

**Dutton's 2017
Pre-game Checklist**

Before the Game

- R** Review starting and stopping the clock, inadvertent whistle, extending the period, extra periods tiebreaker, signals. Conduct pre-game conference, test game balls, meet coaches.
- U** Accompany Referee to conference with coaches. Check equipment (Rules 1-3 & 1-4).
- H** Locate yardage chain, down marker, and clip. Inspect chain for kinks, weak spots and mid-point marker. Instruct chain crew. Carry shoestring or plastic tie, and extra clip.
- B** Take game ball and instruct ball boys.
Have correct time and stop watch. Instruct field clock operator.

Free Kick

- U &** Count Team A players. (**U&B**)
- B &** Count Team B players. (**H**)
- H** Team A players between nine-yard lines after ready. (**U&B**)
Team A players no more than five yards behind restraining line after ready. (**U&B**)
Offside. (**U&B**)
Team A player who goes out of bounds may not return. Drop bean bag. (**U&B**)
Kicking team blocks before eligible to touch the ball.
First touching, forced touching.
Block on kicker. (**U**)
Key on three Team A players on your side. (**H&B**)
Key on five Team A players in the middle. (**U**)
- R** Count Team B players.
- &** Four players on each side of kicker when ball is kicked.
- L** Start the clock when ball is legally touched in field of play or when B brings ball out of end zone. (**All**)
Kick untouched by Team B out of bounds.
Illegal wedge formation
Fair Catch Signal
Forward handoff.
- All** Short kick, Fair catch, Interference.
Kick untouched by Team B out of bounds.
Blocking below the waist.
Clipping.
Block in the back.
Review short kick positions.

Free Kick Penalty Enforcement:

1. Fouls simultaneous with kick: **Previous Spot.**
2. Out-of-bounds: **Previous Spot, or Spot where subsequent dead ball belongs to Team B, or B's ball 30 yards beyond Previous Spot.**
3. Fouls before possession is gained (free kick play): **Basic Spot = Previous Spot.**

But remember:

1. *Interference: **Spot Foul** (behind goal line: **Touchback and penalize from succeeding spot**).*
2. *Block or foul by B player who signals and does not touch the ball: **Spot Foul**.*
3. *Illegal wedge formation: **Spot foul or spot where dead ball belongs to B if behind spot of foul. Previous spot and rekick if dead ball belongs to A.***
4. *Team A fouls: **May be previous spot or spot where subsequent dead ball belongs to Team B.***
4. After possession is gained (running play): **Basic Spot = Spot Where the Run Ends (2-25-8).**
5. Personal and unsportsmanlike fouls by non-scoring team during a touchdown (not on try): **Penalize on try or succeeding kickoff.** Penalties for other fouls: declined by rule.
6. Fouls after ball becomes dead: **Succeeding Spot.**

Before the Snap

- B** Number of defensive players.
25 second count.
More than 11 in defensive formation when snap is imminent (stop action, ball snapped or not).
- U** Number of offensive players.
Team A breaks huddle with more than 11 players (stop action whether ball snapped or not).
Numbers 50-79 *except scrimmage kick formation*.
Blocking zone (10 yards by 6 yards centered on snapper).
Restricted/unrestricted players for blocking below the waist.
Defensive signals.
Abrupt actions by stationary defensive players on line of scrimmage to cause false start.
Quick rush to line of scrimmage to create defensive disadvantage.
After Team A substitutions, stand over ball until Team B makes substitutions.
False start.
Interference with ball or snapper.
Legal snap.
- H** Number of players for team on your sideline.
- &** Offensive line of scrimmage.
- L** Team A breaks huddle with more than 11 players (stop action whether ball snapped or not).
More than 11 in defensive formation when snap is imminent (stop action, ball snapped or not).
Eligible pass receiver(s) on your side.
Restricted/unrestricted players for blocking below the waist.
Players on or off the line of scrimmage.
Legal formation.
Defensive offside.
Abrupt actions by stationary defensive players on line of scrimmage to cause false start.
Interference with ball or snapper.
Legal snap.
False starts.
Illegal motion or shift.
Man in motion on your side of snapper.
Team A *substitutes* between 9-yard marks *after ready*.
Team A *players* between 9-yard marks *after previous play*.
Substitution infractions.
Quick rush to line of scrimmage to create defensive disadvantage.
- R** Number of offensive players.
Team A breaks huddle with more than 11 players (stop action whether ball snapped or not).

