

# OFFICIATING GUIDELINES

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# GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Referees are expected to call the game in a way that allows the players to create a contest according to the following principles:

- Allow players to be athletic and use their strength and skill, playing within the boundaries of what is legal.
- Make the contest look the same at each end, with a consistent look from call to call and from end to end.
- Balance the rights of offence and defence.
  - Do not penalise legal defence; reward the offence where defence is illegal.
- Be active and communicate proactively with players to avoid unnecessary fouls.
- Use voice to prevent illegal contact from occurring (early intervention and prevention).
  - This is a proactive approach to prevent illegal contact from occurring rather than being a reactive measure after contact has occurred. The use of the voice is not intended to replace the calling of fouls that would ordinarily have been called.
  - Where preventative officiating does not prevent illegal contact then referees are expected to become active and call the game.

# CONTACT AND CRITERIA

## EFFECT ON THE PLAY

The sport of basketball is fast paced with many people moving around the court at various speeds and, with this in mind, it is virtually impossible to do so without contacting each other.

Referees shall decide whether illegal contact has had an effect on the play. If contact caused in any way restricts the freedom of movement of an opponent or forcibly moves an opponent, this should be called as a foul. Other contact that does not have an effect on the play is deemed marginal and can be ignored.

When deciding on a personal contact, the referees shall weigh up the following fundamental principles:

- The spirit and intent of the rules, and the need to uphold the integrity of the game.
- Consistency in application of the concept of illegal contact and effect on the play. The referees should not seek to interrupt the flow of the game unnecessarily to penalise marginal contact which does not give the player responsible an advantage nor place the opponent at a disadvantage.
- Consistency in the application of common sense to each game, bearing in mind the abilities of the players and their attitude and conduct during the game.
- Consistency in the maintenance of a balance between game control and game flow, having a 'feeling' for what the players are trying to do and calling what is right for the game.

## USE OF HANDS

The touching of an opponent with one or both hands is, in itself, not necessarily a foul. The referees shall decide whether the player who caused the contact has gained an advantage. If contact caused by a player in any way restricts the freedom of movement of an opponent or redirects an opponent, such contact is a foul.

Illegal use of the hand(s) or extended arm(s) occurs when the defensive player is in a guarding position and their hand(s) or arm(s) is placed upon and remains in contact with an opponent with or without the ball, to impede their progress.

To repeatedly touch or “jab” an opponent with or without the ball is a foul, as it may lead to rough play.

## POST PLAY

The principle of verticality applies also to post play. The offensive player in the low post and the defensive player guarding him must respect each other's rights to a vertical position.

The same principles relating to restricting an opponent's movement or displacing an opponent also apply to post play. This applies equally to a defensive player displacing an offensive player and to an offensive player displacing a defender.

It is a foul by either an offensive or defensive player in the post position to move their opponent out of position or to interfere with their opponent's freedom of movement using extended arms, shoulders, hips, legs or other parts of the body.

Post play should be viewed and anticipated as a physical (not rough) match-up between two opponents, especially big players. But if illegal use of hands, forearm, knees or legs impedes the movement of or dislodges the opponent, then a foul must be called.

## CHARGE/BLOCK SITUATIONS

When judging a charge/block situation involving a player with the ball, a referee shall use the following principles:

- The defensive player must establish an initial legal guarding position by facing the player with the ball and having both feet on the floor.
- The defensive player may remain stationary, jump vertically, move laterally or backwards in order to maintain the initial legal guarding position.
- When moving to maintain the initial legal guarding position, one foot or both feet may be off the floor for an instant, as long as the movement is lateral or backwards, but not towards the player with the ball.
- Contact must occur on the torso, in which case the defensive player would be considered as having been at the place of contact first.
- Having established a legal guarding position, the defensive player may turn within the cylinder to avoid injury.

## SCREENS

Referees are to ensure that players setting screens are stationary with both feet on the floor (and within their cylinder) if contact occurs.

Referees are encouraged to eliminate screens where the backside or extended arms are used to cause to contact and impede the opponent's movement.

Players who deliberately run through legally set screens should be penalised.

## SHOOTER PROTECTION

Illegal contact on the shooter is to be called a foul.

A defensive player must not be penalised for leaving the floor vertically (within their cylinder) or having their hands or arms extended above them within their own cylinder. However, if the defensive player jumps and lands in a new spot, taking the landing spot of the shooter, this should be penalised.

Referees must identify when contact is initiated by the offensive player and penalise that accordingly.

## FAKING A FOUL

Faking is an action by a player to simulate that they have been fouled or to make theatrical exaggerated movements in order to create an impression of being fouled and therefore gaining an advantage. Often this could occur in charging, screening and shooting situations.

This type of behaviour does not fit within the spirit of sportsmanship and fair play and, if identified, should be managed early.

If a player:

- a) contacts incidentally with an opponent as a consequence of a regular play and it does not produce any alteration in the rhythm of the play, it is deemed to be a no call;
- b) fakes while generating illegal contact, a foul is to be called on the faker; if there is a foul on the play there cannot be a fake warning on the same play;
- c) fakes but does not generate any illegal contact and the referee shows the fake signal:
  - i) an official warning is to be given to the player and the warning must also be communicated to the head coach during the next game interruption; this serves as a warning for that team;
  - ii) a technical foul is to be issued to members of the warned team for any repetition of faking; each team is entitled to one warning.

A player who fakes excessively (without any contact with an opponent) and does not generate any illegal contact is to be issued with a technical foul.

# PLAYER/COACH BEHAVIOUR

## COMMUNICATION WITH PLAYERS AND COACHES

Referees are encouraged to have open and respectful communication with players and coaches. Respectful questions asked in a calm manner by a player or a coach are to be answered by the referee when an opportunity permits. Referees are to listen, understand, respect and respond accordingly. Referees are to provide short, sharp responses.

All attempts should be made to resolve conflict in a timely and professional manner, ensuring the game is not unnecessarily delayed.

Mistakes made by coaches, players, administrators and referees are a part of the game. Disrespectful, inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated, including when mistakes are made.

At no time shall a player or coach be disrespectful to referees and/or table officials, for example:

- a) any obvious or blatant verbal or non-verbal disputing of a referee's decision
- b) any action that belittles or demeans a referee
- c) any obvious non-verbal reactions which may incite the crowd
- d) any use of audible foul language.

Referees should not allow any continuous questioning towards the referees or continual commentary on the game.

Referees should not allow assistant coaches or bench players to rise to their feet to complain about referee decisions. However, players standing and celebrating after a score or a great play should be allowed.

Referees should not allow coaches to become the centre of attention with theatrical gestures and constant complaining.

## **PROCEDURE**

Referees are encouraged to try, where possible, to avoid calling a technical foul by anticipating and reading the problem, and consequently addressing the coach's or player's behaviour before having to deal with it with a technical foul.

Referees are encouraged to attempt to de-escalate the situation with effective communication techniques, clearly articulating a warning that the behaviour is not acceptable.

If the inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour continues, the referee is to issue a technical foul.

In the event that the behaviour of the coach or player is at such an unacceptable level, referees are entitled to progress immediately to calling a technical foul.



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