

California Football Officials Association
2026 Summer Study Guide
Officials Version

KEYS

Team A (Offense) or Team B (Defense) is designated as **A or B**

Team A or Team B's 45 yard-lines, example: **A-45** or **B-45**

Player A or B's number is 40, example: **A40** or **B40**

Second down and 6 yards to go for A at the B 23 yard-line, example: **A, 2/6, B-23**

The Kicking or Receiving teams are designated as **K** or **R**

Team K or Team R's 45 yard-lines, example: **K-45** or **R-45**

Player K or R's number is 65, example: **K65** or **R65**

Fourth down and 12 yards to go for K at the R 45 yard-line, example: **K, 4/12, R-45**

ACRONYMS

BBW block or blocking below the waist

BSB blind side block

ENZ expanded neutral zone

EXC exception

FBZ free blocking zone

KCI kick catch interference

NZ neutral zone

OPI / DPI offensive / defensive pass interference

PSK post-scrimmage kick

SKF scrimmage kick formation

UNS unsportsmanlike conduct

BIB block in the back

DNA does not apply

ES enforcement spot

EZ end zone

HC head coach

LOS line of scrimmage

OOB/IB out of bounds/ in bounds

PF personal foul

QB quarterback

SS succeeding spot

RB running back

When referring to Rule 2, Section 29, Article 1 of the NFHS Rule Book, this will be noted as 2-29-1(with dashes). When listed as 2.29.1 (with periods), please refer to the NFHS Case Book.

Additional resources, including specific trainings and weekly instructional bulletins, can be found at:
www.YouTube.com/@CFOAFootball

Most questions contain rule references, others will require officials to get a bit into the NFHS Rule and Case book.

Section 1 – Definitions

Reviewing definitions and key terms in Rule 2 of the NFHS Rule Book is always a great start to a new season. As you read and answer questions, you might also think about how you are going to report a foul to your Referee during a game. Using the correct definition language will make communicating with your crew and coaches, as well as penalty enforcement, much easier, clearer and effective.

1. After an incomplete pass or when enforcing a penalty from the previous spot, the ball should be returned to the spot where the last snap occurred. "Positions 1-5" help officials remember where the previous spot was. Position 1 is **always** the hash closest to the press box, with Position 5 **always** being the hash opposite the press box. Positions 2 and 4 refer to each goal post, with Position 3 being the middle of the field.

A. True
B. False
2. A, 3/15, A-25. B10 is attempting to intercept a pass when he is forcibly contacted by A22 who is not making a play on the ball, not initiating the contact with open hands, and not attempting to tackle B10 by wrapping his arms around him. This contact is legal because a Team B player not in possession of the ball cannot be a defenseless player. (2-32-1d)

A. True
B. False
3. A muff and a fumble are two different terms that define how a ball became loose. A fumble is the touching of a loose ball by a player in an unsuccessful attempt to secure possession. A muff refers to any loss of player possession other than by handing, passing or legal kick. (2-18; 2-27)

A. True
B. False
4. It is forward-pass interference if any Team A or B player, who is beyond the NZ, interferes with an eligible opponent's opportunity to move forward, catch or bat the pass. (7-5-10) Helpful keys to this rule include: All eligible receivers have equal rights to the ball; It is pass interference if the contact interferes with an eligible player's opportunity to move toward, catch or bat the pass; and physical contact is necessary to have pass interference (e.g. face guarding is legal).

A. True
B. False
5. A, 1/G, B-12. WR A2 runs a pattern to the endzone, stops and jumps in the air to catch a pass from QB A1. With possession in the air above the endzone, A5 is wrapped by B1 and carried to the B-1 where he is tackled. Because A2 had possession of the ball in the endzone, this is a Touchdown. (2-15-2; 2.15.2)

A. True
B. False

California Football Officials Association

2026 Summer Study Guide

Officials Version

6. A, 1/Goal, B-6. QB A1 pitches the ball to A21 at the B-9. A21 sweeps to his left and dives at the B-2 in an attempt to score. B15 hits A21 which causes him to land out of bounds beyond the goal line extended. The ball was in A21's left hand, toward the sideline, outside of the pylon and his right hand was touching the goal line. (2-26-3; 2.26.3)
- A. Touchdown
 - B. B, 2/Goal, line of scrimmage is the foremost point where the ball crosses the sideline plane.
7. The free-blocking zone is a rectangular area extending laterally 4 yards from the spot of the ball and 3 yards behind each line of scrimmage. Before a forward pass is thrown or the ball leaves the FBZ, blocking below the waist and blocking in back is permitted. (2-17)
- A. True
 - B. False
8. The elements of a completed "catch" include securing firm control of a live ball in flight with the arms or hands before the ball touches the ground, the player first touching the ground inbounds with both feet or with any part of their body, and maintaining control of the ball throughout the catch. (2-4)
- A. True
 - B. False
9. A, 1/10, A-20. QB A1 receives the snap and throws a pass to A21 at the A-27 where he is tackled. Before the pass, A68 was at the A-24 looking for a Team B player to block, but came back to the A-22 when the pass was thrown. A68 has NOT committed a foul for being an ineligible player downfield, because A68 was within the expanded neutral zone when the pass was thrown. (2-28-2, 7-5-12)
- A. True
 - B. False
10. A, 2/6, A-24. B91 jumps into the neutral zone, but has time to get back before the snap. (7-1-6a)
- A. Live-ball foul, Team A has a "free play"
 - B. Dead-ball foul, covering official blows their whistle to kill the play
 - C. No foul, B93 did not make contact with a Team A player or cause an A player to move

Section 2 – 2025 and 2026 New Rules

We had several new rules in 2025 including new language around forward fumbles and illegal participation; in 2026 we just have two – 1) players can now wear play cards on their belts and forearms and 2) any player that "slap blocks" another player in the head is a foul. (Interestingly, this was only a foul for an offensive player.)

