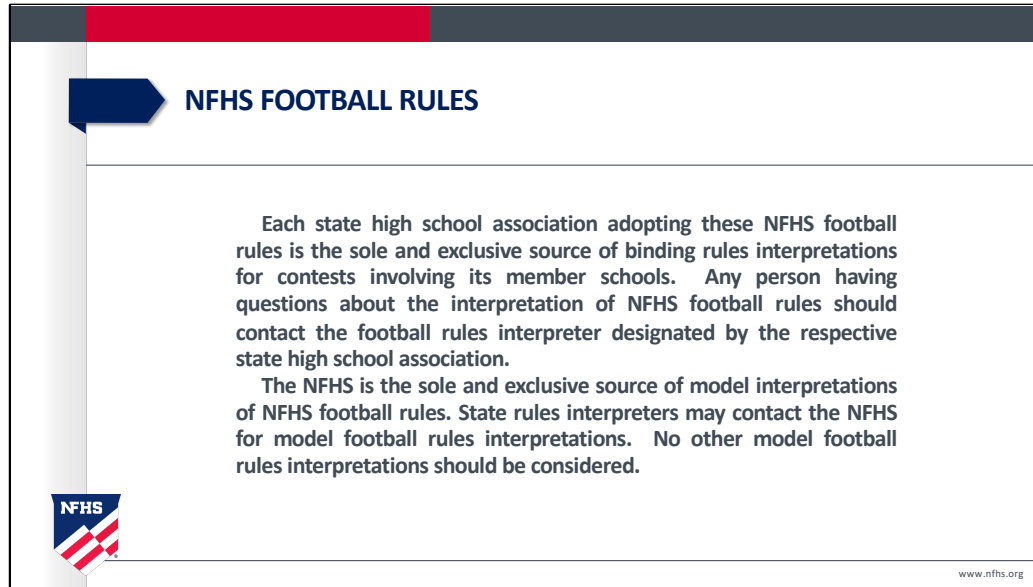




**2022 NFHS  
FOOTBALL RULES CHANGES**






The slide features a red and grey header bar. A blue arrow points to the title "NFHS FOOTBALL RULES". The main content area contains two paragraphs of text. In the bottom left corner is the NFHS logo, and in the bottom right corner is the website "www.nfhs.org".

## NFHS FOOTBALL RULES

Each state high school association adopting these NFHS football rules is the sole and exclusive source of binding rules interpretations for contests involving its member schools. Any person having questions about the interpretation of NFHS football rules should contact the football rules interpreter designated by the respective state high school association.

The NFHS is the sole and exclusive source of model interpretations of NFHS football rules. State rules interpreters may contact the NFHS for model football rules interpretations. No other model football rules interpretations should be considered.

 [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org)

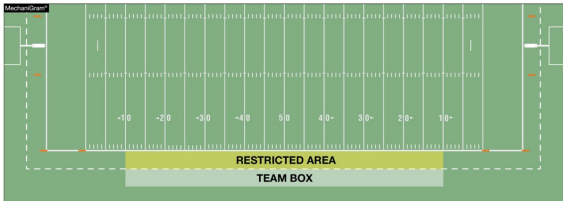
❖ Comment on Slide:

This statement appears at the bottom of page two in the 2022 NFHS Football Rules Book.


Rule Change

## TEAM BOXES

### RULE 1-2-3g NOTES 3. (NEW), TABLE 1-7 (3.) (NEW)



It is permissible for state associations to approve an extension of the team box and to determine the individuals who may be in the extended area, provided such extension is the same for both teams.


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❖ **Rule Change:**

**RULE 1 – SECTION 2 THE FIELD ANE MARKINGS ...**

**ART. 3 . . . Lines and other markings: ...**

g. Team boxes shall be marked on each side of the field outside the coaches' area between the 25-yard lines for use of coaches, substitutes, athletic trainers, etc., affiliated with the team. The coaches' area is a minimum of a 2-yard belt between the front of the team box and the sideline, and becomes a restricted area when the ball is live.

