

2004-05 NFHS Basketball Rules

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

1. **Closely guarded.** Well-officiated closely-guarded situations provide for better balance between offense and defense. When the closely guarded rules are not followed, there is a significant advantage for the offense. The following four areas are to be emphasized:

A. **When to start.** A closely guarded situation occurs when a player in control of the ball in his or her team's front court, is guarded by an opponent who is within six feet of that player who is holding or dribbling the ball. It should also be emphasized that the defensive player must obtain a legal guarding position.

A player shall not hold the ball for five seconds or dribble the ball for five seconds while closely guarded in his or her front court. A player can legally hold the ball while closely guarded for four seconds, dribble the ball for four seconds and hold the ball again for four seconds before violating.

B. **When to stop.** A closely-guarded count ends when no defensive player is within six feet. The count also stops when a closely guarded player (a) completes a dribble anywhere in the team's own front court; (b) starts a dribble in the team's own frontcourt and ends it anywhere in the frontcourt (a new five-second count will start if the player holds the ball); (c) loses possession of the ball for any reason in the team's own frontcourt; or (d) has his or her dribble interrupted. If a closely-guarded player beats the defender(s) by getting head and shoulders past the defensive player, the count has ended.

C. **Multiple defenders.** The count should continue even if there is a defensive switch, provided the six-foot distance is maintained. There is no requirement for the defensive player to remain the same during the count as long as the offensive player is closely guarded throughout.

D. **Counting mechanics.** Emphasis should be placed on the official to begin a visible count when the six-foot distance is established. The official must switch arms when going directly from one counting situation to another.

2. **Time-out administration.**

A. **Coaches calling.** Coaches must understand that just because they've requested a timeout doesn't guarantee it will be granted. Remember, only the head coach may legally request a timeout from the bench. Officials must be sure that the head coach is making the request. That is best done by hearing the coach, then visually confirming the request by seeing the coach request the timeout. Too often officials use sound only, later to discover the time out request was from someone other than the head coach.

B. **Player control.** The committee is still concerned that officials are granting timeouts while the ball is loose and not in player control. Over the years, an officiating philosophy has developed that teaches officials to grant loose ball timeouts quickly to avoid rough play and stop additional players from diving onto the loose ball pile. While preventing rough play is desirable, that concept cannot supersede the basic rule that a player must be in control of the ball in order for a timeout to be legally granted. When in doubt, do not grant the timeout.

3. **Player positioning/status.** Players must play the game within the confines of the playing court. Otherwise, a tremendous advantage is gained by allowing a team or player more space than allowed. There are two specific areas of concern:

A. **Players on the court.** Last year's emphasis ensured that defensive players obtain legal guarding position while on the playing court and not while out of bounds. The same principle is in place for all players. Too often, players are leaving the court for unauthorized reasons. An all-too-common example is an offensive player getting around a screen or defensive player by running out of bounds. That is not legal and gives a tremendous advantage to the offense. Officials must enforce the rule that is already in place. **It is a technical foul.** Coaches benefit the game by teaching players to play on the court.

The committee is also concerned about bench personnel leaving the bench, sometimes during a live ball. Heading into the hallway to get a drink or sitting up in the stands with friends or family, even for a short period of time, are not authorized reasons unless they are medically related. **Coaches must ensure that bench personnel remain on the bench.**

B. **Legal guarding position along a sideline or end line.** Last year's editorial change that required a defensive player to obtain legal guarding position while on the playing court met with concerns. In fact, the rule had not changed. Confusion arose regarding a defensive player's movements after legal guarding position was obtained. The committee clarified the long-standing rule that after legal guarding position is obtained; the defender may move to maintain it within the rules. A defender's feet do not have to be

on the floor to maintain legal guarding position, whether or not a sideline or end line is involved. As long as the defender obtains legal guarding position while on the court and continues to have inbounds status, a charging foul is called if there is contact deemed a foul.

4. **Specific unsporting acts.** The committee is concerned about the following specific unsporting acts. Coaches, players and officials must pay particular attention to these areas:

A. **Face guarding.** A new rule change that calls for a **technical foul for face guarding** regardless of whether or not the offended player has the ball calls attention to the problem. The NFHS first defined face guarding as illegal in 1913. The rules have essentially been unchanged and have received varying degrees of emphasis through the century.

Face guarding is defined in rule 10-3-7d as purposely obstructing an opponent's vision by waving or placing hand(s) near his or her eyes. **The penalty is a technical foul.** Face guarding could occur with a single hand and a player's hand(s) do not have to be waving; the hand(s) could be stationary but still restrict the opponent's vision.

The committee does not intend for good defense to be penalized. Challenging a shooter with a 'hand in the face' or fronting a post player with a hand in the air to prevent a post pass are examples of acceptable actions. The rule and point of emphasis is designed to penalize actions that are clearly not related to playing the game of basketball properly and that intentionally restrict vision. Often, that occurs off the ball or as players are moving up the court in transition.