California Football Officials Association

2026 Summer Study Guide

Officials Version

11. A, 3/9, B-25. QB A1 throws a pass and it is intercepted at the B-5 by B33. B33's momentum brings him into his endzone. B33 attempts to run with the ball and, before leaving the endzone, fumbles the ball while being tackle by A5. The loose-ball rolls out of bounds at the B-3. Because the new forward fumble rule, the result of the play would be a Safety.
- A. True
B. False
12. A, 1/10, B-25. QB A1 pitches the ball to A21 who runs to the B-20 and fumbles. The ball rolls out of bounds at the B-18. The next play will be: (3-4-3)
- A. A, 2/3, B-18
B. A, 2/5, B-20
13. A, 1/10, A-20. QB A1 throws a pass to A2 and is caught at the A-30. Team B had 10 players on the field at the snap. B9, realizing he should be on the field, runs on to the field at the A-30 and tackles A2 at the A-40. The next play will be A, 1/10, B-45. (9-6 Penalty)
- A. True
B. False
14. A, 1/10, A-20. QB A1 pitches the ball to A21 who runs to the A-28 where he fumbles. The ball goes out of bounds at the A-25. The next play will be:
- A. A, 2/2, A-28
B. A, 2/5, A-25
15. A, 1/G, B-5. QB A1 pitches the ball to A21 who runs to the B-3 and fumbles. The ball rolls into the endzone and out across the endline. The next play will be:
- A. A, 2/G, B-3
B. Touchback. B, 1/10, B-20
16. A, 1/10, A-4. QB A1 pitches the ball at the A-2 to A21 who muffs the pitch. The ball goes out of bounds in the endzone, across the sideline. The next play will be:
- A. A, 2/12, A-2
B. Safety. K, Free Kick, K-20

Section 3 – Free Kicks

To begin the 1st and 3rd quarters, after a score/safety, and to score, Free Kicks have several unique rules that all officials need to remember.

17. Free kick, K-40. Team K trails Team R, 20-24 with 1:30 remaining in the 4th quarter. Team K may have 3 players lined up to the right of the kicker in an obvious on-side kick situation. (6-1-4)

California Football Officials Association

2026 Summer Study Guide

Officials Version

- A. True
 - B. False
18. Kicker K1 informs the Back Judge that he is going to punt the ball on the free kick to start the 2nd half. This is legal. (6-1-2)
- A. True
 - B. False
19. Free-kick, K-40. Other than the kicker, no player may be more than 5 yards behind the kicking team's free kick line. A kicking team player may straddle the line 5-yards behind the free kick line, one foot on one side of the line, one foot on the other side of the line. (6-1-3b)
- A. True
 - B. False
20. Free kick, K-40. Kicker K1 kicks the ball from the tee high into the air in an area with very few R players. K20 catches the kick at the R-40, before it has touched the ground, and runs to the R-35 where he is tackled. Since Team K cannot advance a kick, the next play will be K, 1/10, R-40. (6-1-6, 6-5-6)
- A. True
 - B. False
21. Free kick, K-40. K54, on the far side of the kicker, has one foot down on the K-41 and taking another step forward at the time of the kick. (6-1-3a)
- A. Legal play
 - B. Illegal, Encroachment on the kicking team, live-ball foul. Team R can enforce the 5-yard penalty from the succeeding spot.
 - C. Illegal, Encroachment on the kicking team, dead-ball foul. Stop the play and enforce the 5-yard penalty from the previous spot.
22. Free-kick, K-40. After the Ready for Play signal, K3 is standing on the K-33. K19, who is legally lined up at the K-36 runs with the kicker and kicks the ball in an attempt to surprise Team R with an onside kick. At the time of the kick, Team K had 4 players on each side of the ball. This is a legal onside kick. (6-1-3)
- A. True
 - B. False
23. Free-kick, K-40. 0:45 in the 4th quarter, Team K is trailing Team R. 20-24. K has 4 players to the left of the kicker and 6 players to the right of the kicker when the Referee blows the whistle for the ready to play. When the kicker gives a signal, K40 goes in motion from the left side of the kicker at the K-39 and turns up field and is on the right side of the kicker when the ball is kicked. (6-1-4; 6.1.4)
- A. Legal play because K had 4 players on each side of the kicker at the ready for play signal.

2026 Summer Study Guide

Officials Version

- B. Live-ball foul, Illegal Formation. K must have at least 4 players on each side of the kicker when the ball is kicked.
- C. Dead-ball foul, Illegal Formation. K must have at least 4 players on each side of the kicker when the ball is kicked.

