

Tips and information for old and new refs alike!

Remember, we are there for the kids on the floor. One day you will call your last game but the sport will continue without you.

Keep your contact info updated in Zebra-ware

Contact your co-official(s) at least the day before a game, if not earlier. Get travel arrangements, meeting places, who is driving, etc worked out well beforehand. Read and know the pay policy per the UIL.

Be at the game site well before tipoff. For varsity games one hour should be the minimum. For all others get there in time to dress, stretch, pre-game.

PRE-GAME every game. Even if you are all experienced calling with each other. This is necessary to all be together. Don't shortchange a younger official and neglect to pregame. This is a great learning opportunity for all. Discuss important issues at half-time and have a POST-GAME talk.

Accept games, communicate, take care of business.

During snowy/icy weather, DO NOT call, email, or contact the schools or coaches. DO NOT contact the assigning secretary before 12:00 noon....they most likely will not know anything about a game decision until after 12:00. Keep checking your emails and assigning software.

Your only ally in the gym is your fellow official(s). Support each other, work hard, call the game correctly. If you have an issue with a fellow official the floor is not the place to discuss, settle it, or make them look bad. Discuss things after the game or on the way home.

Experienced officials....remember you were also new at some point...remember what it was like to be helped and get your questions answered. Give constructive criticism to help them get better.

New/newer officials....take every advantage you can to learn. Go to games to watch veteran officials. Go to the dressing rooms to hear pre-games, half-time talks, and post-game discussions. If you ask a question..listen, if you ask for an opinion...listen—don't "yeah butt...", be prepared for an answer you may not like. Hear the answer, think on it, apply it to your game. Don't try to justify what you did each time an experienced official tries to give you a pointer.

If you don't know....don't blow! That goes for fouls or violations...don't guess, know that you saw what happened and saw the whole play....based on good positioning, knowing floor mechanics, and moving to get and maintain angles.

Fans are going to yell. Let them. Don't take it personally, they are yelling at the uniform. If they get personal, encourage fighting behavior, use profanity or racial slurs, come down to the floor out of the stands, then get the game administrator and have them handle it. This is their job as mandated by the UIL. If no administrator is available then uniformed law enforcement security at the gym may be contacted. Let an administrator or officer remove someone. You do NOT remove a fan yourself. Again, have thick skin unless a fan crosses a line as outlined here.

On the topic of fans...remember three things:

1. They don't know the rules and how to apply them
2. They are extremely biased toward their team
3. They don't have the guts like you do to get out on the floor and officiate!!!

You are being evaluated by parents, players, school administrators, coaches, athletic directors, principals, and secretaries when you join the chapter, accept games arrive at a game site, dress and talk in the hall or locker rooms, and come out onto the floor

If you think you are not getting enough games, or higher level games, remember some things:

- Look at what YOU are doing (or not doing) to get more games/higher level games
 - Do you look the part? Shined shoes, uniform neat, hair groomed in a professional manner, don't wear jewelry (except wedding ring)
 - Are you in shape? Do you look like a basketball referee? Can you get up and down the floor to stay up with the action?
 - Do you read the rule book....**really** read the rule book? This is the foundation of officiating. You have to know the rules in order to adjudicate plays and perform the officiating functions.
 - Are you a professional?
 - Contact partners a day or two before games...at all levels
 - Accept games without question of level or who co-officials may be
 - Return phone calls and emails promptly
 - Get to games early to relax, prepare, pre-game
 - Do you use proper hand signals? Floor mechanics? Do you work your primary or do you ball watch and make calls all over the floor?
 - Do you listen to coaches? Communicate professionally and effectively?
 - Do you take the initiative to attend training camps? Do you sign up then not attend? Do you talk negatively about camps (they are only for college officials, they are just money makers, the chapter is responsible for training me)

If you struggle keeping your uniform shirt tucked in during games, don't expect to have your schedule increased or move up in officiating. Over the last few years we've had officials on the floor with their shirts out. This is unacceptable. Coaches, fans, and other school officials see this and it not only gives you a poor image, it reflects poorly on the chapter.

