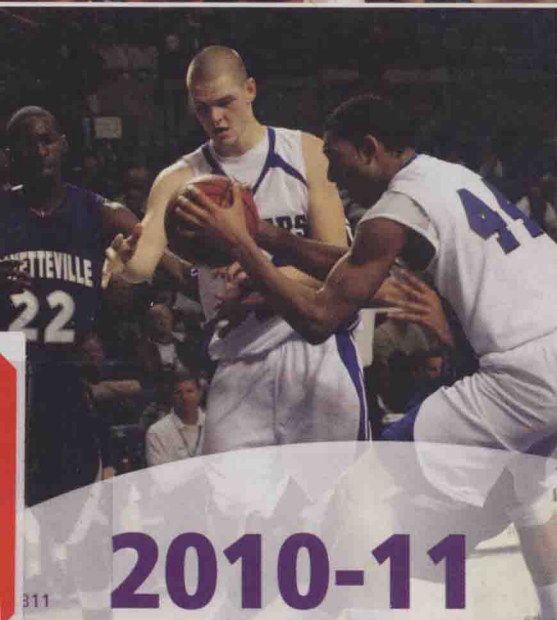


National Federation of State  
High School Associations



# Basketball

## Rules Book



2010-11

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Requests for basketball rules interpretations or explanations should be directed to the state association responsible for the high school basketball program in your state. The NFHS will assist in answering rules questions from state associations whenever called upon.



2010-11 NFHS

# BASKETBALL RULES BOOK

**ROBERT B. GARDNER, Publisher**

Mary E. Struckhoff, Editor

**NFHS Publications**

To maintain the sound traditions of this sport, encourage sportsmanship and minimize the inherent risk of injury, the National Federation of State High School Associations writes playing rules for varsity competition among student-athletes of high school age. High school coaches, officials and administrators who have knowledge and experience regarding this particular sport and age group volunteer their time to serve on the rules committee. Member associations of the NFHS independently make decisions regarding compliance with or modification of these playing rules for the student-athletes in their respective states.

NFHS rules are used by education-based and non-education-based organizations serving children of varying skill levels who are of high school age and younger. In order to make NFHS rules skill-level and age-level appropriate, the rules may be modified by any organization that chooses to use them. Except as may be specifically noted in this rules book, the NFHS makes no recommendation about the nature or extent of the modifications that may be appropriate for children who are younger or less skilled than high school varsity athletes.

Every individual using these rules is responsible for prudent judgment with respect to each contest, athlete and facility, and each athlete is responsible for exercising caution and good sportsmanship. These rules should be interpreted and applied so as to make reasonable accommodations for disabled athletes, coaches and officials.

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## **2010-11 NFHS Basketball Rules Changes**

- 2-8-5; 3-3-8** Changed the guidelines and procedures for identifying and removing a player who exhibits signs, symptoms and/or behaviors consistent with a concussion.
- 3-5-3a** The list of permissible headband and wristband colors was changed to include any single solid school color.
- 10-3-6i; 10-5-5** Specific rules were added to address the unsporting acts of a player leaving the playing court for an unauthorized reason to demonstrate resentment, disgust or intimidation and team members leaving the bench area and/or playing court for an unauthorized reason.

### **2010-11 NFHS Major Editorial Changes**

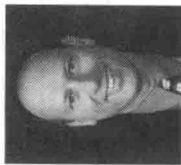
- 3-3-1a NOTE;** Clarified that when a substitute is not properly reported, the players in the game at the conclusion of the quarter/when the time-out was granted shall begin play for the new quarter/after the time-out. During an intermission, all team members are bench personnel for the purpose of penalizing unsporting behavior.
- 4-34-2**
- 3-4-2d** Clarified that a school or conference logo/mascot may be located at the apex/opening of the neckline, in the corresponding area on the back of the jersey and/or in the either side insert.
- 3-5-2** Clarified the requirements for guards, casts and braces and that a protective face mask shall be worn molded to the face.
- 4-4-7d** Clarified that the ball is at the disposal of a player when it is available after a goal and the official begins the throw-in count.
- 7-6-6** Clarified that when the ball is awarded to the wrong team, the mistake must be rectified before the throw-in ends.

