



NEW 25/40 SECOND PLAY CLOCK MECHANICS

The play clock will start at 40 seconds unless there is an administrative stoppage. Below is a list of administrative stoppages - the play clock will reset to 25 seconds in these instances and will start on the Referee's ready for play signal (#1) and whistle. If the Referee is in doubt – reset to 25 seconds and start on the ready for play.

25 Second play clock (administrative stop):

1. Following a penalty administration or of an inadvertent whistle.
2. Following a score either on try or succeeding kickoff.
3. Following a touchback.
4. Following a measurement for a possible first down.
5. Following a charged timeout by either team or a media timeout.
6. Following an official's timeout for an injury to any player, or helmet coming off any player.
7. At the start of a period or overtime.
8. Following a change of possession.
9. Following an official's timeout for a measurement.
10. Following an official's timeout for any other reason.

40 Second play clock:

1. End of a running play, either inbounds or out of bounds.
2. End of a pass play, complete or incomplete.

The 40-second play clock shall start as soon as the play ends and the ball is dead. The covering official will raise one hand over head (signal #7) when the play ends in-bounds which indicates the ball is dead and the 40-second play clock should start. If there is an incomplete pass or the play ends out of bounds, the incomplete signal (#10) or the stop the clock signal (#3) by the covering official indicates the start of the 40-second play clock. There will be no ready for play signal nor whistle from the Referee. The clock operator will start the 40-second play clock, unless an administrative stop should occur that requires the 25-second play clock to reset (see above).

The 40-second play clock should be the most used reset following a normal play.

If during the down a change of possession occurs, the 25-second play clock will be reset.

The signal to reset the 25-second play clock is one arm pumped in the air by the Referee.

The signal to reset the 40-second play clock is both arms pumped in the air by the Referee. This will be rarely done.

If an official's timeout is taken for an injury or a helmet coming off any player, the 25-second play clock will be reset.

After a long play downfield, the "box man" on the chain crew must hustle (run) to the succeeding spot because once the ball is placed, and the Umpire steps away, the ball can be snapped because the 40-second play clock is already running. The Umpire must spot the ball as soon as possible. When the Umpire steps away into position, the ball is ready for play. As soon as the first down is signaled by the Referee, the "box man" must hustle to the succeeding spot. Stopping the clock to signal first down will not reset the play clock to 25 seconds, the 40-second play clock will be running as soon as the play is dead. If the "box man" is not in place and Team A is ready to snap the ball, The Linesman will drop a bean bag on the sideline to mark the yard line from where the play started. The 40-second play clock is NOT to be interrupted because the "box" is not in place.

When visible play clocks are NOT used, the play clock official (SJ in 6 man or BJ in 5 and 7 man) at 10 seconds remaining in the count will raise one hand into the air. At 5 seconds that official will count down with a one arm swiping motion (i.e. basketball count).

When visible play clocks ARE used, the official will not use this mechanic.

If for some unusual reason through no fault of Team A, the official's crew has not been able to place the ball ready in a timely fashion, and the running 40-second play clock gets down to around 20 seconds, the play clock should be reset to 25 seconds.

Rationale for change: The consistency of officiating crews marking the ball ready for play and starting a 25-second play clock is of concern to coaches and administrators. The time between plays, and the number of plays and length of games varies widely from crew to crew. This new timing procedure will allow a more consistent application of the interval between the end of a down and the ready for play for the next down.

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April 2019