Section 4 – Scrimmage Kicks

Arguably the most complex part of our game. Team possession generally changes during the down, there are formation expectations, and there are special enforcements depending on when a foul occurs. We reviewed Post-Scrimmage Kick foul enforcement in the offseason and a training video is on the CFOA YouTube page. When a foul occurs when Team K is in a scrimmage kick formation, it is so very, very important to think about and report on the status of the ball at the time of the foul. A foul by Team R “during the kick” could have a very different penalty enforcement than “after the kick/during the run”.

24. K, 4/7, R-25. Team K is in a legal scrimmage kick formation when K1 attempts a field goal. R20, standing in his endzone, jumps and bats/blocks the ball before it crosses the crossbar.

- A. Illegal Batting. Enforce the foul from the previous spot. K, 1/10, R-15
- B. Touchback.

25. Team K kicks the ball across the expanded neutral zone and, during the kick, Team R holds Team K. Team R is next to put the ball into play. The basic spot is the: (10-4-3)

- A. Previous spot
- B. End of the kick
- C. Spot of the foul
- D. Succeeding spot

26. K, 4/15, 50. Punter K1 kicks the ball and it is grounded at the R-3 where it continues toward the endzone. K21 jumps from the field of play toward the endzone and bats the ball one yard deep in the endzone back to the R-4 where K22 falls on it. The ball never touched the ground in the endzone. (6-3-1)

- A. R, 1/10, R-4. Spot where the kick ended.
- B. R, 1/10, R-13. Spot where the kick ended, plus 10-yards for illegal batting by K21.
- C. R, 1/10, R-20. Touchback.

27. K, 4/10, K-20. K1's kick is high, but short and in an attempt to catch the kick, the ball bounces off R20's shoulder pad, into the air. K10 pushes R20 at the R-40 in an attempt to catch the ball. K10 catches the ball at the R-43 where he is tackled. (6.5.6E)

- A. No foul. K, 1/10, R-43
- B. No foul. R, 1/10, R-43
- C. Kick catch interference. Team R has options for enforcement. .

28. K, 4/10, K-20. Receiver R21 is contacted early and not given a chance to catch the kick. The Back Judge has a flag for Kick Catch Interference. Since this foul occurs during the kick, while the

California Football Officials Association

2026 Summer Study Guide

Officials Version

ball was loose, Team R may enforce the KCI penalty from either the previous spot or the end of the kick using post-scrimmage kick enforcement.

- A. True
 - B. False
29. K, 4/10, K-45. Kicker K1 punts the ball from the K-35, the kick is blocked by R90 and is grounded at the K-32. K1 picks up the ball and advances to the R-44 where he is tackled. (6-2-3. 6.2.3A Comment)
- A. R, 1/10, R-44. First touching of the kick by K1 gives R the opportunity to take the ball at that spot if R does not commit a foul during the down.
 - B. K, 1/10, R-44. Any K player may advance a kick recovered behind the neutral zone.
 - C. K, 4/10, K-45. Replay the down.
30. K, 4/10, K-20. R32 illegally blocks K2 below the waist at the R-48 before R1 catches the kick at the 50 and advances to the K-45 where he is tackled. The enforcement spot is: (2-41-6)
- A. The previous spot since the foul occurred during the kick.
 - B. The end of the kick. Post scrimmage kick enforcement.
 - C. The spot of the foul. The foul occurred behind the end of the kick.
 - D. The end of the run. The basic spot is beyond the end of the kick, so enforce from the basic spot.
31. K, 4/5, K-20. During the kick, K20 illegally blocks R40 below the waist at the K-40. R1 catches the kick at the 50 and advances to the K-45 where he is tackled. The next play will be. (10-4-2 Exp)
- A. R, 1/10, K-30.
 - B. K, 4/15, K-10.
 - C. Either A and B.
32. K, 4/10, R-15. Kicker K1 attempts a field goal from the R-22, it is blocked by R90 at the R-14 and bounces to the R-17. K1 picks up the ball and runs into the endzone.
- A. K, 1/10, R-17. K cannot advance a kick.
 - B. K Touchdown. Any K player may advance a kick recovered behind the neutral zone.
 - C. R, 1/10, R-17. The ball is dead when K1 first touches it.
33. K, 4/4, B-16. Team K is lined up in a legal scrimmage kick formation to attempt a field goal. After the snap, R90 grabs and pulls K47 from his position on the offensive line to open a gap for R75 to block the kick (pull and shoot). The field goal is good. (8-4-3)
- A. Team K may accept the result of the play and enforce the foul from the succeeding spot
 - B. K, 1/G, B-8; Team K may enforce the foul from the previous spot
 - C. Holding by Team R is legal. Team K has no options, free kick from the K-40
 - D. Both A and B