If you take care of everything you have control over, and keep up with those things, you will be more successful.

Some items to think on:

- In 2-man crew when players are overloaded on the L side, T needs to move down toward end line a few steps to be in better position to make a call
- Every year we get coaches telling us officials WALKING in sub-varsity games when they should be hustling. GET DOWN THE FLOOR TO OFFICIATE
- 3pt line-no part of either foot may be on the line, or touching anywhere past the edge of the line away from the basket, neither foot can be on or inside the outer edge of the line when leaving the floor in order to make a 3pt goal
- Ball watching at the sub-varsity level (some at varsity too) causes officials to reach out and make calls when they shouldn't even be looking in these places. Know your primary areas and don't make a call outside that area unless:
 - It is a non-basketball play (elbow, punch, shove, etc)
 - Is an obvious call, and I mean obvious to everyone in the gym and 10 miles away AND it will negatively affect the game if its not called
 - You know 150% that your partner is blocked out on a play and the call is as obvious as the previous situation and must be called
- In 3-man....ROTATE! We always have people at L just sit there. You have to move as an official. At L mirror the location of the ball as it is going back and forth across the floor, close down to the lane line in preparation for a rotation so you can just walk across to complete the rotation when the ball crossed the lane line extended opposite of you. C should be the most active whistle on the floor. It is not a rocking chair to kick back and not do anything.

Strive for consistency..between officials, in both halves, early and late in a game, early and late in the season

Remember...under stress you will only perform to the level that you have mastered.

Handling coaches

- Ultimately....BE PROFESSIONAL!!!
- Do not ignore
- Answer questions when appropriate
- Ignore comments unless it needs to be addressed
- Address issues EARLY
- Communicate issues to partner(s)
- DO NOT embarrass

Things to NEVER say to a coach

1. "one more word and you're out of here!"
2. "shut up!"
3. "i've had enough of you/this"
4. "you're wrong!"
5. "are you serious?"
6. "that's not my call"
7. "its just a game"

Things to say to a coach

- I hear you coach
- I'll watch it coach
- I didn't see that
- You may be right
- I might have missed that one
- Admit a mistake....I missed that one coach

When enough is enough

- Coaching box
 - Coach help us tonight, I need you to stay in your box
- Coach we've already addressed that call, lets get back to the game
- Give official warning if appropriate
 - 2 hands
 - Coach that's enough
 - This is your warning

When giving the T

- Don't show emotion
- Give it professionally
- Give it and GET AWAY!!!
- Non-calling official has your back when getting away
- Non-calling official intercept coach, let them vent a little if appropriate
- Don't give the 2nd T yourself during the same episode if possible

The Technical Foul: Part One

By Kathy Jenkins on December 18, 2014

Top Ten Reasons to **Not** Give A Technical Foul

1. You can address a coach before it becomes a problem. A quiet word can go a long way in preventing.
2. Coaches are competitors they love challenges. Don't back yourself into a corner by saying be quiet or else. Instead offer a reason why you might be right.
3. When coaches complain ask yourself, is the call questionable, is the call wrong. If they have a legitimate gripe, then allow them some latitude.
4. If you know a coach is upset, then move out on to the floor when in front of the bench.
5. Don't tolerate a lot before a warning. Warnings can be very effective in preventing situations from escalating.
6. Lend an ear. Coaches like to be heard. If you ignore them, they may become more frustrated and more likely to lose control.
7. If a coach says something and you are the only one who hears it, when you give him or her a technical while they are sitting on the bench, then you get the worst of the situation.
8. If an assistant is out of line, speak to the head coach ask him or her to help you out.
9. If a player is out of line, then let the coach know. Tell him or her you've warned the player. That way if you do give a technical, the coach isn't surprised. Most good coaches will speak to the player first.
10. If you have had a rough day and know your fuse is short, keep it in mind before you do anything rash. Ask yourself, does the situation come under one of the top 10 reasons to give a technical.