Quick rush to line of scrimmage to create defensive disadvantage.
Legality of backfield formation and eligible backs.
Restricted/unrestricted backs for blocking below the waist.
One second pause after shift.
Illegal motion of backfield group directly behind ball.
Tackle on your side.

Before the Snap Penalty Enforcement

1. Foul before snap: **Succeeding Spot.**
2. Foul simultaneous with snap: **Previous Spot.**

Running Play

- U** Read keys for run or pass.
Focus on point of attack, then behind the ball.
Illegal use of hands or arms.
Blocking zone, illegal block from behind and at or below the knee, chop block.
Illegal block below the waist by restricted player.
- H** Read keys for run or pass.
- &** Blockers and action around end and linebackers on your side.
- L** Illegal block below the waist by restricted player.
Blocking pitch man below waist, tackling pitch man.
Runner in your area; action behind runner when play goes to other side.
Forward progress (come in on close plays, especially 4th down and goal line plays).
Down field blocks.

- B** Action on and by your key player(s). Review keys.
Keep runner between you and wing official; cover action in advance of runner.
Follow runner out of bounds, especially in opponent's team area.

- R** Ball, runner, action around runner.
Illegal block below the waist by restricted player.
Forward progress and out of bounds spot behind the neutral zone.
Follow runner out of bounds, especially in opponent's team area.

Running Play Penalty Enforcement

1. Run ends behind the neutral zone: **Basic Spot = Previous Spot.**
But remember: *offensive illegal use of hands, holding, illegal block and personal fouls behind the neutral zone - Enforce from **Previous Spot** (not basic spot enforcement). Safety if behind Team A's goal line.*
2. Run ends beyond the neutral zone: **Basic Spot = Spot Where the Run Ends.**
But remember: *Offensive illegal use of hands, holding, illegal block and personal fouls behind the neutral zone - Enforce from **Previous Spot** (not basic spot enforcement). Safety if behind Team A's goal line.*
3. Personal and unsportsmanlike fouls by non-scoring team during a touchdown (not on try):
Penalize on try or succeeding kickoff. Penalties for other fouls: declined by rule.

Pass Play

- U** Read keys for run or pass.
Move toward neutral zone.
Illegal use of hands.
Blocking zone, illegal block from behind and at or below the knee, chop/combination block.
Ineligibles downfield (especially on broken play).

Screen pass.
Pass crosses/does not cross the neutral zone.
Deliberate touching by ineligible receivers.
Know if pass first touches anything behind or beyond the neutral zone.
Assist with pass after runner has crossed the neutral zone.
Assist on low trajectory passes.

- H** Read keys for run or pass.
- &** Eligible receivers.
- L** Action on and by your key player(s). Review Keys.
- &** Eligible receiver out of bounds. Drop cap.
- B** Blocking eligible receiver below waist beyond neutral zone.
Pass forward or backward. **(H&L)**
Pass complete/incomplete, in bounds/out of bounds.
Responsible for your sideline. **(H&L)**
Responsible for endline. **(B)**
Pass intercepted (watch for blocking below the waist, block in the back, clipping).
Offensive pass interference.
Defensive pass interference.
Illegal contact.
- R** Eligible receivers in backfield.
Illegal use of hands and holding until passer is threatened.
Pass forward/backward, pass/fumble.
Illegal pass (intentional grounding, second forward pass, thrown beyond neutral zone, thrown by Team B after change of possession).
Passer five yards or more toward sideline, ball lands beyond neutral zone extended - grounding
- OK.** Pass crosses/does not cross neutral zone.
Fouls against the passer.

Pass Play Penalty Enforcement

1. Fouls after the snap and before the pass is complete, incomplete, or intercepted (legal forward pass play): **Basic Spot = Previous Spot.**
But remember:
 1. *Defensive pass interference: **May Be a Spot Foul** (if foul occurs less than 15 yards from previous spot).*
 2. *Illegal pass to conserve time or save yardage: **Loss of Down at Spot of Foul.***
 3. *Other illegal passes: **5 yards from Spot of Foul and Loss of Down***
 4. *Roughing the passer and all Team B personal fouls when the pass is complete, run ends beyond the neutral zone and no change of team possession: **End of Last Run.***
 5. *Illegal touching: Enforce from **Previous Spot.***
 6. *Team A facemask, illegal use of hands, holding, illegal block and personal fouls behind the neutral zone - Enforce from **Previous Spot** (not basic spot enforcement). Safety if behind Team A's goal line.*
2. Fouls after pass is completed or intercepted (running play): **Basic Spot = Spot Where the Run Ends.**
3. Personal and unsportsmanlike fouls by non-scoring team during a touchdown (not on try): **Penalize on try or succeeding kickoff.** Penalties for other fouls: declined by rule.