California Football Officials Association

2026 Summer Study Guide

Officials Version

34. K, 4/10, K-40. Kicker K1 punts the ball high in the air and R21 gives a fair catch signal at the R-35. K5 makes early contact with R21 before the ball arrives. The ball hits the ground and touches R21 at the R-34. R5 muffs the loose-ball and recovers it at the R-20. (6-5-6a; 10-5-1b)
- A. K, 4/25, K-25. Previous spot enforcement.
 - B. R, 1/10, 50. Spot of the foul enforcement.
 - C. R, 1/10, R-20. Result of the play.
 - D. All of the above.
35. K, 4/10, K-25. Attempting to catch the ball at the R-40, R12 muffs the kick after making a valid fair catch signal. K22 attempts to recover the ball but muffs the ball and it goes out of bounds at the R-45.
- A. K, 1/10, R-45
 - B. Replay the down. K, 4/10, K-20
 - C. R, 1/10, R-45.
36. K, 4/14, K-35. Kicker K1 punts the ball from the K-25. R23 muffs the kick at the K-49, and it rolls to the K-44 where it is recovered by K30.
- A. K, 1/10, K-44
 - B. R, 1/10, K-44
 - C. R, 1/10, K-49

Sections 5 – Formations and Player Eligibility

Always a point of emphasis from NFHS is formations and what makes legal and illegal, and which Team A players are eligible to touch a legal forward pass based on that formation. There is an instructional video on this topic on the CFOA YouTube Page.

(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SpG_bFOrl_I&t=129s) Recommend reviewing before completing this section.

37. A, 1/10, A20. At the snap, WR A1 and A2 are both in motion. (7-2-7)
- A. Dead ball foul, Illegal Motion
 - B. Dead ball foul, Illegal Shift
 - C. Live ball foul, Illegal Motion
 - D. Live ball foul, Illegal Shift
38. A, 2/5, A-25. Team A is in a legal formation and the snapper has placed his hand on the ball. QB A1 sees the defensive formation and yells, “check, check, easy, easy” and looks toward the sideline. Snapper A79 removes his hand from the ball, not simulating a snap, and stands to look toward the sideline. (7-1-3a)
- A. Legal
 - B. Illegal

California Football Officials Association

2026 Summer Study Guide

Officials Version

39. Try, R-3. Holder K21 muffs the snap from snapper K3. Kicker K1 yells “fire, fire” as K2 starts to run with the ball at the R-10. Under a heavy rush, K2 throws the ball into the endzone where it is caught by K35. (7-2-5b-2, 7-5-12, 7-5-13, 8-3-4)
- A. 2-point try is good
 - B. Ineligible receiver downfield, replay the down. Try, R-8
 - C. Illegal Touching, Try is over. Free-kick from the K-35
 - D. Illegal Touching, Try is over. Free-kick from the K-40.
40. A, 1/10, A-20. Team A has 5 players in the offensive backfield at the snap. (7-2-5a)
- A. A, 1/15, A-15. Illegal Formation, dead-ball foul
 - B. A, 1/15, A-15. Illegal Formation, live-ball foul
 - C. Legal formation
41. A, 2/15, A-32. Team A has 10 players on the field. Before the snap, A10 runs on the field and lines up as the widest receiver between his sideline and the numbers. Team B sees this and has time to cover A10 before the snap.
- A. Legal
 - B. Illegal
42. K, 4/3, R-20. K3 is 12-yards behind the line of scrimmage, lined up to attempt a field goal. Holder K20 is 7-yards behind the line of scrimmage, squatting down, without his knee on the ground. After the snap, K20 throws a completed pass to K19 in the endzone. This is a legal play if: (2-14-2a; 7-2-5)
- A. This is legal formation, Touchdown.
 - B. K3 can be no more than 10-yards behind the line of line of scrimmage.
 - C. Team K has 5 players numbered 50-79 on the line of scrimmage at the snap.
 - D. None of the above.
43. A, 1/10, A-20. Snapper A79 breaks from huddle grabs the ball and rotates it horizontally/parallel to the line of scrimmage before the snap occurs. This is legal because A79 never removed his hand from the ball. (7-1-2)
- A. True
 - B. False
44. A, 3/2, A-40. Defensive Tackle B90 jumps into the neutral zone and is able to get out of the neutral zone before the snap occurs and did not cause a Team A lineman to move.
- A. Dead-ball, Encroachment
 - B. Live-ball, Encroachment
 - C. No foul, B90 was not in the neutral zone when the ball was snapped.

California Football Officials Association
2026 Summer Study Guide
Officials Version

45. A, 1/10, A-20. Right Tackle A79 breaks the huddle and gets into a 3-point stance, one hand on the ground, next to TE A99 who is also on the line of scrimmage. QB A1 sees the defensive formation and yells, “check, check, easy, easy” and looks toward the sideline. RT A79 lifts his hand, not simulating the snap, to look toward the sideline.
- A. Foul
 - B. No foul
46. A, 3/4, A-25. Line Backer B99 runs into a gap between the defensive tackle and nose guard, stomping his foot at the A-26 and clapping loudly towards the offensive line. Left Guard A55 jumps from his 3-point stance before the snap. (7-1-9)
- A. A, 1/10, A-30
 - B. A, 3/9, A-20
47. A, 3/3, B-30. Team A is trailing 24-28 with 0:30 seconds remaining in the game, with no timeouts. QB A1 is positioned 4-yards behind snapper A79 in a shotgun formation. A1 muffs the snap and it falls to the ground. A1 immediately picks up the ball and spikes it to the ground to stop the clock. This is legal because the spike/pass was immediate after A1 gained possession. (7-5-2, 7.5.2B)
- A. True
 - B. False
48. A, 3/7, B-40. Team A has 5 players in their backfield at the snap. QB A1 throws a pass that is intercepted by B23 at the B-35. B23 returns the interception for a touchdown. (8-2-3)
- A. Touchdown. B, Try, A-1.5
 - B. After the Try, B, Free Kick, B-45
 - C. Team B must decline the foul in order to take the result of the play. Touchdown.
 - D. Both A and B are options for Team B