Ejections

- All ejections involving a head coach, assistant coach, or bench personnel require an incident report
- All player ejections for fighting or unusual circumstances require a report, this does not include fouling out or ejection for a flagrant foul
- Any unusual game situations such as forfeits or having to end the game early require a report

Be a professional

- How you dress
- What you say
- How you say it
- You cannot misquote silence
- In the parking lot
- In the hall
- On the floor
- In the locker room

Remember...you cannot misquote silence. Players, fans, administrators can read lips. Locker/dressing rooms have thin walls.

CONFLICT

Every time we step on the floor we have conflict

- 50% of fans happy
- With coach
- With players
- With co-official(s)

Know that conflict will exist, its inevitable

Each of us deals with it differently

Depends on who you are as a person

Conflict by nature seems negative but in basketball-necessary process

Managing conflict

- Assertiveness
- Cooperation

Balance between assertiveness, and listening and taking in other perspectives

Collaboration-blending what you believe to be true with other perspectives

- Listen
- Analyze
- Acknowledge
- Provide what & why
- Block you called, coach wants charge
- Out of bounds play should go other way
- Call vs no call

Key to conflict management

Focus attention off what you want, and direct it toward maintaining an environment that is safe and fair for both teams

Emotions

- Run high
 - Coaches
 - Players
 - Fans
 - Officials

Listen, process, then explain

- What you saw, and how it fits with the rules
- Be assertive but professional
- Provide answers to their questions, not comments
- Ignore comments unless they need addressing

You may have a chance to change a call

- Out of bounds
 - Ask for help

- Partner changes ? NO YOU DO!!!
- Partner provides info on something that must be dealt with and has direct impact on game
- Most often you have to live with it

Managing conflict can make or break the game
Can make or break your career

Communication

- Everyone can express their opinion
- Not all can do it effectively, efficiently, or professionally
- Verbal & non-verbal
 - Facial expression
 - Body language
 - Hands
 - Body positioning

Something needing addressed with official(s) during game

- Time-out
- Halftime
- respectful

Think before you speak

Think about the way you speak

- To partner(s)
- To players
- To coaches

PRODUCTIVE discussions require exchange of information

No:

- Insulting or demeaning comments
- Sarcasm
- Simply telling someone what to do

Conduct ourselves in a professional manner

Be honest with yourself & your partners

- There has never been and will never be a perfectly officiated game

If you are honest with yourself when you make a mistake you will learn from it... and get better!!!

Giving false feedback to partner(s) doesn't help them, the game, or organizations

Constructive criticism is necessary

If you want to improve, you must know what you're doing wrong

If hearing critical remarks is tough for you, work on it, get better at receiving feedback

If you are not open to receiving feedback, you won't improve

Post-game

1. It is important to know the intent and purpose of a rule so that it may be intelligently applied in each play situation. A player of a team should not be permitted an advantage which is not intended by a rule. Neither should a play be permitted to develop which may lead to placing a player at a disadvantage not intended by a rule.

2. A player cannot touch the ball, ring or net while the ball is on the ring or within the basket. A player cannot touch the ball if it is in the imaginary cylinder above the ring. These are examples of basket interference. It is legal to touch the ring or the net if the ball is above the ring and not touching the ring, even if the ball is in the imaginary cylinder above the ring. It is legal to hang on the ring if a player is avoiding an injury to himself or herself or another player.

3. Goaltending is contacting the ball on its downward flight, above the level of the rim, with a chance to go in. It is legal to pin the ball against the backboard if it's still on the way up and not in the imaginary cylinder above the basket. Slapping the backboard is neither basket interference nor is it goaltending and points cannot be awarded. A player who strikes a backboard so forcefully that it cannot be ignored because it is an attempt to draw attention to the player, or a means of venting frustration, may be assessed a technical foul. When a player simply attempts to block a shot and accidentally slaps the backboard it is neither a violation nor is it a technical foul.

4. The front, top, sides and bottom of the backboard are all in play. The ball cannot pass over the rectangular backboard from either direction. The back of the backboard is out of bounds as well as the supporting structures.