**NOTES:**

1. It is permissible for both team boxes to be on the same side of the field, provided each team box is marked between respective 20- and 45-yard lines.
2. It is recommended goal lines and the team box boundaries be marked in a color which contrasts with other field markings and the area between the sidelines and the team box boundaries be solid white or marked with diagonal lines.

3. It is permissible for state associations to approve an extension of the team box and to determine the individuals who may be in the extended area, provided such extension is the same for both teams.

**RULE 1 – TABLE 1-7 – TABLE OF STATE ASSOCIATION ADOPTIONS ...**

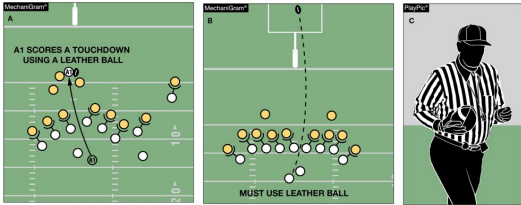
3. Approve an extension of the team box if the same for both teams. (1-2-3g NOTE 3)

❖ **Rationale for Change:**


By state association adoption, the team box may now be extended beyond the 25-yard line.

Rule Change

GAME BALLS  
RULE 1-3-3



Any game official may order the ball changed between downs. Unless the ball is ordered changed by the Referee or another game official, Team A scoring a touchdown with one ball (MechaniGram A) may not request a different ball for the try (MechaniGram B) but may use a different approved ball for the ensuing free kick (PlayPic C).


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❖ **Rule Change:**

**RULE 1 – SECTION 3 GAME EQUIPMENT ...**


**ART. 3 . . .** The referee shall decide whether the ball meets specifications, and the referee or any other game official may order the ball changed between downs.

❖ **Rationale for Change:**

Any game official may order the ball changed between downs.

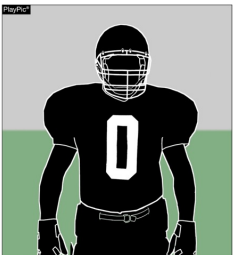
❖ **Case Book:** See SITUATIONS 1.3.3A, 1.3.3B

Rule Change




## JERSEY NUMBERS

### RULE 1-4-3, FIGURE 1-4-2, RULE 1-5-1c(1), RULE 7-2-5b EXCEPTIONS, RULE 7-5-6a




Legal



Illegal

Each player shall be numbered 0 through 99 inclusive. Any number preceded by the digit zero such as "00" is illegal.


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✦ **Rule Change:**

**RULE 1 – SECTION 4 PLAYER DESIGNATIONS ...**

**ART. 3 . . .** Each player shall be numbered 0 through 99 inclusive. Any number preceded by the digit zero is illegal. See 7-2-5.

**RULE 1 – SECTION 5 PLAYER EQUIPMENT ...**

**ART. 1 . . .** Mandatory equipment. Each player shall participate while wearing the following pieces of properly fitted equipment, which shall be professionally manufactured and not altered to decrease protection: ...

c. Numbers

1. The numbers shall be clearly visible and legible using Arabic numbers 0-99 inclusive and shall be on the front and back of the jersey.

**RULE 7 – SECTION 2 FORMATION/POSITION, NUMBERSING AND ACTION AT THE SNAP ...**

**ART. 5 . . .** Player formation and numbering requirements include:

- a. No more than four A players may be backs and only one A player
- b. At the snap, at least five A players on their line of scrimmage must be numbered 50-79.

**EXCEPTIONS:**

1. On first, second or third down, when A sets or shifts into a scrimmage-kick formation as in 2-14-2a, the snapper may be a player numbered 0 to 49 or 80 to 99. If Team A has the snapper in the game under this exception, Team A shall have four players wearing numbers 50-79 on its line of scrimmage. The snapper in the game under this exception must be between the ends and is an ineligible forward-pass receiver during that down unless the pass is touched by B (7-5-6b).
2. On fourth down or during a kick try, when A sets or shifts into a scrimmage-kick formation, any A player numbered 0 to 49 or 80 to 99 may take the position of any A player numbered 50 to 79. A player in the game under this exception must assume an initial position on his line of scrimmage between the ends and he remains an ineligible forward-pass receiver during that down unless the pass is touched by B (7-5-6b).