Section 6 – The Basic Spot and Penalty Enforcement

Our CFOA offseason instructional sessions covered penalty enforcement for fouls during a run and when the ball was loose. Determining the status of the ball at the time of the foul helps determine the basic spot and the basic spot helps determine the enforcement spot – did the foul occur Behind or Beyond the basic spot?

NFHS made significant changes to the Basic Spots and Enforcement Spots in 2023, this section covers those changes. Please refer to the Table 10-4 for the new enforcement spots.

49. No foul causes a live ball to become dead. (2-16-4)
- A. True
 - B. False

California Football Officials Association
2026 Summer Study Guide
Officials Version

50. Referee's rarely know the result of any given play, especially down field. Whether it's the calling official or another official on the crew, the first piece of information reported to the Referee should be the result of the play.
- A. True
 - B. False
51. Reporting a foul to your Referee includes the following: Result of the play, Status of the ball at the time of the foul, Type of foul, offense or defense, and the number of the player(s) that committed the foul. An example of this would be, "The result of the play is a completed catch at the B-30. During the pass, Pass Interference, Offense #43."
- A. True
 - B. False
52. A, 1/Goal, B-7. RB A21 receives a hand-off at the B-10 and runs for a touchdown. WR A2 holds B10 at the B-2. The next play will be: (10-4-4)
- A. A, 1/10, B-12
 - B. A, 1/Goal, B-17
 - C. A, 1/Goal, B-10
 - D. A, 1/Goal, B-12
53. A, 1/10, A-20. Back A21 runs to the A-25 where he is tackled. Right Guard A54 holds B90 at the A-19 right at the point of attack, giving Team A an advantage. The enforcement spot is:
- A. Previous spot
 - B. End of the run
 - C. Spot of the foul
 - D. Succeeding spot
54. A, 3/2, B-40. Running Back A21 receives the handoff and runs up the middle between the snapper and tackle to the B-39. The flank official and umpire blow their whistles as the pile begins to move backwards. B21 runs and, unnecessarily, jumps on top of the pile after the whistle. The enforcement spot is the: (10-4-5)
- A. Previous spot
 - B. End of the run
 - C. Spot of the foul
 - D. Succeeding spot
55. QB A1 throws a pass to A2, the result of the play is an incomplete pass. The basic spot and enforcement spot for defensive or offensive pass interference committed during the pass is the: (10-4-2)
- A. Previous spot
 - B. End of the run

California Football Officials Association

2026 Summer Study Guide

Officials Version

- C. Spot of the foul
 - D. Succeeding spot
56. A, 1/10, A-20. B1 grabs and twists A21's facemask at the A-15. A21 continues to run and is tackled at the A-18. The personal foul will be enforced from the previous spot since the end of the run is behind the line of scrimmage.
- A. True
 - B. False
57. A, 1/10, A-20. B1 grabs and twists A21's facemask at the A-15. A21 continues to run and is tackled at the A-25. The personal foul will still be enforced from the previous spot since the foul occurs behind the line of scrimmage.
- A. True
 - B. False
58. A, 1/10, A-40. QB A1 hands the ball to RB A21 at the A-36. A21 runs to the A-45 where he is tackled. During the run, A79 held B20 at the A-38.
- A. A, 1/22, A-28
 - B. A, 1/15, A-35
 - C. A, 1/20, A-30
59. A, 1/10, A-20. B1 grabs and twists A21's facemask at the A-35, where A21 fumbles the ball. A3 gains possession of the ball at the A-36 and runs to the B-20 where he is tackled. The Personal Foul, Facemask penalty will be enforced, half the distance, from the end of A3's run. (10-4-8)
- A. True
 - B. False
60. A, 1/Goal, B-7. RB A21 receives a hand-off at the B-10 and runs for a touchdown. During the run, WR A2 holds B2 in the endzone. The next play will be:
- A. Try, Touchdown stands
 - B. A, 1/10, B-17
 - C. A, 1/Goal, B-10
61. A, 3/5, A-20. RT A75 holds B99 at the A-10 and RB A21 is tackled at the A-16. After the covering official blows their whistle, B21 illegally jumps on the pile late.
- A. A, 1/10, A-20
 - B. A, 1/10, A-23
 - C. A, 1/10, A-25

2026 Summer Study Guide

Officials Version

62. A, 2/20, B-45. QB A1 throws a pass to A21. During the pass, B3 makes early contact with A21 at the B-35. The pass falls incomplete at the B-32.

