

Summary of penalties

Officials' signals (see pages 166 - 168), the numbers refer to numbered illustrations; R, Rule; S, Section; A, Article; P, Page. Where a signal is marked *, the referee shall also give Signal 9.

Index

		O	R	S	A	P
LOSS OF A DOWN						
1	Illegal scrimmage kick	31*	6	3	10	89
2	Illegally handing ball forward	35*	7	1	6	101
3	Planned loose ball play	19*	7	1	7	101
4	Intentionally throwing backward pass out of bounds	35*	7	2	1	101
5	Illegal forward pass by Team A	35*	7	3	2	103
6	Intentionally grounding forward pass	36*	7	3	2	103
7	Forward pass illegally touched by player out of bounds	16*	7	3	4	105
8	Forward pass illegally touched	16*	7	3	11	111
9	Illegally batting loose ball	31*	9	4	1	140
10	Illegally kicking ball	31*	9	4	4	142
LOSS OF FIVE YARDS						
1	Alteration of playing surface for an advantage	19	1	2	9	18
2	Improper numbering	23	1	4	2	21
3	Coin toss infractions	19	3	1	1	48
4	Illegal delay of game	21	3	4	2	65
5	Advancing a dead ball	21	3	4	2	65
6	Disconcerting offensive signals	21	3	4	2	65
7	Substitution rules infraction (live-ball)	22	3	5	2	68
8	Substitution rules infraction (dead-ball)	22	3	5	2	68
9	Delay of game (substitutions)	21	3	5	2	68
10	More than 11 players in the formation or during the play (Team A)	22	3	5	3	70
11	More than 11 players in the formation or during the play (Team B)	22	3	5	3	70
12	More than 11 players when the play clock expires	22	3	5	3	70
13	Putting ball in play before it is ready	19	4	1	4	75
14	Exceeding play clock count	21	4	1	5	76
15	Infraction of free kick formation	18, 19	6	1	2	82
16	Player out of bounds when ball free-kicked	19	6	1	2	83
17	Team A player illegally goes out of bounds (free kick)	19	6	1	11	85
18	Team A blocking during a free kick	19	6	1	12	86
19	Free kick out of bounds	19	6	2	1	86
20	Return kick	31	6	3	10	89
21	Illegal scrimmage kick (also loss of down)	31*	6	3	10	89
22	Marking spot of place kick	19	6	3	10	89
23	Team A player illegally goes out of bounds (scrimmage kick)	19	6	3	12	90
24	Defensive linemen in field goal formation	19	6	3	14	91
25	Taking more than two steps after a fair catch	21	6	5	2	94

Index		O	R	S	A	P
26	Illegal snap	19	7	1	1	96
27	Snapper's position and ball adjustment	19	7	1	3	97
28	Team A not within nine-yard marks after ready for play	19	7	1	3	97
29	Encroachment (offense) at snap	19	7	1	3	97
30	False start or simulating start of a play	19	7	1	3	97
31	Player out of bounds when ball is snapped	19	7	1	4	99
32	Offensive player illegally in motion at the snap	20	7	1	4	99
33	Illegal formation	19	7	1	4	99
34	Illegal formation due to numbering exception	19	7	1	4	99
35	Illegal shift	20	7	1	4	99
36	Interference with opponent or ball	18	7	1	5	100
37	Defensive player charging unabated toward a back	18	7	1	5	100
38	Abrupt defensive actions	21	7	1	5	100
39	Offside (defense)	18	7	1	5	100
40	Defensive player out of bounds at snap	19	7	1	5	100
41	Illegally handing ball forward (also loss of down)	35*	7	1	6	101
42	Planned loose ball play (also loss of down)	19*	7	1	7	101
43	Intentionally throwing backward pass out of bounds (also loss of down)	35*	7	2	1	101
44	Player on scrimmage line receiving snap	19	7	2	3	102
45	Illegal forward pass by Team A (also loss of down)	35*	7	3	2	103
46	Ineligible receiver downfield	37	7	3	10	110
47	Forward pass illegally touched (also loss of down)	16*	7	3	11	111
48	Running into the kicker or holder	30	9	1	16	129
49	Game administration interference (also 15 yards)	21,29	9	2	5	136
50	Interlocked interference or helping ball carrier	44	9	3	2	138
LOSS OF 10 YARDS						
1	Home team delay	21	3	4	1	64
2	Illegal block by fair catch signaller	40	6	5	4	95
3	Illegal use of hands or arms (offense)	42	9	3	3	138
4	Holding or obstruction (offense)	42	9	3	3	138
5	Locked hands	42	9	3	3	138
6	Illegal use of hands (defense) (first down)	42	9	3	4	139
7	Holding or obstruction (defense) (first down)	42	9	3	4	139
8	Illegal block in the back	43	9	3	5	140
9	Illegally batting loose ball (also loss of down)	31*	9	4	1	140
10	Illegally batting a backward pass	31	9	4	2	141
11	Batting a ball in possession by player in possession	31	9	4	3	141
12	Illegally kicking ball (also loss of down)	31*	9	4	4	142
LOSS OF 15 YARDS						
1	Marking ball	27	1	3	3	20
2	Numbers changed (also disqualification)	27	1	4	2	21
3	Improper colours	27	1	4	5	22
4	Illegal signal devices (also disqualification)	27, 47	1	4	10	26