### **2010-11 Points of Emphasis**

**(For a complete discussion of the points of emphasis, see page 66.)**

- |                      |                               |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Rules Enforcement | 4. Closely-guarded Situations |
| 2. Sporting Behavior | 5. Principle of Verticality   |
| 3. Perimeter Play    |                               |

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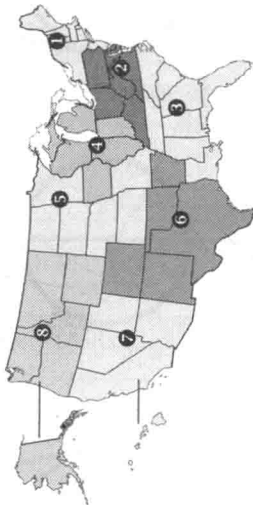
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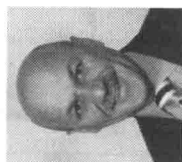
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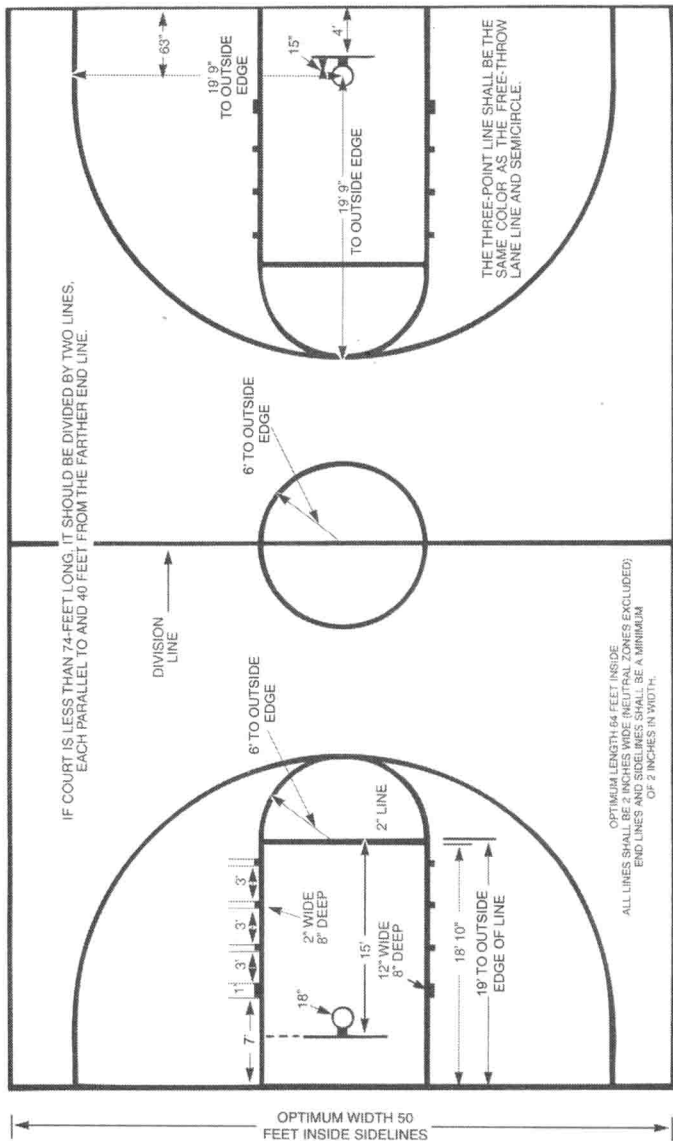


**Jeff Wells**  
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**FIGURE 1-1**

# **BASKETBALL COURT**

(See Rule 1-13 for location and size of optional coaching box)



## **MINIMUM OF 3 FEET**

Preferably 10 feet of unobstructed space outside. If impossible to provide 3 feet, a narrow broken 1-inch line should be marked inside the court parallel with and 3 feet inside the boundary.