5. The traveling rule is one of the most misunderstood rules in basketball. To start a dribble, the ball must be released before the pivot foot is lifted. On a pass or a shot, the pivot foot may be lifted, but may not return to the floor before the ball is released. A player may slide on the floor while trying to secure a loose ball until that player's momentum stops. At that point that player cannot attempt to get up or roll over. A player securing a ball while on the floor cannot attempt to stand up unless that player starts a dribble. A player in this situation may also pass, shoot, or call a timeout. If the player is flat on his or her back, that player may sit up without violating.

6. During a fumble, the player is not in control of the ball, and therefore, cannot be called for a traveling violation. A fumble is the accidental loss of player control when the ball is unintentionally dropped or slips from a player's grasp. After a player has ended a dribble and fumbled the ball, that player may recover the ball without violating. Any steps taken during the recovery of a fumble are not traveling, regardless of how far the ball goes and the amount of advantage that is gained. It is always legal to recover a fumble, even at the end of a dribble; however, that player cannot begin a new dribble, which would be a double dribble violation. A player who fumbles the ball when receiving a pass may legally start a dribble.

7. The shooter can retrieve his or her own airball, if the referee considers it to be a shot attempt. The release ends team control. It is not a violation for that player to start another dribble at that point. When an airborne player keeps control of an attempted shot that is blocked and is unable to release the ball and returns to the floor with it, that player has not traveled; it's a jump ball. If, in this situation, the shooter releases the ball, then this is simply a blocked shot and play continues.

8. Palming or carrying is when a player gains an advantage when the ball comes to rest in the player's hand, and the player either travels with the ball, or dribbles a second time. There is no restriction as to how high a player may bounce the ball, provided the ball does not come to rest in the player's hand. Steps taken during a dribble are not traveling, including several that are sometimes taken when a high dribble takes place. It is not possible for a player to travel during a dribble.

9. A player inbound the ball may step on, but not over the line. During a designated spot throw, the player inbound the ball must keep one foot on or over the three-foot wide designated spot. An inbound player is allowed to jump or move one or both feet. A player inbound the ball may move backward as far as the five-second time limit or space allows. If a player moves outside the three-foot wide designated spot it is a violation, not traveling. **In gymnasiums with limited** space outside the sidelines and endlines, a defensive player may be asked to step back no more than three feet. A player inbound the ball may bounce the ball (dribble) on the out-of-bounds area prior to making a throw.

10. The defender may not break the imaginary plane during a throw in. If the defender breaks the imaginary plane during a throw in, the defender's team will receive a team warning, or if the team has already been warned for one of the delay situations, this action would result in a team technical foul. If the defender contacts the ball after breaking the imaginary plane, it is a player technical foul and a team warning will be recorded. If the defender fouls the inbound player after breaking the imaginary plane, it is an intentional personal foul, and a team warning will be recorded.

11. The inbound player does not have a plane restriction, but has five seconds to release the ball and it must come directly onto the court. The ball can always be passed into the backcourt during a throw in. This situation is not a backcourt violation.

12. If a player's momentum carries him or her off of the court, he or she can be the first player to touch the ball after returning inbounds. That player must not have left the court voluntarily and must immediately return inbounds. It is a violation for a player to intentionally leave the court for an unauthorized reason.

13. A moving screen is not in and of itself a foul, contact must occur for a foul to be called. If a blind screen is set on a stationary defender, the defender must be given one normal step to change direction and attempt to avoid contact. If a screen is set on a moving defender, the defender gets a minimum of one step and a maximum of two steps, depending on the speed and distance of the defender.

14. The hand is considered part of the ball when the hand is in contact with the ball. This includes holding, dribbling, passing, or even during a shot attempt. Striking a ball handler or shooter on that player's hand that is incidental to an attempt to play the ball is not a foul, no matter how loud it sounds or how much it hurts.

15. Reaching is not a foul. There must be contact to have a foul. The mere act of reaching in, by itself, is nothing. If contact does occur, it's either a holding foul or an illegal use of hands foul. When a player, in order to stop the clock, does not make a legitimate play for the ball, pushes or grabs away from the ball, or uses undue roughness, the foul is an intentional foul.