**RULE 7 – SECTION 5 FORWARD-PASS CLASSIFICATION ...**

**ART. 6 . . .** Pass eligibility rules apply only to a legal forward pass. The following players are eligible pass receivers:

- a. All A players eligible by position and number including those who, at the time of the snap, are on the ends of their scrimmage line or legally behind the line (possible total of six) and are numbered 0-49 or 80-99. (7-2-5b EXCEPTION 2)

✦ **Rationale for Change:**

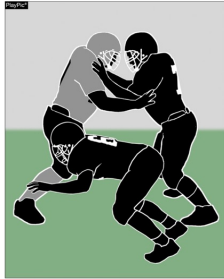
The single digit number "0" is now a legal number.

✦ **Case Book:** See SITUATION 1.4.3


Rule Change

➔

## CHOP BLOCK RULE 2-3-8



A chop block is combination block by two or more teammates against an opponent other than the runner, with or without delay, where one of the blocks is below the waist and one of the blocks is above the waist.


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❖ **Rule Change:**

**RULE 2 – SECTION 3 BLOCKING ...**

**ART. 8 . . .** Chop block is a combination block by two or more teammates against an opponent other than the runner, with or without delay, where one of the blocks is below the waist and one of the blocks is above the waist.

❖ **Rationale for Change:**

A chop block has been redefined as an illegal combination block where contact is made above and below the waist.

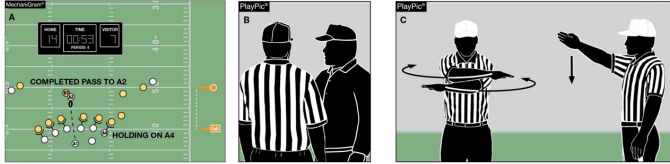
❖ **Case Book:** See SITUATION 9.3.2F

**CORRECTED - 9.3.2 SITUATION F:** A1 and A2 combine in blocking B1 as follows: (a) both block B1 downfield with A1 making contact above the waist and A2 simultaneously making contact below the waist but above the knees; or (b) both block B1 in the free-blocking zone with A1's block above the waist and A2's block below the waist; or (c) A1 blocks B1 above the waist as part of immediate, initial action following the snap and at the same time, A2 blocks B1 below the waist and above the knees; or (d) both A1 and A2 block B1 below the knees from the front of B1 while in the free-blocking zone. **RULING:** ~~In (a), (b) and (c) illegal chop block by A2; illegal block below the waist by A2 in (a) since the block is not in the free-blocking zone even if part of the immediate, initial action following the snap; in (b) illegal chop block by A2; in (c) the block by A2 is legal if both blockers were on the line of scrimmage and in the free-blocking zone at the snap and the block was part of the immediate, initial action following the snap;~~ in (d) this combination or multiple block is legal if the block and both blockers were in the free-blocking zone at the snap and the block was part of the immediate, initial action following the snap. (2-17-2, 9-3-6)


Rule Change

## GAME CLOCK OPTION

### RULE 3-4-7



When a foul is committed with less than two minutes remaining in either half, the offended team has the option to start the game clock on the snap. In Mechanigram A, Team B trails when Team A fouls. Team B's coach is consulted (PlayPic B), choosing to decline the penalty and have the clock started on the snap (PlayPic C).


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❖ **Rule Change:**

**RULE 3 – SECTION 4 STARTING AND STOPPING THE GAME CLOCK ...**

**ART. 7 . . .** When a foul is committed with less than two minutes remaining in either half, the offended team will have the option to start the game clock on the snap.

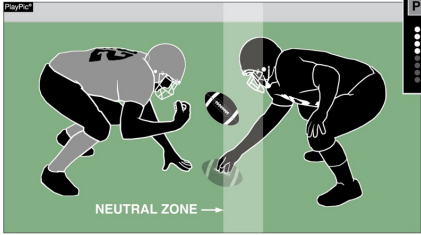
❖ **Rationale for Change:**

Changed the offended team's game clock options following a foul committed with less than two minutes remaining in either half.


