

NFHS GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR FOOTBALL CLOCK OPERATORS



- A. The clock operator should report to the game officials at the stadium at least 30 minutes before game time for the following purposes:
1. To synchronize timer's watch with official game time as established by the game official responsible for timing.
 2. To advise game officials whether the clock operator will be in the press box or on the sideline. Determine procedure for communication with timer and check this procedure prior to the game.
 3. To discuss coordination of starting, stopping and adjusting the clock in accordance with the playing rules.
 4. To discuss if the game clock horn (mechanical signal) can be turned off. Preference is for the game clock horn (mechanical signal) to be turned off for the duration of the game.
- B. The field clock is normally started 30 minutes before game time. The halftime intermission will start on the referee's signal when the players and game officials leave the field. All pregame and halftime activities will be synchronized with the official game clock. The mandatory three-minute warm-up period will be put on the clock after the intermission time has elapsed and shall be started immediately.
- C. The clock operator shall have an extra stopwatch available. In case of failure of the game clock, the clock operator shall immediately contact the game officials, giving them the correct data regarding the official time. The game official responsible for timing will then pick up the correct game time on the stopwatch. If the field clock becomes inoperative and is subsequently repaired, it will not be used again until the next period or when the referee determines it is operational. The public-address announcer will indicate the field clock will not be official until the malfunction is corrected and a subsequent announcement is made on the public-address system.
- D. Game Procedures:
1. The clock operator is an **integral member** of the officiating crew and game administration. Unfair advantages occur when the game clock is not started or stopped correctly by rule. Great care must be exercised to see that no time lag occurs in starting or stopping the clock.
 2. On all free kicks, the nearest game official(s) will signal the legal touching of the ball by indicating that the clock should start.
 3. Any game official may signal a time-out; therefore, the operator should be alert to stop the clock.
 4. The **incompletion signal** will stop the clock.
 5. The clock operator will automatically stop the clock following a touchdown, field goal, touchback or safety after the appropriate scoring signal has been made.
 6. After the clock has been stopped, the referee will start it again on the referee's start-the-clock signal and if no such signal is given, the operator will start the clock on the snap without the signal from the referee.
 7. The referee may start the clock again in certain instances before the ready-for-play signal.
 8. The try is **not** a timed down.
 9. There are instances when a period shall be extended by an untimed down. During these extensions, leave the clock at :00. **Do not** reset the clock for the next period until the referee declares the period over by facing the press box and holding the ball overhead.
 10. Each state association may decide whether or not to utilize a running clock in certain situations, and the procedures for those situations.



OFFICIAL FOOTBALL SIGNALS



<p>1 Ball ready for play *Untimed down</p>	<p>2 Start clock</p>	<p>3 Time-out Discretionary or injury time-out (followed by tapping hands on chest)</p>		
<p>4 TV/radio time-out</p>	<p>5 Touchdown, Field goal, Point(s) after touchdown</p>	<p>6 Safety</p>	<p>7 Dead ball foul, Touchback (move side to side)</p>	
<p>8 First down</p>	<p>9 Loss of down</p>	<p>10 Incomplete forward pass Penalty declined No play, no score Toss option deferred</p>	<p>11 Legal touching of forward pass or scrimmage kick</p>	<p>12 Inadvertent whistle</p>
<p>13 Disregard flag</p>	<p>14 End of period</p>	<p>15 Sideline warning</p>	<p>16 First touching Illegal touching</p>	
<p>18 Encroachment</p>	<p>19 False start Illegal formation</p>	<p>20 Illegal shift (2 hands) Illegal motion (1 hand)</p>	<p>21 Delay of game</p>	<p>22 Substitution infraction</p>

PlayPic® PlayPics courtesy of Referee magazine.



OFFICIAL FOOTBALL SIGNALS



<p>23 Failure to wear required equipment</p> 	<p>24 Illegal helmet contact/targeting</p> 	<p>25 Illegal horse-collar tackle</p> 	<p>27 Unsportsmanlike conduct Noncontact foul</p> 	<p>28 Illegal participation</p> 
<p>29 Sideline interference (Face press box)</p> 	<p>30 Running into or Roughing kicker or holder</p> 	<p>31 Illegal batting/kicking (Followed by pointing toward toe for kicking)</p> 	<p>32 Invalid fair catch Illegal fair catch signal</p> 	<p>33 Forward pass interference Kick catching interference</p> 
<p>34 Roughing passer</p> 	<p>35 Illegal pass/forward handing (Face press box)</p> 	<p>36 Intentional grounding</p> 	<p>37 Ineligible downfield on pass</p> 	<p>38 Personal foul</p> 
<p>39 Clipping</p> 	<p>40 Blocking below waist</p> 	<p>41 Chop block</p> 	<p>42 Holding/obstruction Illegal use of hands/arms</p> 	<p>43 Illegal block</p> 
<p>44 Helping runner Interlocked blocking</p> 	<p>45 Grasping face mask or helmet opening</p> 	<p>46 Tripping</p> 	<p>47 Disqualification</p> 	

PlayPic® PlayPics courtesy of Referee magazine. Note: Signal numbers 17 and 26 are for future expansion.

FOOTBALL CLOCK OPERATORS CHEAT SHEET

- Pre-Game clock countdown set to expire 5:00 minutes prior to game start time.
(Please insure the scoreboard horn does **NOT** go off during the national anthem.)
- 12 Minute Quarters
- Half-time clock set to 17:00 minutes to start on Referee's signal.
- Return from half-time and set team warm-up time for 3:00 minutes.
- 3 Minutes countdown between regular play time and overtime play.

TABLE OF GAME CLOCK TIMES:

PERIOD OF TIMING	CLOCK TIME
<u>First Half:</u> First period Intermission for changing goals Second period	12 minutes 1 minute 12 minutes
<u>Intermission:</u> When Teams Leave the Field 15 minutes is normal. It may be increased to a maximum of 20 minutes, provided opponents have been notified no later than 5 minutes prior to the game. By mutual agreement of the opposing coaches, the intermission may be reduced to a minimum of 10 minutes (not including the mandatory warm-up period).	10 to 20 minutes
Mandatory Warm-up Period Following Intermission: (The game officials are responsible for ensuring that there is a three-minute warm-up period posted on the clock and the clock immediately started for use by the coaches immediately after the halftime intermission expires. The head coach is responsible for his team being on the field for mandatory warm-up time at the end of the scheduled halftime intermission.) <u>Second Half:</u> Third period Intermission for changing goals Fourth period	3 minutes 12 minutes 1 minute 12 minutes
Charged Time-outs	1 minute