**Left End Shows**  
Rectangular Backboard  
72-Inches Wide

**Right End Shows**  
Fan Backboard  
54-Inches Wide

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## **TABLE 1-1**

### **SUPPLEMENT TO BASKETBALL COURT**

#### **Court Specifications:**

1. If possible, building plans should provide for a court with ideal measurements as stated in Rule 1-1, ample out-of-bounds area and necessary seating space. A long court permits use of two crosswise courts for practice and informal games.
2. It is recommended that the area above the court be clear of any obstructions and be at least 25 feet or higher.
3. Instead of the 2-inch minimum boundaries, it is legal to use contrasting-colored floor areas by painting the out-of-bounds area, the center restraining circle, and the restricted parts of the free-throw lanes so that the mathematical line between the two colors is the boundary. If such contrasting colored out-of-bounds belt is used, it should be at least 8 inches wide.
4. It is recommended that a belt 8 inches wide or more in width be used to mark the boundaries on all courts which have at least 10 feet of open space between the boundary lines and the seating. This plan is urged for all new construction and for other similar courts when the boundaries are remarked.
5. It is recommended that there be a 2-inch wide broken line consisting of 12-inch segments, 12 inches apart, of a color different from that of the boundary, at a minimum of 6 feet outside the court extending from sideline to sideline and parallel to the end line.
6. Optional coaching box – tableside. Bounded by a line 28 feet from end line, the sideline, a line no more than 14 feet from the 28-foot line, and the team bench. Located off the court and 2 inches wide.  
NOTE: State associations may, on an individual basis, allow alternative bench locations.
7. The court should be uniformly and adequately lighted. Lighting engineers should be placed in charge of this important factor when planning any new installations. For information on recommended specifications for lighting, you may contact: Illuminating Engineering Society of North America, 120 Wall St., 17th Floor, New York, NY 10005, 212-248-5000.



## THE INTENT AND PURPOSE OF THE RULES

The restrictions which the rules place upon the players are intended to create a balance of play; to provide equal opportunity between the offense and the defense; to provide equal opportunity between the small player and tall player; to provide reasonable safety and protection; to create an atmosphere of sporting behavior and fair play; and to emphasize cleverness and skill without unduly limiting freedom of action of individual or team play on either offense or defense.

Therefore, 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 or a team should not be permitted an advantage which is not intended by a rule. Neither should play be permitted to develop which may lead to placing a player at a disadvantage not intended by a rule.

It is the policy of the NFHS Basketball Rules Committee that there be no deviation from the rules unless experimental approval has been granted by the NFHS liaison to the rules committee.

**THE GAME** – Basketball is played by two teams of five players each. The purpose of each team is to throw the ball into its own basket and to prevent the other team from scoring. The ball may be thrown, batted, rolled or dribbled in any direction, subject to restrictions laid down in the following rules.

# Rule

# 1

## *Court and Equipment*

The NFHS does not perform scientific tests on any specific items of equipment to determine if the equipment poses undue risks to student-athletes, coaches, officials or spectators. Such determinations are the responsibility of equipment manufacturers.

### SECTION 1 PLAYING COURT DIMENSIONS

The playing court shall be a rectangular surface free from obstructions and with dimensions not greater than 94 feet in length by 50 feet in width. IDEAL MEASUREMENTS ARE: High School Age – 84 by 50 feet. These are the dimensions for the playing court only. Suggestions about construction and lighting are in Table 1-1.

### SECTION 2 SIDELINES, END LINES

**ART. 1 . . .** The playing court shall be marked with sidelines, end lines and other lines as shown in Figure 1-1. There shall be at least 3 feet (and preferably 10 feet) of unobstructed space outside boundaries. The sidelines and end lines shall be a minimum of 2 inches in width. If it is desirable to use contrasting colored-floor

areas instead of the lines, see Table 1-1.

**ART. 2 . . .** If, on an unofficial court, there is less than 3 feet of unobstructed space outside any sideline or end line, a narrow broken line shall be marked on the court parallel with and 3 feet inside that boundary. This restraining line becomes the boundary line during a throw-in on that side or end, as in 7-6. It continues to be the boundary until the ball crosses the line.

### **SECTION 3 CENTER RESTRAINING CIRCLE, DIVIDING LINE**

**ART. 1 . . .** A 2-inch wide restraining circle shall be drawn at the center of the court with a radius of 6 feet measured to the outside edge. Spaces for nonjumpers around the center restraining circle are 36 inches deep.

**ART. 2 . . .** A division line 2 inches wide, shall divide the court into two equal parts. If the court is less than 74 feet long, it should be divided by two lines, each parallel to and 40 feet from the farther end line.

**NOTE:** A solid or shadow-bordered 2-inch wide line is permissible. A shadow line is a line that designates the required 2-inch width by use of border or outline lines at least ¼-inch wide, which shall lie within the 2-inch width. Border lines that are the natural color of the court are permissible. The area within these lines need not be one color, but the continuous 2-inch wide outline must be clearly visible to the officials. If the floor has a logo in the center of the court, that logo should not distract from the visibility of the center line or center circle.