16. Over the back is not a foul. The term is nowhere in any rulebook. There must be contact to have a foul. A taller player may often be able to get a rebound over a shorter player, even if the shorter player has good rebounding position. If the shorter player is displaced, then a pushing foul must be called. A rebounding player, with an inside position, while boxing out, is not allowed push back or displace an opponent, which is a pushing foul.

17. A defensive player does not have to remain stationary to take a charge. A defender may turn away or duck to absorb contact, provided he or she has already established legal guarding position, which is both feet on the playing court and facing the opponent. The defender can always move backwards or sideways to maintain a legal guarding position and may even have one or both feet off the playing court when contact occurs. That player may legally rise vertically. If the defender is moving forward, then the contact is caused by the defender, which is a blocking foul.

18. The mere fact that contact occurs does not constitute a foul. Incidental contact is contact with an opponent which is permitted and does not constitute a foul. Contact, which occurs unintentionally in an effort by an opponent to reach a loose ball, or contact which may result when opponents are in equally favorable positions to perform normal defensive or offensive moves, should not be considered illegal, even though the contact may be severe.

19. A ten-second count continues when the defense deflects or bats the ball in the backcourt. When a dribbler is advancing the ball into the frontcourt, the ball maintains backcourt status until both feet and the ball touch entirely in the frontcourt.

20. During a throwin or jump ball, any player; or a defensive player, in making a steal; may legally jump from his or her frontcourt, secure control of the ball with both feet off the floor and return to the floor with one or both feet in the backcourt; these are not a backcourt violation. In both cases control, a player holding or dribbling the ball, has not yet been established.

21. During a throwin or jump ball, any player; or a defensive player, in making a steal; may legally jump from his or her frontcourt, secure control of the ball with both feet off the floor, and return to the floor with one or both feet in the backcourt. The player may make a normal landing and it makes no difference whether the first foot down is in the frontcourt or the backcourt. These three situations are not backcourt violations.

22. The closely guarded rule is in effect in frontcourt only, when a defender is within six feet of the ball handler. Up to three separate five-second counts may occur on the same ball handler, holding, dribbling, and holding. The count continues even if defenders switch and the first is still within six feet while the second defender takes over. The five-second count ends when a dribbler gets his or her head and shoulders ahead of the defender.

23. The intent of the three-second rule is to not allow an offensive player to gain an advantage. There is no three-second count between the release of a shot and the control of a rebound, at which time a new count starts. There is no three-second count during a throwin. There is no three-second count while the ball is in the backcourt. Allowance shall be made for a player who, having been in the restricted area for less than three seconds, dribbles in or moves immediately to try for goal.

24. The head coach may request and be granted a timeout if his or her player is holding or dribbling the ball, or during a dead ball period. A player saving the ball in the air can ask for and be granted a timeout even if that player is going out of bounds. The key is whether or not the player has control of the ball.

25. On free throws, there is a maximum of two offensive players and four defensive players in the six marked lane spaces. The defense must be in both bottom spaces on all free throws. The shooter and all the players outside three point line/above the free throw line extended must wait until the ball hits rim or backboard before entering the lane. Those players in marked lane spaces may enter the lane upon the free throw shooter releasing the ball on the free throw. During a free throw, no opponent, including bench personnel, may disconcert the free thrower.

26. Kicking the ball is intentionally striking it with any part of the leg or foot. An unintentionally kicked ball is never illegal, regardless of how far the ball goes and who recovers it. It is also illegal to hit the ball with a fist.

27. Players may not participate while wearing jewelry. Religious medals or medical alert medals are not considered jewelry. A religious medal must be taped and worn under the uniform. A medical alert medal must be taped and may be visible. Rubber or cloth elastic bands may be used to control hair. Undershirts must be similar in color to the jersey and shall not have frayed or ragged edges. State associations may on an individual basis, allow a player to participate while wearing a head covering, if it is worn for medical or religious reasons, provided that the covering is not abrasive, hard, or dangerous, and is attached in such a way that it is highly unlikely to come off during play. Written documentation should be available.