- A. A, 1/10, B-35
- B. A, 1/10, B-30
- C. A, 2/10, B-35
- D. A, 2/5, B-30

63. A, 1/20, A-4. QB A1 drops back to pass and begins to scramble in the endzone under a heavy rush. RT A75 holds B99 in the endzone. A1 runs to the A-10 where he is tackled. The Holding penalty will be enforced half the distance and the next play will be A, 1/22, A-2.

- A. True
- B. False

Section 7 – Fouls During a Change of Possession

In thinking about fouls that occur during a change of possession, break it down as follows: 1) When did the foul(s) occur? 2) Who was in possession when the foul(s) occurred? and 3) Who is in final possession, e.g. who will be next to put the ball in play?

Review 10-2-2 before completing this section of questions. The standard of “clean hands” is not directly referenced in our rule book but has to do with whether the team in final possession (usually Team B) got possession before they committed a foul. Unless Team B possesses the ball with clean hands or commits a PSK foul, Team B will not be next to put the ball in play.

64. A, 4/Goal, B-6. Late in the game, Team A is trailing Team B by 6 points. RB A21 receives the hand-off and runs to the B-3 where he is driven out of bounds by B40. B40 continues to tackle A21 and makes a second act, forcefully throwing A21 to the ground 4-yards outside the field of play. Team A had 5 players in the offensive backfield at the snap. These fouls will offset, and the down will be replayed.

- A. True
- B. False

65. A, 1/10, A-20. QB A12 throws a pass that was intercepted by B23 at the A-40. During B23's run, B70 blocks A61 below the waist at the A-35. Team A had 2 backs in motion at the snap. Since both teams committed a live ball foul, those fouls will offset, and we will replay the down.

- A. True
- B. False

66. A, 1/Goal, B-8. QB throws an interception to B2 in the endzone. After the interception, B5 holds A2 in B's endzone. Team A had 5 players in the offensive backfield at the snap. Team B will accept Team A's illegal formation foul because to not accept it would result in a Safety for Team A. Team A will also accept the Holding on Team B, the two live-ball fouls will offset and we will replay the down.

California Football Officials Association

2026 Summer Study Guide

Officials Version

- A. True
- B. False

67. A, 3/5, B-10. QB A1's pass is intercepted in the endzone by B2 and he advances to the B-6 where he fumbles. The ball rolls into the endzone where it is recovered by B-20 while they are on the ground. During the fumble, B40 held A35 at the B-4. Team A will decline the foul and take the result of the play, a safety.

- A. True
- B. False

68. A, 1/10, A-20. QB A1's pass is intercepted by B23 at the A-35 after B23 interfered with WR A2, pulling him to the ground during the pass. During B23's run, A65 illegally blocks B75 below the waist at the A-15. These fouls will offset, and the down will be replayed.

- A. True
- B. False

69. A, 1/10, A-20. QB A1 throws a pass that is intercepted by B2 at the A-30 where he is tackled. Team A had 5 players in the offensive backfield at the snap. Team B can "tack-on" the 5-yard penalty from the dead-ball spot.

- A. True
- B. False

70. A, 2/4, B-20. QB A1 throws a pass that is intercepted by B21 at the B-6. After the interception, B70 illegally blocks A20 in the back at the B-20, A90 grabs and pulls B21's facemask in an attempt to tackle him at the B-45, and B55 holds A15 at the A-10. B21 scores a touchdown.

- A. B, 1/10, A-20; Block in the back and Facemask offset
- B. Fouls offset, replay the down
- C. Fouls offset, touchdown for Team B
- D. B, 1/10, B-10

Section 8 – Special Enforcements

NFHS has 10 special enforcement rules (10-5) that we all need to just memorize so that proper enforcement can be applied when one of these fouls occurs. Further, there are several fouls with special enforcement options that are written in the statement of penalty throughout the rule book. It's important to just simply memorize these so enforcement options are correctly communicated to head coaches.

71. Five-yard facemask fouls are rare, but if it is a "quick grasp and let go", it can be called. When in question it is a 15-yard Personal Foul.

- A. True
- B. False

California Football Officials Association
2026 Summer Study Guide
Officials Version

72. There are only 4 fouls that carry a loss of down in their statement of penalty using NFHS rules.
- A. True
 - B. False
73. A, 3/5, A-6. QB A1 is under pressure and retreats into his endzone. A1 runs to the A-5 and throws a forward pass from outside the free-blocking zone into an area with an eligible receiver, that does not cross the line of scrimmage. (10-5-4)
- A. Legal Play
 - B. Enforce 5-yards from the previous spot, replay the down. A, 3/8, A-3
 - C. Enforce 5-yards from the previous spot, loss of down. A, 4/8, A-3
 - D. Safety. A, Free-kick, A-20
74. There are only 4 fouls that carry an automatic first down using NFHS rules.
- A. True
 - B. False
75. K, 4/20, K-36. Kicker K11 is roughed by R34. The Personal Foul, Roughing the Kicker will be enforced from the previous spot, but since the penalty yardage did not result in a 1st down for Team K, the next play would be K, 4/5, R-49. (9-5, 10-5-1h)
- A. True
 - B. False
76. Free kick, K-40. With 1:05 remaining in the 4th quarter, Team K trails Team R 10-13. Team K's kick bounces at the K-45 and goes untouched out of bounds at the 50. The best option for Team R would be: (6-1-9, 10-5-1)
- A. Rekick from the K-35
 - B. R, 1/10, 50
 - C. R, 1/10, K-45
 - D. R, 1/10, R-35
77. A, 2/7, B-40. QB A1 throws a pass that is tipped by A22 at the B-8, then tipped by B2 at the B-6, and intercepted by B20 at the B-4. B20 was running toward his endzone at the time of the interception. A22 tackles B20 in Team B's endzone. (8-5-2a Exception)
- A. Safety, B Free Kick from the B-20
 - B. Touchback. B, 1/10, B-20
 - C. B, 1/10, B-4