### **SECTION 4 THREE-POINT LINE**

**ART. 1 . . .** A three-point field-goal line, 2 inches wide in the form of a semicircle, shall be drawn at each end of the court as shown in Figure 1-1. The semicircle has a radius of 19 feet 9 inches from a point in the middle of the free-throw lane directly below the center of the basket to the outside edge of the line. The semicircle shall be extended with a 2-inch wide line perpendicular to the end line, the length of which shall be 63 inches from the inside edge of the end line.

**ART. 2 . . .** The three-point field-goal line shall be the same color as the free-throw lane boundary lines and free-throw semicircle.

### **SECTION 5 FREE-THROW LANE**

**ART. 1 . . .** A free-throw lane, 12 feet wide measured to the outside of each lane boundary, and the semicircle with the free-throw line as a diameter, shall be marked at each end of the court with dimensions and markings as shown in Figure 1-1. All lines designating the free-throw lane, but not lane-space marks and neutral-zone marks, are part of the lane.

**ART. 2 . . .** The lane-space marks (2 inches by 8 inches) and neutral-zone marks (12 inches by 8 inches) identify areas which extend 36 inches from the outer edge of the lane lines toward the sidelines. There are three lane spaces on each lane boundary line.

**SECTION 6 FREE-THROW LINE**

A free-throw line, 2 inches wide, shall be drawn across both circles, which have an outside radius of 6 feet as shown in Figure 1-1. It shall be parallel to the end line and shall have its farthest edge 15 feet from the plane of the face of the backboard.

**SECTION 7 BACKBOARDS**

**ART. 1 . . .** The backboards shall be the same size at both ends of the court. The backboard shall be one of three types: (1) a rectangle 6 feet horizontally and 4 feet vertically; or (2) a rectangle 6 feet horizontally and 3½ feet vertically; or (3) a fan-shaped backboard, 54-inches wide and with dimensions as shown in Figure 1-2.

**NOTE:** The 6-foot horizontal and 3½-foot vertical dimensions are recommended for replacement backboards or new installations.

**ART. 2 . . .** Each of the backboards shall be of any rigid material. The front surface shall be flat and, unless it is transparent, it shall be white. Tinted glass backboards are prohibited beginning with those manufactured after January 1, 1995.

Figure 1-2

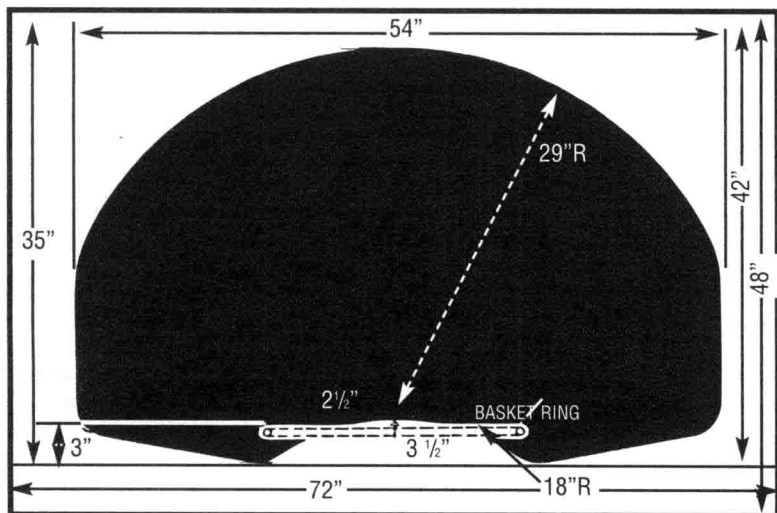


Figure 1-2 gives specifications for the three types of backboards. See Rule 1, Sections 7, 8, 9. It is not legal to paint a fan-shaped board on a rectangular backboard.

**NOTE:** For the fan-shaped backboard in transparent material, the recurved cut-out at the bottom may be filled in and the ring attached to the front of the backboard.