❖ **Case Book:** See SITUATIONS 3.4.7A, 3.4.7C, 3.4.7D

Rule Change


**PLAY CLOCK**  
**RULE 3-6-1a(1)e EXCEPTION 2. (NEW)**



PLAY CLOCK



When the clock is stopped due to Rule 3-5-7i and Team B is the only team to foul, the play clock will be set to 40 seconds.


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❖ **Rule Change:**

**RULE 3 – SECTION 6 PLAY CLOCK, BALL READY FOR PLAY AND DELAY ...**

**ART. 1 . . .** Play clock and ready-for-play:

a. Play clock:

1. 25 seconds will be on the play clock and start on the ready-for-play signal:

- (a) Prior to a try following a score;
- (b) To start a period or overtime series;
- (c) Following administration of an inadvertent whistle;
- (d) Following a charged time-out;
- (e) Following an official's time-out as in 3-5-7 or 3-5-10.

**EXCEPTIONS:**

1. 3-5-7b;


2. 3-5-7e, 3-5-7i or 3-5-10 if related to a defensive player.

❖ **Rationale for Change:**

Added a new exception to the play clock administration following a foul committed only by the defensive team.



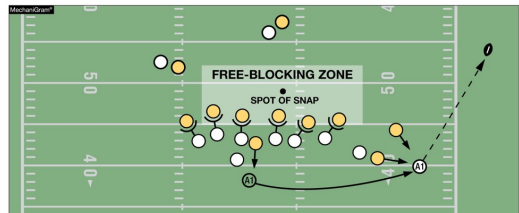
Rule Change



## INTENTIONAL GROUNDING


### RULE 7-5-2d EXCEPTION 2. (NEW), TABLE 7-5-2,

#### TABLE 7-5



The diagram shows a football field with yard lines. A shaded area labeled 'FREE-BLOCKING ZONE' is centered around the 'SPOT OF SNAP'. A player (A1) is shown throwing a pass from behind this zone. The pass is shown as a dashed line reaching the neutral zone, which is the area beyond the free-blocking zone and the sideline.

It is legal for a player to conserve yardage by intentionally throwing an incomplete forward pass if the passer has been beyond the lateral boundary of the free-blocking zone as established at the snap; and the pass reaches the neutral zone, including the extension beyond the sideline.


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❖ **Rule Change:**

**RULE 7 – SECTION 5 FORWARD-PASS CLASSIFICATION ...**

**ART. 2 . . .** An illegal forward pass is a foul. Illegal forward passes include:

- a. A pass after team possession has changed during the down.
- b. A pass from beyond the neutral zone.
- c. A second and subsequent forward pass(es) thrown during a down.
- d. A pass intentionally thrown into an area not occupied by an eligible offensive receiver, or thrown incomplete to save loss of yardage or to conserve time.

**EXCEPTIONS:**

1. It is legal for a player positioned directly behind the snapper to conserve time by intentionally throwing the ball forward to the ground immediately after receiving the snap that has neither been muffed nor touched the ground.

2. It is legal for a player to conserve yardage by intentionally throwing an incomplete forward pass if:

- a. The passer has been beyond the lateral boundary of the free-blocking zone as established at the snap; and
- b. The pass reaches the neutral zone, including the extension beyond the sideline.

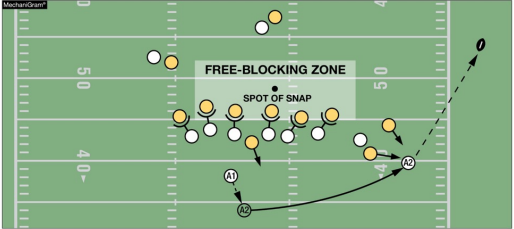
❖ **Rationale for Change:**

Added a new exception that allows the passer to legally throw the ball away to conserve yardage.

❖ **Case Book:** See SITUATIONS 7.5.2A, 7.5.2C

Rule Change

**INTENTIONAL GROUNDING  
RULE 7-5-2d EXCEPTION 2. (NEW), TABLE 7-5-2,  
TABLE 7-5**



Legal. The player taking advantage of the new rules exception need not be the player who received the snap.

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