2026 Summer Study Guide

Officials Version

78. A, 1/10, A-20. QB A1 drops back and throws a completed pass to A2 at the A-25 where he is begins his run. While being tackled at the A-30, A2 fumbles the ball, and the ball rolls out of bounds at the A-32. After throwing the pass, B99 picks up QB A1 and forcefully drives him to the ground. (10-5-5)
- A. A, 1/10, A-35
 - B. A, 1/10, A-45
 - C. A, 1/10, A-47
79. K, Free Kick, K-40. R20 muffs the ball and the balls rolls out of bounds at the R-35. Team R has options on where the ball will next be put into play. (6-1-10, 10-5-1a)
- A. True
 - B. False
80. A, 1/Goal, B-6. Running Back A21 runs a sweep to the left and runs untouched into the endzone for a touchdown. 4-yards into the endzone, B32 forcibly knocks A21 to the ground. (8-2-5)
- A. A, Try, B-1.5
 - B. A, Free Kick, R-45
 - C. Either A or B
81. A, 1/10, A-20. QB A1 drops back and throws a completed pass to A2 at the A-40 where he is tackled. After throwing the pass, B99 picks up A1 and forcefully drives him to the ground. (10-5-5)
- A. Team A will decline the personal foul for Roughing the Passer and take the result of the play
 - B. Team A can “tack-on” the personal foul for Roughing the Passer to the end of the run
82. A, 1/10, A-40. QB A1 hands the ball to A21 and runs to the right. Back A45 illegally blocks B90 below the waist at the A-45 and B90 is obviously injured on the play. A21 has possession of the ball and while at the A-47, the Head Line Judge blows their whistle given B90’s injury. The foul can be enforced and will be administered from the previous spot.
- A. True
 - B. False

Section 9 – Inadvertent Whistles

It’s going to happen...anyone who says they’ve never had one is probably lying or will have one in their next game if they don’t knock on wood. Depending on your unit, you may be buying the first round at the after-game dinner.

Most officials do not keep their whistle in their mouth during the play to avoid a quick, early whistle before the ball is dead. The play ends itself, not our whistle. See the ball or player in possession on the ground before blowing your whistle.

California Football Officials Association

2026 Summer Study Guide

Officials Version

But when they do happen, it's important to know what we need to do. 4-2-3 lists the various times in which an inadvertent whistle could happen and what to do about it: 1) Ball in player possession, 2) During a loose-ball, or 3) During a legal forward pass or kick.

83. A, 1/10, A-20. QB A1's pass is caught by A21 at the A-35. A21 fumbles the ball at the A-40 and it is recovered by B25. Thinking the play was over the Line Judge blows their whistle when B25 was at the A-38. The Umpire confirms that B25 has possession when the whistle was blown. Team B will be next to put the ball in play, 1/10, A-38.

- A. True
- B. False

84. K, 4/10, R-40. K1's kick is high and as the ball is coming down at the R-15, it hits K25 on the helmet at the R-15 and is grounded at the R-17. R1 dives in an attempt to recover the ball at the R-21 but muffs it. The Back Judge, thinking R1 has possession, blows their whistle while the ball is still loose. The ball will next be put into play R, 1/10, R-21. (6-2-5)

- A. True
- B. False

85. K, 4/10, R-45. K1's kick is high and R1 signals for a fair catch at the R-15. The ball hits R1 in the chest and the Back Judge blows his whistle as the ball is grounded. Team R has the option to take the ball at the dead-ball spot since there was a legal scrimmage kick and Team K was not in possession.

- A. True
- B. False

86. A, 1/10, A-10. Team A has a run/pass option offense. QB A1 fakes a handoff to A21 who runs up the middle of the line simulating that he has the ball. A1 runs to his left with the ball and is at the A-15 when the Umpire, thinking A21's forward progress is stopped, blows their whistle. Team A has the option to replay the down from the previous spot or take the result of the play at the dead-ball spot.

- A. True
- B. False

Section 10 – Mandatory versus Illegal Equipment

Our student athletes continue to modify or remove equipment to look like college or NFL players. Cutting knee pads, or even removing them completely, or not wearing/using a mouthpiece are among our biggest equipment issues we as officials continuously come across. It is the responsibility of all officials to address any issues during the pregame warm-up period.

