Bean bag: Always use a bean bag on a fumble to mark the spot.
- Observe plays in pre-game. Don't stand around.
- Start a new series on a yard line.