**ART. 3 . . .** If the backboard is transparent, it shall be marked as follows: A rectangle shall be centered behind the ring and marked by a 2-inch white line. The rectangle shall have outside dimensions of 24 inches horizontally and 18 inches vertically. For the rectangular backboard, the top edge of the backboard shall be level with the ring. For the fan-shaped backboard, the baseline shall be omitted, and the two vertical lines shall be extended to the bottom of the backboard. The rectangular target in a bright orange or black color may be used on a nontransparent backboard. The border of the backboard shall be marked with a white line. The border shall be 3 inches or less in width.

**ART. 4 . . .** Either type backboard may be transparent or nontransparent. No logo, marking, lettering, etc., is permitted on the backboard, backboard padding, or basket.

## **SECTION 8 BACKBOARD POSITION**

**ART. 1 . . .** Each backboard shall be midway between the sidelines, with the plane of its front face perpendicular to the floor, parallel to the end line, and 4 feet from it.

**ART. 2 . . .** The upper edge of the backboard shall be 13 feet above the floor for the rectangular, and 12 feet 8 inches for the fan-shaped. The backboard shall be protected from spectators to a distance of at least 3 feet at each end.

## **SECTION 9 BACKBOARD PADDING, SUPPORT SYSTEMS**

**ART. 1 . . .** The bottom and each side of the all-rectangular backboards shall be padded with a poly high-carb vinyl-type material that meets the Bashor resilience test with a range of 20-30. The padding must cover the bottom surface of the board and the side surface to a distance of 15 inches up from the bottom. The front and back surfaces must be covered to a minimum distance of 3/4 inch from the bottom of the backboard. The padding shall be 1 inch thick from the front and back surfaces of the backboard. The material shall be 2 inches from the bottom edge of the backboard. It is recommended that the padding be mounted on the backboard by adhesive or material such as Velcro, channel, etc. The padding shall be a single, solid color and shall be the same color on both backboards.

**ART. 2 . . .** Any backboard support behind the backboard and at a height of less than 9 feet above the floor shall be padded on the bottom surface to a distance of 2 feet from the face of the backboard. All portable backstops must have the bases padded to a height of 7 feet on the court-side surface.

**ART. 3 . . .** Clearances – As below and behind backboards, all support systems should be at least 8 feet behind the plane of the backboard face and at a height of 7 feet or more above the floor.

**ART. 4 . . .** Any backboard support, all of which is not directly behind the

backboard, should be at least 6 inches behind it if the support extends above the top and at least 2 feet behind it if the support extends beyond the side. Any overhead backboard support structure which must be forward-braced due to space limitations, architectural or structural restraints, shall meet the following requirements: A front, diagonal-brace system must be located above a line extending upward and into the playing court at a maximum 45-degree angle from a point on a vertical line located a minimum of 6 inches behind the front side of the backboard at a minimum height of 4 feet 6 inches above the basket ring.

**ART. 5 . . .** Warning on misuse of portable backstops – Manufacturers and administrators should be aware of an “extreme-caution” warning relative to the misuse of portable backstops. A high degree of injury potential and a severe liability problem exists when players or spectators are allowed to hang, sit or stand on the basket ring or backboard. Administrators must see that this practice is eliminated or that the portable units are lowered at the completion of the game. There is a high risk of severe injury, even death, if this practice continues. A recommended warning or inscription such as “Danger – please do not get on the rim/backboard” is desirable.

## **SECTION 10 BASKET SIZE, MATERIAL**

**ART. 1 . . .** Each basket shall consist of a single metal ring, 18 inches in inside diameter, its flange and braces, and a white-cord 12-mesh net, 15 to 18 inches in length, suspended from beneath the ring.

**ART. 2 . . .** Each ring shall not be more than 5/8 inch in diameter, with the possible addition of small-gauge loops on the bottom edge for attaching a 12-mesh net. The ring and its attaching flange and braces shall be bright orange in color.

**ART. 3 . . .** The cord of the net shall be not less than 120-thread nor more than 144-thread twine, or plastic material of comparable dimensions with no additional extensions. It shall be constructed to momentarily check the ball as it passes through.

## **SECTION 11 BASKET RING**

**ART. 1 . . .** Each basket ring shall be securely attached to the backboard/support system with a ring-restraining device. Such a device shall ensure that the basket stays attached in the event a glass backboard breaks. Each basket ring shall have its upper edge 10 feet above and parallel to the floor and shall be equidistant from the vertical edges of the backboard. The nearest point of the inside edge of the ring shall be 6 inches from the plane of the face of the backboard.