Knee pads do not need to be pulled down or jerseys untucked from under the shoulder pads until the ready for play has been sounded by the Referee, but we still need to do our best before the game to warn players and coaches of such infractions. However, when thinking about when to penalize a head coach

California Football Officials Association

2026 Summer Study Guide

Officials Version

for equipment issues, determine whether: 1) Was the equipment missing or be improperly worn or 2) was the equipment illegal.

87. During the pre-game conference, the Referee, with another official present, will ask each head coach if every player is legally equipped, instructed on the proper use of their equipment and confirm players will not use illegal equipment. (1-5-4)
- A. True
 - B. False
88. During the previous play, WR A2's knee pads have rolled up around his thigh pads and are not covering the players knees. A2 joins his team's huddle and lines up for the next down without fixing his knee pads. The flank official blows their whistle and tells A2 to pull down his knee pads. A2 may remain in the game when properly equipped.
- A. True
 - B. False
89. Following the coaches pregame verification, if a player is seen not wearing required equipment (e.g. knee pads, mouthpiece, or thigh guards) or if a player is not wearing their equipment properly (e.g. knee pads where the thigh pads should be) the head coach will receive an Unsportsmanlike Conduct foul. (10-8-1)
- A. True
 - B. False
90. A, 1/10, A-20. The Umpire notices that Lineman A75 does not have a mouthpiece and takes an official timeout to remove the player from the game for one play. Another lineman on the sideline gives A75 his mouthpiece. A75 may now stay in the game.
- A. True
 - B. False
91. The home team's equipment manager, trainer and team doctor provide the Referee with a personal doctor's note authorizing #33 to be able to play with a tinted visor on their helmet. The request will not be granted and #33 can only play with a clear visor, absent of any tint.
- A. True
 - B. False

California Football Officials Association
2026 Summer Study Guide
Officials Version

Section 11 – May The Force Be With You

Several key principles exist when talking about Force, but always ask yourself one question, “How did the ball get into the endzone?”. When determining if the play resulted in a Touchback or Safety, which team gave the ball force into the endzone matters. Rule 2-13 is a good place to start, followed by Rule 8-5.

92. Responsibility for forcing the ball from the field of play across a goal line is attributed to the player who carries, snaps, passes, fumbles or kicks the ball, unless a new force is applied to a grounded backwards pass, kick or fumble. (8-5-1)
- A. True
 - B. False
93. A, 1/15, A-5. QB A1 pitches the ball backwards to RB A21. Defensive End B99 runs unblocked into the offensive backfield and bats the ball into the endzone where it is grounded and rolls across the endline.
- A. Touchback
 - B. Safety
94. A, 1/15, A-5. QB A1 pitches the ball backwards to RB A21 who muffs the ball at the A-2 where the ball hits the ground at the A-3. Defensive End B99 runs unblocked into the offensive backfield and in an attempt to recover the ball at the A-2, muffs the ball into the endzone where it is grounded and rolls across the endline.
- A. Touchback
 - B. Safety
95. QB A1’s pass is intercepted at the B-3 by B19 and his momentum carries him into the endzone. B19 attempts to run the ball from the endzone when A22 forces B19 to fumble the ball in the endzone. The loose ball rolls out of bounds beyond the endline. (2-13-1)
- A. Touchback. Team B ball 1/10, B-20.
 - B. Safety for Team A. B, Free Kick, B-20.
 - C. Touchdown for K
 - D. B, 1/10, B-3.

Section 12 – The Clock and Timeouts

While the Back Judge is generally responsible for signaling to the Referee the status of the clock after penalties are enforced, but clock status is a responsibility that every official on the field should know. Further, every official has a responsibility during a timeout. All officials should note the team that called the timeout and the quarter/time in their notebook and confirm timeouts remaining with the other officials and coaches.

96. K, Free Kick, K-40. Team R trails Team K by 3 points with 0:03 in the 4th quarter. Kicker K1 kicks the ball low and it hits the ground at the R-40 and starts bouncing around. The clock operator

California Football Officials Association

2026 Summer Study Guide

Officials Version

starts the clock when the ball is grounded. R7 recovers the kick while on the ground at the R-34 and the clock reads 0:00. (3-4-1)

- A. The game is over.
- B. Referee should instruct the clock operator to put 0:03 seconds on the clock. R, 1/10, R-30.

97. The Back Judge is responsible for the one-minute time-out interval. With 20 seconds remaining, the Back Judge will blow their whistle 3 times indicating the teams should begin getting set for the next down. Flank officials should assist and verbally remind their teams to return to the field.

- A. True
- B. False

98. After the play, Team A's coach calls a timeout which is granted by the Line Judge. A7 falls to the ground with a cramp and the Umpire signals for an official's timeout. A7 can return to the game without being replaced for one play.

- A. True
- B. False

99. A, 2/10, A-25. After QB A1 was tackled inbounds on first down, the Referee notices A59 on the ground holding his ankle for an extended period of time and stops the clock for an officials timeout. Team A's head coach can call a timeout and have A55 back in the game for the next down. (3-5-10)

- A. True
- B. False

100. A, 1/10, A-20. A21 receives the handoff and is tackled by B90 and B92 at the A-25. During the legal tackle, A21's helmet comes off. A21 must be replaced for one down. The play clock will be set to 40 seconds and the game clock will start on the snap.

- A. True
- B. False