Scrimmage Kick - Punt

- U** Take position 8-10 yards deep.
Foul against the snapper.
Contact with the snapper before one second elapsed.

Player leaping over opponent in attempt to block punt.

- H** Determine if short or partially blocked kick crosses the neutral zone. **(H)**
& Scrimmage kick made beyond the neutral zone.
- L** First touching, forced touching, illegal touching, interference, if kick is short.
Stay on line until no threat of blocked kick; then move downfield in an easy run. **(L)**
Stay on line until kick has clearly crossed and will not threaten the neutral zone. **(H)**
Responsible for your entire sideline.
Illegal use of hands, holding by receiving team.
Help **B** with fair catch signal, player who signals and blocks.
- B** First touching, illegal touching, touchback.
Batting the ball in the end zone.
Fair catch.
Interference with the opportunity to catch a kick.
Illegally batting or kicking the ball.
Spot where the kick ends.
- R** See the ball from snapper to kicker, blockers and rushers.
Kicker carrying ball outside the tackle box.
Roughing or running into the kicker.
Advance and recovery of blocked kick.
- All** Blocking below the waist.
Clipping.
Block in the back.

Scrimmage Kick-Punt Penalty Enforcement

1. Fouls after the snap and before player possession is gained or the ball declared dead (scrimmage kick play): **Basic Spot = Previous Spot**, unless the kick is governed by post scrimmage kick rules; then **Basic Spot = Post Scrimmage Kick Spot (2-25-11)**.
But remember:
 1. Interference: **Spot Foul** (behind goal line: **Touchback and penalize from Succeeding Spot**).
 2. A bats loose ball untouched by B behind B's goal line: **Violation and B may elect Touchback**.
 3. Team A *illegal use of hands, holding, illegal block and personal fouls behind the neutral zone - Enforce from Previous Spot (not basic spot enforcement)*. Safety if behind Team A's goal line.
 4. *Team A fouls: May be previous spot or spot where subsequent dead ball belongs to Team B*.
2. Fouls during the run back (running play): **Basic Spot = Spot Where the Run Ends**.
3. Personal and unsportsmanlike fouls by non-scoring team during a touchdown (not on try): **Penalize on try or succeeding kickoff**. Penalties for other fouls: declined by rule.

Scrimmage Kick - Field Goal & Try

- U** Foul against snapper.
Three defensive linemen shoulder-to-shoulder contact single Team A player at snap.
Player restrictions.
Player who runs forward and leaps.
Interlocked interference.
- H** Whole line of scrimmage.
Determine if short or partially blocked kick crosses the neutral zone.

L Rule on the kick. **B** makes ruling if kick strikes the crossbar.
& Responsible for your sideline.
B

R Fumble by holder (ball dead/alive).
Roughing or running into the kicker and holder.

All Be alert for blocked kick.

Scrimmage Kick-Field Goal Penalty Enforcement - Same as Punt

Scrimmage Kick-Try Penalty Enforcement - Review 8-3-3 & 4

Miscellaneous

All Bean bag mechanics.
Time outs, measurements, end of period.
Calling and enforcing fouls.
Goal line plays.
Digging out fumbles.
Hurry-up offense.
Controlling the game (personal fouls, unsportsmanlike conduct).
Player's helmet comes off.

New in 2017

Knee pads must be covered by pants (no change for UIL).
Enforce the same color jersey and numeral rule as written (UIL).
Defensive Player who runs forward from beyond the neutral zone may not leap or hurdle in an obvious attempt to block a field goal or try.
Horse collar tackle includes grabbing the nameplate area of the jersey and immediately pulling the ball carrier down.