**ART. 2 . . .** Movable and nonmovable rings are legal. Movable basket rings shall have rebound characteristics similar to those of nonmovable rings. The pressure-release mechanism should ensure these characteristics, as well as

protect both the ring and backboard. The design of the ring and its construction should ensure player safety.

**ART. 3 . . .** For those rings with a lock/release mechanism, the pressure-release mechanism must not disengage until a static load of 230 pounds has been applied to the top of the ring at the most distant point from the backboard. The pressure-release mechanism must be preset by the manufacturer at the required static-load setting and may be sealed or field adjustable. When released, the ring shall not rotate more than 30 degrees below the original horizontal position. After release and with the load no longer applied, the ring shall return automatically and instantaneously to the original position.

## SECTION 12 BALL

**ART. 1 . . .** The ball shall meet the following specifications:

- a. Its solid color shall be the approved orange shade or natural color.
- b. It shall be spherical.
- c. It shall have a deeply-pebbled cover with horizontally shaped panels bonded tightly to the rubber carcass.
- d. The circumference shall be:
  1. Within a minimum of 29½ inches to a maximum of 30 inches for high school boys competition.
  2. Within a minimum of 28½ inches to a maximum of 29 inches for high school girls competition.
- e. The weight shall be:
  1. Within a minimum of 20 ounces to a maximum of 22 ounces for high school boys competition.
  2. Within a minimum of 18 ounces to a maximum of 20 ounces for high school girls competition.
- f. The black rubber rib separating the panels shall not exceed ¼ inch in width.
- g. The ball shall include the NFHS Authenticating Mark. The mark can be displayed in either format shown in Figure 1-3. A current list of NFHS authenticated products can be found on the Web site, [nfhs.org](http://nfhs.org).

Figure 1-3



**NOTE:** By state association adoption, either legal-size ball may be used for boys junior high school competition.

**ART. 2 . . .** The ball shall be inflated to an air pressure such that when it is dropped to the playing surface from a height of 6 feet, measured to the bottom of the ball, it shall rebound to a height, measured to the top of the ball, of not less

than 49 inches when it strikes on its least resilient spot, nor more than 54 inches when it strikes on its most resilient spot.

**NOTE:** To be legal, the air pressure which will give the required reaction must be stamped on it. The pressure for game use must make the ball bounce legally.

**ART. 3 . . .** The home team shall provide a ball which meets the specifications. The referee shall be the sole judge of the legality of the ball and may select a ball provided by the visiting team.

### **SECTION 13 TEAM BENCH LOCATIONS, COACHING BOX, TIME-OUT AREA**

**ART. 1 . . .** The location of each team's bench shall be designated by game management. It is recommended that the benches for team members and coaches of both teams be placed along that side of the court on which the scorer's and timer's table is located.

**ART. 2 . . .** The coaching box shall be outlined outside the side of the court on which the scorer's and timer's table and team benches are located. The area shall be bounded by a line 28 feet from the end line, the sideline, a line no more than 14 feet from the 28-foot line toward the end line, and the team bench. These lines shall be located off the court, be 2 inches wide.

**NOTE:** State associations may alter the length and placement of the 14-foot (maximum) coaching box.

**ART. 3 . . .** The time-out area shall be the area inside an imaginary rectangle formed by the boundaries of the sideline (including the bench), end line, and an imaginary line extended from the free-throw lane line nearest the bench area meeting an imaginary line extended from the coaching-box line.

### **SECTION 14 RED/LED LIGHT, AUDIBLE SIGNAL**

A red light behind each backboard or an LED light on each backboard is permitted to signal that time has expired for a quarter or extra period. In facilities without a red light behind or an LED light on each backboard, the audible timer's signal shall indicate that time has expired.

### **SECTION 15 CLOCK AND SCOREBOARD**

A visible game clock and scoreboard are mandatory. An alternate timing device and scoring information system shall be available in the event of malfunction.

### **SECTION 16 POSSESSION ARROW**

A visible display shall be located at the scorer's and timer's table to indicate team possession for the alternating-possession procedure.

### **SECTION 17 "X" LOCATES SCORER**

An "X" 12 inches long and 2 inches wide shall be placed on the floor out of bounds directly in front of the official scorer to help substitutes with the proper location.