28. Officials are not required to explain judgment calls, but they may explain some calls if approached by the head coach in a respectful manner. Officials should call technical fouls for profanity, unsporting acts and (if previously warned) excessive complaints or verbal abuse.

29. Officials do not have calls that decide to outcome of a game. Players commit fouls and violations; officials view those infractions, judge the action, and then apply the rules of the game to what they had viewed. The rules then determine the penalty. Officials are on the court to be the only unbiased arbiters of the game. Officials are not concerned with who wins or loses, but only fairness and safety. Everyone else in that gym cares about winning, and therefore cannot look at the game objectively.

Six Things You Never Say to a Coach

You will say all kinds of things when you're having a conversation, conference, discussion, talk, debate or heated exchange with a coach. But are there some comments that should never come out of your mouth? *Referee* asked subscribers in a recent "Your Call" survey what not to say. Some things are an obvious no-no, such as foul language. Here are some of the other things your peers suggested are off limits. If you're currently using any of the following in your "conversations" with coaches, you might want to "eject" them from your dialogue.

1. **"One more word and you're out of here!"** It's the classic overused phrase that needs to go away. And you can toss any other useless threats from your coach interaction vocabulary as well. What happens if the coach comes back with a compliment just to test you, or comes back with "word"? Are you prepared to eject the coach for that? Probably not. That's why "one more word" is worthless at best, and adding fuel to the fire at worst. Don't commit yourself to an action. It's a no-win situation.
2. **"Shut Up."** Now that's an example of adding more gasoline. It's antagonistic and unprofessional. Coaches should be allowed to have their say. If they cross the line and say something that warrants a reaction, use your tools within the rules – such as a technical foul, penalty or ejection – to "shut up" the coach. That's the professional approach. That should be your approach.
3. **"You're wrong?"** If you don't tell a coach he or she is wrong, that doesn't mean you don't think or know, in some cases, that the coach is wrong. It simply means you don't say it, because it won't lead to a positive result. Suggesting the coach is "right" all the times isn't the answer either. Explaining what happened on a play or why you called what you called will let the coach know he or she is wrong (or right) without saying it. Sometimes telling the coach, "That's not what I saw," or "I'll check with play after the game" serves to mitigate the situation and allows both parties to move on.
4. **"Are you serious?"** Sometimes what comes out of the mouths of coaches is so far-fetched and ridiculous, you want to question their mind-set. But that is not the right approach. Coaches have a big stake in the outcome of the game, and as a result, rational thinking can be lost at times. Assume they are serious. Keep your sense of humor about you and don't take some statements too seriously and you'll survive and thrive on the field and court.
5. **"That's not my call."** Officiating is a team sport, just like any of the others. You and your partners are in it together, so you need to act like it. That statement can be taken to mean two things: "My partner is to blame," or "I saw what happened, but decided not to call it." Both are bad. While it may not have been a call in your area, there are plenty of things you can say without shifting the negative spotlight on your partner. If you did see the play and could have helped your partner call something he or she missed, it's your fault for not doing it. Getting the play right is your number-one priority.
6. **"It's just a game."** You may argue, "It's just a game. Coaches shouldn't act as if it is a life-or-death situation." No one is suggesting that some coaches don't need to learn some perspective. The key is that it's not your job to teach it to them, and that phrase isn't the way to teach that, anyway. You might as well be saying, "Who cares" I don't," because that is how it is going to be interpreted. Games are important to the coaches and participants, no matter the level or sport, and that isn't going to change.

Just as officiating is important to you. Respecting the game and the participants is important, whether or not it is reciprocated.

Ok, the list can go on and on. Maybe you've heard other no-no comments come out of your fellow officials' mouths or your own that shouldn't have. What you say can make or break your career. So remain calm and in control during talks with coaches, and think before you speak. That will help eliminate a good percentage of your miss-speaks.

By Julie Sternberg