New in 2016

Composite footballs are illegal for varsity games; Ok for sub-varsity.
Knee pads do not have to cover the knees.
Eye shields and glasses must be clear and not tinted unless UIL form presented before the game.
Clock stopped only to enforce a penalty by team ahead in score, during last 2 minutes of either half, starts on the snap by rule.
Ball may not be snapped after substitutions by Team A until Team B is allowed to substitute.
Tripping the runner is a foul.
Targeting requires one of four indicators of targeting.
Ball carrier who obviously gives himself up by sliding feet-first is a defenseless player.
Blocking below the waist rule refers to the tackle box. Review who is restricted or unrestricted.
Restricted players may block below the waist only from the front and not toward the original position of the ball until the ball is clearly beyond the neutral zone.
Unrestricted players may block below the waist from the side or from the front until they leave or the ball leaves the tackle box.
After the ball leaves the tackle box, all Team A players may block below the waist only from the front, and not back toward their own end line.
Scrimmage kick formation requires at least one player 10 yards behind the neutral zone or a potential kicker and holder at least 7 yards behind the neutral zone.
Coach is disqualified after two unsportsmanlike fouls. (UIL exception: if there is only one coach on the sideline, he may remain in the playing area).

New in 2015

Overbuilt facemask illegal.

Wearing illegal equipment or not wearing mandatory equipment – must leave game for at least one down or buy back in with charged timeout.

Playclock reset when 40-second clock reaches **25** (not 20) and ball not ready for play.

Number of down may be corrected anytime within a series or before put in play after that series.

Forcible contact to push or pull an opponent off the pile – unsportsmanlike conduct.

Warning for first sideline administration infraction.

New in 2014

Illegal to target *and make forcible contact* with crown of helmet on any opponent.

Illegal to target *and make forcible contact* to the neck or head area of a defenseless player.

Player in position to receive a backward pass is a defenseless player.

Airborne player inbounds remains inbounds until he is out of bounds.

Airborne player out of bounds remains out of bounds until he established himself inbounds.

Team B players enter the field just before the snap but are not in the formation: live-ball foul.

Team B personal fouls when the pass is complete, run ends beyond the neutral zone and no change of team possession: Penalize from end of last run.

Defensive player rushing unabated, making forcible contact at the knee area or below on an offensive player in a passing posture is roughing the passer.

40 second and 25 second play clocks for UIL games.

New in 2013

Player who enters after changing jersey must report to **R**. Not reporting: unsportsmanlike foul.

Two players, same number, same position: Live-ball unsportsmanlike foul.

Towels not smaller than 4"X12" and not larger than 6"X12."

Eyeglasses and goggles under clear eye shields must also be clear and not tinted.

Referee with microphone may announce number of player committing foul.

Team A first down through penalty: clock starts on snap. Through play: clock starts on ready.

Clock stopped and will start on ready: 3 or more seconds: expect to spike and another play. 2 seconds or 1 second: time for only one play.

Forward pass starts with any intentional forward movement of hand or arm with ball firmly in control.

Forward pass illegal if thrown from behind neutral zone after ball carrier and ball have been beyond.

New low-blocking zone: 7 yards each side of snapper, 5 yards beyond the neutral zone and back to Team A end line.

While ball is in this zone, Team A "unrestricted" players may block below the waist from the front or from the side. Team A "restricted" players may block below the waist only from the front. No Team A "restricted" player may block below the waist toward the original position of the ball at the snap.

After the ball has left the zone, all Team A players may block below the waist only front and no

Team A player may block below the waist toward his own end line.

"Unrestricted" Team A players: players on the line of scrimmage completely within the zone at the snap and stationary backs partially inside the tackle box and frame of second lineman from snapper.

"Restricted" Team A players: all other Team A players.

Targeting fouls now automatic disqualification.

Additions to Defenseless Player: receiver who has just completed a catch and has not had time to protect himself or become a ball carrier; kicker in the act or just after kicking, or during the kick or return; player on the ground; player who receives a blind-side block; ball carrier in the grasp and whose forward progress has been stopped; quarterback after a change of possession.

Team B personal and unsportsmanlike fouls on successful try enforced on succeeding spot kickoff or succeeding spot in extra periods.

Dead-ball contact fouls, pushing, shoving, striking, not part of game action - unsportsmanlike foul.

Teammates of ball carrier may not grasp, pull, or lift him to assist in forward progress.

Postscrimmage kick enforcement applies only during the kick and includes fouls 3 yards or less beyond the neutral zone.