Index		O	R	S	A	P
5	Eavesdropping (also disqualification)	27, 47	1	4	13	28
6	Team not ready to play at start of either half	21	3	4	1	64
7	Rapid substitution to opponent's disadvantage	27	3	5	2	68
8	Blocking a free kicker	40	6	1	9	85
9	Illegal wedge	27	6	1	10	85
10	Interference with opportunity to catch kick	33	6	4	1	92
11	Tackling or blocking fair catcher	38	6	5	5	95
12	Offensive pass interference	33	7	3	8	107
13	Defensive pass interference (first down)	33	7	3	8	108
14	Personal foul (first down)	38	9	1	0	121
15	Striking an opponent (first down)	38	9	1	2	121
16	Tripping (first down)	46	9	1	2	121
17	Targeting/forcible contact with crown of helmet (first down) (also disqualification)	24, 38, 47	9	1	3	122
18	Forcible contact to head/neck area of a defenseless player (first down) (also disqualification)	24, 38, 47	9	1	4	122
19	Clipping (first down)	39	9	1	5	123
20	Blocking below the waist (first down)	40	9	1	6	124
21	Late hit (first down)	38	9	1	7	126
22	Action out of bounds (first down)	38	9	1	7	126
23	Helmet/face mask fouls (first down)	38, 45	9	1	8	126
24	Roughing the passer (first down)	34	9	1	9	126
25	Chop blocking (first down)	41	9	1	10	127
26	Leverage/Leaping (first down)	38	9	1	11	128
27	Defensive restrictions	27	9	1	11	128
28	Fouling an opponent obviously out of the play (first down)	38	9	1	12	128
29	Hurdling (first down)	38	9	1	13	128
30	Illegal contact against the snapper (first down)	38	9	1	14	128
31	Horse-collar tackle (first down)	25, 38	9	1	15	128
32	Roughing the kicker or holder (first down)	30, 38	9	1	16	129
33	Simulating roughed or run into	27	9	1	16	129
34	Blocking a free kicker	40	9	1	16	129
35	Continued participation without a helmet (first down)	38	9	1	17	130
36	Illegal blind-side block (first down)	38	9	1	18	130
37	Unsportsmanlike conduct (first down)	27	9	2	1	131
38	Obscene or vulgar language	27	9	2	1	131
39	Persons illegally on the field	27	9	2	1	131
40	Provoking ill will	27	9	2	1	131
41	Player not returning ball to official	27	9	2	1	132
42	Persons leaving team area	27	9	2	1	132
43	Noise by persons subject to the rules	27	9	2	1	132
44	Concealing the ball	27	9	2	2	134
45	Simulated replacements or substitutions	27	9	2	2	134
46	Equipment to confuse opponents	27	9	2	2	134
47	Unusual action or verbiage to confuse opponents	27	9	2	2	134

Index		O	R	S	A	P
48	Simulating injury to confuse opponents or officials	27	9	2	2	134
49	More than one player with same number	27	9	2	2	134
50	Intentionally contacting an official (also disqualification)	27, 47	9	2	4	136
51	Game administration interference (also 5 yards)	27, 29	9	2	5	136
52	Physical interference with an official	27	9	2	5	136
53	Fighting (first down) (also disqualification)	27, 38, 47	9	5	1	142
LOSS OF HALF DISTANCE TO GOAL LINE						
1	If distance penalty exceeds half the distance (except on defensive pass interference)	-	10	2	6	150
OFFENDED TEAM'S BALL AT SPOT OF FOUL						
1	Defensive pass interference (if less than a 15-yard penalty) (first down)	33	7	3	8	108
CHARGED TIMEOUT FOR A VIOLATION						
1	Illegal jersey numbers	27	1	4	5	23
2	Not wearing mandatory equipment	23	1	4	8	25
3	Wearing illegal equipment	23	1	4	8	25
4	Head coach's conference	21	3	3	4	59
5	Player presents as injured after ball is spotted	3	3	3	6	60
6	Head coach's review	21	12	1	1	152
VIOLATION						
1	Illegal touching of free kick by kicking team	16	6	1	3	84
2	Illegal touching of scrimmage kick by kicking team	16	6	3	2	87
3	Scrimmage-kick-batting exception	16	6	3	11	90
DISQUALIFICATION						
1	Prohibited signal devices	47	1	4	10	26
2	Eavesdropping	47	1	4	13	28
3	Flagrant fouls	47	9	1	1	121
4	Targeting/forcible contact with crown of helmet	38	9	1	3	122
5	Forcible contact to head/neck area of a defenseless player	38	9	1	4	122
6	Intentionally contacting an official	47	9	2	4	136
7	Two unsportsmanlike fouls	47	9	2	6	137
8	Fighting	47	9	5	1	142
AUTOMATIC FIRST DOWNS (DEFENSIVE FOULS)						
1	Defensive pass interference	33	7	3	8	108
2	Defensive pass interference (if less than a 15-yard penalty)	33	7	3	8	108
3	Personal foul	38	9	1	0	121
4	Striking an opponent	38	9	1	2	121
5	Tripping	46	9	1	2	121
6	Targeting/forcible contact with crown of helmet (also disqualification)	24, 38, 47	9	1	3	122
7	Forcible contact to head/neck area of a defenseless player (also disqualification)	24, 38, 47	9	1	4	122

