

Football Rules Changes - 2025

By NFHS on February 06, 2025

football

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Committee Clarifies and Restricts Attachments on Tooth and Mouth Protectors 1-5-1d(5)a - 4, 5 (NEW) – Items that are attached to the tooth and mouth protector that do not serve a purpose and function in protecting the teeth or mouth will not be allowed. Items that are a part of the tooth and mouth protector that are a health or risk issue to the player and can pose a danger to themselves or other players, will not be allowed.

Arm Sleeve Specifications Developed to Guide Manufacturers, Players and Coaches Effective with the 2027 Season 1-5-2d (NEW), 1-5-3c(5) – The Sports and Fitness Industry Association (SFIA), in working with the football arm sleeve manufacturers and the NFHS, has developed new football arm sleeve performance specifications to be effective with the 2027 playing season. These new specifications closely align with the current rules for football gloves.

Electronic Equipment Approved to Permit Non-Audio and Still Images to Assist with Relaying Plays from the Sideline to Players 1-5-3c(2) – This change allows for the use of some additional equipment, but continues to preclude in-helmet communication. This would allow for fixed electronic signs with play signals as well as non-audio methods but still would not permit the players between the numbers to watch video.

Rules Additions Further Prohibit the Use of Video and Audio Devices by Players 1-5-3c(3) (NEW) – No player participating in the game will be allowed to wear any type of audio or video device in order to record or transmit audio or video.

Forward Fumbles Out of Bounds to be Returned to the Spot of the Fumble 3-4-3, 4-3-1 EXCEPTION (NEW) – A situation potentially giving an unfair advantage to a fumbling team was revised. When a forward fumble goes out of bounds or is ruled out of bounds between the goal lines, the ball shall be returned to the spot of the fumble.

Further Clarifications Made to Rule 10-4 in Specific Situations 9-6 PENALTY, 10-4-4b (DELETED) – The committee continues its revisions and clarifications within the penalty enforcement rules to ensure consistency, particularly among illegal participation fouls.

Rules for 6-Player Football Revised to Permit Advancement of a Fumbled Snap Six-Player – Rule 2 and 7, Six-Player – Rule 7 – The committee clarified that as long as there is a change of possession from the snap receiver to another player on offense, the ball can be advanced beyond the line of scrimmage.

2025 EDITORIAL CHANGES

1-5-1b(2)b(1); 1-5-1b(3)b(1); 2-32-16d; 2-33-1, 2; 2-41-9b; 6-1-9; 7-2-5b EXCEPTION 2; 7-5-12; 9-4-3 (NEW); 9-8-1g; 10-3-1, 2; 10-4-2; 10-4-4a; 10-5-3; PENALTY SUMMARY;

2025 POINTS OF EMPHASIS

1. Illegal and Improperly Worn Player Equipment
2. Sportsmanship
3. Defenseless Player / Targeting