B. **'Flopping.'** The defensive player or screener acting as though he or she has been charged by an opponent, when in fact he or she has not been, definitely has an impact on the game. It is detrimental to the best interests of basketball. The 'actor' wants to create the false impression that he or she has been fouled in the charging/guarding situation, or while he or she is screening when in either case there is no contact or incidental contact. The 'actor' falls to the court as though he or she were knocked down by the force of the contact. Those actions are designed to have a foul charged to the opponent a foul not deserved. The "flop" also incites spectators. The rules are in place to deal with such activity and must be enforced. **A technical foul is charged to the 'actor' in all cases.** Coaches can have a positive impact by appropriately dealing with players who fake being fouled. It is not a part of the game. Officials must penalize the act.

C. **Inappropriate language.** The committee is concerned about the use of inappropriate language by players, bench personnel, coaches, officials and spectators. Each group has a responsibility to the game and to each other to demonstrate civility and citizenship. **The team huddle is not a safe haven for coaches' bad language.** Players are not permitted to "let off steam" by using profanity, even if it is not directed at an opponent or official. Being angry at oneself is no excuse. Officials are not exempt either. Inappropriate references to players or coaches are not acceptable. Game administrators must also pay particular attention to fans, they do not have a license to abuse.

COMMENTS ON THE 2004-05 RULES REVISIONS

CONTRASTING COLORED LINES DELETED (1-5-2, 1-13-2): Deletes the requirement for contrasting colored lines for the lane spaces/neutral zone with the lane boundary lines and for the coaching box line to contrast with the boundary lines. Deleting the requirement allows for either contrasting colors or the same color for the lines specified.

HOME TEAM MUST WEAR WHITE IN 2007-08 (3-4-6 Note): Beginning in 2007-08, the home team shall wear white jerseys and the visiting team dark jerseys. More teams are opting for light-colored home jerseys that cause confusion with opponents' dark jerseys. This change ensures similar colors won't be worn by opponents. The new rule only affects varsity uniforms; lower level programs may still continue to wear "light-colored" uniforms as home jerseys.

INTENTIONAL KICK RULE EXPANDED (4-29): The rule has been expanded to include intentionally striking the ball with any part of the leg or foot. Kicking is an act that requires use of the entire leg. If it is an intentional act, it should be penalized regardless of where it may have actually struck the player's leg. The previous rule, which only included the knee and below, required an interpretation by officials that was more complicated and subject to misapplication. This change makes the determination simpler and more evenly applied.

OBSTRUCTING AN OPPONENT'S VISION RULE EXPANDED (10-3-7d): Purposely obstructing an opponent's vision by waving or placing hands(s) near his or her eyes now also includes the player with the ball. Previously the rule only prohibited the act against a player without the ball. Guarding a player's eyes should not be allowed as an effort to obstruct any player's movement and is an unsafe act. It is a technical foul whether or not the player has the ball.

PLAYER(S) EJECTED FOR LEAVING BENCH IF FIGHT MAY OCCUR (10-4-4): A bench player will now be ejected if he or she leaves the confines of the bench during a fight or when a fight may break out. Previously there was no coverage in the rules book when bench personnel left the bench when two or more players confronted one another but no fight occurred. These volatile situations can easily degenerate into a fight or worse by the presence of team members from the bench. The penalty is now the same as for leaving the bench during a fight, ejection.

TECHNICAL-FOUL PENALTY SUMMARY

TYPE FOUL	CHARGED TO:	COUNTS TOWARD	**HEAD COACH ASSESSED
Administrative: Providing rosters: starters, numbers, changes, additions, etc.: team not ready to start half, TV monitor, electronic communication: not occupying assigned bench: more than five players: excess time-out: violation after team warning for delay: all players not returning at same time after time out or intermission (10-1)	Team	Team-foul count	
Dunk or grasp basket: During warm-ups-any team members (10-3-5)	Team Member	1. 2 Technicals 2. 5 Personal 3. Team-foul count	Indirect
Substitutes: Entering court; no report; not beckoned (10-2)	Substitute	1. 2 Technicals 2. 5 Personal 3. Team-foul count	
Players: *Changing number without reporting; wearing Illegal number, shin, pants; leaving court or delaying return; grasping basket, slapping backboard; delaying game; unsporting act/conduct; goaltending on free throw; reaching through plane to touch or dislodge ball; contact opponent during dead ball; use of tobacco; *fight (10-3)	Player	1 2 Technicals 2. 5 Personal 3. Team-foul count	
Bench personnel: Unsporting act/conduct; enter court without permission; use tobacco; *fight; *leave bench during fight or possible fight (10-4)	Substitute/ Bench Personnel	1 2 Technicals 2. 5 Personal 3. Team-foul count	Indirect
Disqualified player on bench: Unsporting act/conduct	Substitute/ Bench Personnel	Team-foul count	Indirect
Assistant Coach: Unsporting act/conduct (10-4)	Assistant Coach	2 techs toward ejection Team-foul count	Indirect
Head coach: Unsporting act/conduct; off bench/outside box; not replacing player as required in 30 seconds; leaving bench during fight unless beckoned; playing a disqualified player (10-5).	Head Coach	2 directs toward election Team-foul count	Direct