**SECTION 18 MUSIC/SOUND EFFECTS/ARTIFICIAL NOISEMAKERS**

The playing of music/sound effects shall only be permitted during pregame, time-outs, intermission and post-game. The use of artificial noisemakers shall be prohibited.

# **Rule 2**

## ***Officials and Their Duties***

**SECTION 1 GAME AND TABLE OFFICIALS**

**ART. 1 . . .** The official's uniform shall be a black-and-white striped shirt, black pants, entirely black-shoes and black socks.

**ART. 2 . . .** The game officials shall be a referee and an umpire or a referee and two umpires who shall be assisted by an official timer and scorer.

**ART. 3 . . .** The scorer and timer shall be located at the scorer's and timer's table on the side of the court. It is recommended that the official scorer and timer be seated next to each other.

**SECTION 2 OFFICIALS' JURISDICTION**

**ART. 1 . . .** The officials shall make decisions for infractions of the rules committed within or outside the boundary lines. The use of any replay or television monitoring equipment by the officials in making any decision relating to the game is prohibited.

**NOTE:** A state association may permit game or replay officials to use a replay monitor during state championship series contests to determine if a try for goal at the expiration of time in the fourth quarter or any overtime period (0:00 on the game clock) should be counted, and if so, determine if it is a two- or a three-point goal.

**ART. 2 . . .** The officials' jurisdiction, prior to the game, begins when they arrive on the floor. The officials' arrival on the floor shall be at least 15 minutes before the scheduled starting time of the game.

**ART. 3 . . .** The officials' jurisdiction extends through periods when the game may be momentarily stopped for any reason.

**ART. 4 . . .** The jurisdiction of the officials' is terminated and the final score has been approved when all officials leave the visual confines of the playing area.

**SECTION 3 REFEREE'S AUTHORITY**

The referee shall make decisions on any points not specifically covered in the rules.

**SECTION 4 REFEREE'S PREGAME DUTIES**

The referee shall:

**ART. 1 . . .** Inspect and approve all equipment, including court, baskets, ball, backboards, and timer's and scorer's signals.



**ART. 2 . . .** Designate the official timepiece and official timer prior to the scheduled starting time of the game.

**ART. 3 . . .** Designate the official scorebook and official scorer prior to the scheduled starting time of the game.

**NOTE:** A state association may authorize use of supplementary equipment to aid in game administration.

**ART. 4 . . .** Be responsible for having each team notified three minutes before each half is to begin.

**ART. 5 . . .** Verify with the head coach, prior to each contest, that his/her team member's uniforms and equipment are legal and will be worn properly, and that all participants will exhibit proper sporting behavior throughout the contest.

## **SECTION 5 REFEREE'S DUTIES DURING GAME**

The referee shall:

**ART. 1 . . .** Designate the official to toss the ball in the center restraining circle for all jump-ball situations.

**ART. 2 . . .** Administer the alternating-possession throw-in to start the second, third and fourth quarters.

**ART. 3 . . .** Decide whether a goal shall count if the officials disagree.

**ART. 4 . . .** May declare the game a forfeit when conditions warrant.

**ART. 5 . . .** Decide matters upon which the timer and scorer disagree and correct obvious timing errors.

**ART. 6 . . .** Confer with the official scorer at halftime to determine the possession arrow is pointed in the proper direction to begin play in the third quarter.

**ART. 7 . . .** Check and approve the score at the end of each half.

## **SECTION 6 OFFICIALS' AUTHORITY**

No official has the authority to set aside or question decisions made by the other official(s) within the limits of their respective outlined duties.

## **SECTION 7 OFFICIALS' GENERAL DUTIES**

The officials shall conduct the game in accordance with the rules. This includes:

**ART. 1 . . .** Notifying the captains when play is about to begin at the start of the game.

**ART. 2 . . .** Putting the ball in play.

**ART. 3 . . .** Determining when the ball becomes dead.

**ART. 4 . . .** Prohibiting practice during a dead ball, except between halves.

**ART. 5 . . .** Administering penalties.

**ART. 6 . . .** Granting time-out.

**ART. 7 . . .** Beckoning substitutes to enter the court.

**ART. 8 . . .** Signaling a three-point goal by raising two arms extended overhead.

**ART. 9 . . .** Silently and visibly counting seconds to administer the throw-in (7-