Index		O	R	S	A	P
8	Clipping	39	9	1	5	123
9	Blocking below the waist	40	9	1	6	124
10	Late hit	38	9	1	7	126
11	Action out of bounds	38	9	1	7	126
12	Helmet/face mask fouls	38, 45	9	1	8	126
13	Roughing the passer	34	9	1	9	126
14	Chop blocking	41	9	1	10	127
15	Leverage/Leaping	38	9	1	11	128
16	Fouling an opponent obviously out of the play	38	9	1	12	128
17	Hurdling	38	9	1	13	128
18	Illegal contact against the snapper	38	9	1	14	128
19	Horse-collar tackle	25, 38	9	1	15	128
20	Roughing the kicker or holder	30, 38	9	1	16	129
21	Continued participation without a helmet	38	9	1	17	130
22	Illegal blind-side block	38	9	1	18	130
23	Unsportsmanlike conduct	27	9	2	1	131
24	Illegal use of hands (defense)	42	9	3	4	139
25	Holding or obstruction (defense)	42	9	3	4	139
26	Fighting (also disqualification)	27, 38, 47	9	5	1	142
REFEREE'S DISCRETION						
1	Penalty for unfair acts	27	9	2	3	135
WHEN IN QUESTION RULES						
1	Block below waist contact is below waist	-	2	3	2	30
2	Block in the back contact is at or below waist	-	2	3	4	30
3	Catch, recovery or interception not completed	-	2	4	3	31
4	Ball accidentally touched rather than batted	-	2	11	3	34
5	Ball not touched on kick or forward pass	-	2	11	4	35
6	Ball accidentally touched rather than kicked	-	2	16	1	36
7	Forward pass rather than backward pass	-	2	19	2	39
8	Forward pass and not fumble	-	2	19	2	39
9	It is a catchable forward pass	-	2	19	4	40
10	A player is defenseless	-	2	27	14	44
11	Stop clock for injured player	-	3	3	6	60
12	Forward progress stopped	-	4	1	3	74
13	Kick-catch interference	-	6	4	1	92
14	It is a catchable forward pass	-	7	3	8	107
15	Touchback rather than safety	-	8	5	1	117
16	Twisting, turning or pulling face mask (helmet opening)	-	9	1	8	126
17	Roughing kicker rather than running into	-	9	1	16	129

Summary of foul codes

Alphabetically by code:

Code	Foul
APS	Altering playing surface
ATR	Assisting the runner
BAT	Illegal batting
DEH	Holding, defense
DOD	Delay of game, defense
DOF	Offside, defense
DOG	Delay of game, offense
DPI-AB	Pass interference, defense, arm bar
DPI-CO	Pass interference, defense, cut off
DPI-GR	Pass interference, defense, grab and restrict
DPI-HT	Pass interference, defense, hook and turn
DPI-NPB	Pass interference, defense, not playing the ball
DPI-PTO	Pass interference, defense, playing through opponent
DSH	Delay of game, start of half
DSQ	Disqualification
ENC	Encroachment (offense)
FGT	Fighting
FST	False start
IBB	Illegal block in the back
IBK	Illegal block during kick
IBP	Illegal backward pass
IDP	Ineligible downfield on pass
IFD	Illegal formation, defense (3-on-1)
IFH	Illegal forward handing
IFK	Illegal free kick formation
IFP	Illegal forward pass
IKB	Illegally kicking ball
ILF	Illegal formation
ILM	Illegal motion
ING	Intentional grounding
IPN	Improper numbering
IPR	Illegal procedure
ISH	Illegal shift
ISP	Illegal snap
ITP	Illegal touching of a forward pass
IUH	Illegal use of hands
IWK	Illegal wedge on kickoff
KCI	Kick-catch interference
KIK	Illegal kick
KOB	Free kick out of bounds
OBK	Out of bounds during kick
OFH-GR	Holding, offense, grab and restrict
OFH-HR	Holding, offense, hook and restrict
OFH-TD	Holding, offense, takedown
OFK	Offside, free kick
OPI-BK	Pass interference, offense, blocking

Code	Foul
OPI-DT	Pass interference, offense, driving through
OPI-PK	Pass interference, offense, pick
OPI-PO	Pass interference, offense, pushing off
PF-BBW	Personal foul, blocking below the waist
PF-BOB	Personal foul, blocking out of bounds
PF-BSB	Personal foul, blind-side block
PF-CHB	Personal foul, chop block
PF-CLP	Personal foul, clipping
PF-FMM	Personal foul, face mask
PF-HCT	Personal foul, horse collar tackle
PF-HDR	Personal foul, hit on defenseless receiver
PF-HTF	Personal foul, hands to the face
PF-HUR	Personal foul, hurdling
PF-ICS	Personal foul, illegal contact with snapper
PF-LEA	Personal foul, leaping
PF-LHP	Personal foul, late hit/piling on
PF-LTO	Personal foul, late hit out of bounds
PF-OTH	Personal foul, other
PF-RFK	Personal foul, roughing free kicker
PF-RTH	Personal foul, roughing the holder
PF-RTK	Personal foul, roughing the kicker
PF-RTP	Personal foul, roughing the passer
PF-SKE	Personal foul, striking/kneeing/elbowing
PF-TGB	Personal foul, targeting (both Rules 9-1-3 and 4)
PF-TGC	Personal foul, targeting (crown of helmet)
PF-TGD	Personal foul, targeting (defenseless player)
PF-TRP	Personal foul, tripping
PF-UNR	Personal foul, unnecessary roughness
RNH	Running into the holder
RNK	Running into the kicker
SLI	Sideline interference, 5 yards
SLM	Sideline interference, 15 yards
SLW	Sideline interference, warning
SUB	Illegal substitution
UC-2PN	Unsportsmanlike conduct, two players with same number
UC-ABL	Unsportsmanlike conduct, abusive language
UC-BCH	Unsportsmanlike conduct, bench
UC-DBS	Unsportsmanlike conduct, dead ball shoving
UC-DEA	Unsportsmanlike conduct, delayed/excessive act
UC-FCO	Unsportsmanlike conduct, forcibly contacting an official
UC-RHT	Unsportsmanlike conduct, removal of helmet
UC-SBR	Unsportsmanlike conduct, simulating being roughed
UC-STB	Unsportsmanlike conduct, spiking/throwing ball
UC-TAU	Unsportsmanlike conduct, taunting/baiting
UC-UNS	Unsportsmanlike conduct, other
UFA	Unfair acts
UFT	Unfair tactics

Alphabetically by foul:

Code	Foul
APS	Altering playing surface
ATR	Assisting the runner
DOD	Delay of game, defense
DOG	Delay of game, offense
DSH	Delay of game, start of half
DSQ	Disqualification
ENC	Encroachment (offense)
FST	False start
FGT	Fighting
KOB	Free kick out of bounds
DEH	Holding, defense
OFH-GR	Holding, offense, grab and restrict
OFH-HR	Holding, offense, hook and restrict
OFH-TD	Holding, offense, takedown
IBP	Illegal backward pass
BAT	Illegal batting
IBK	Illegal block during kick
IBB	Illegal block in the back
ILF	Illegal formation
IFD	Illegal formation, defense (3-on-1)
IFH	Illegal forward handing
IFP	Illegal forward pass
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KIK	Illegal kick
IKB	Illegally kicking ball
ILM	Illegal motion
IPR	Illegal procedure
ISH	Illegal shift
ISP	Illegal snap
SUB	Illegal substitution
ITP	Illegal touching of a forward pass
IUH	Illegal use of hands
IWK	Illegal wedge on kickoff
IPN	Improper numbering
IDP	Ineligible downfield on pass
ING	Intentional grounding
KCI	Kick-catch interference
DOF	Offside, defense
OFK	Offside, free kick
OBK	Out of bounds during kick
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UC-STB	Unsportsmanlike conduct, spiking/throwing ball
UC-TAU	Unsportsmanlike conduct, taunting/baiting
UC-2PN	Unsportsmanlike conduct, two players with same number

Code PF-BTH has been deprecated (as of 2026) in favour of the three PF-TG* codes.