

Football Officiating Tips

1. Always have courage to pick up your flag if you realize there was no foul.
2. Always stop the clock after all fourth down plays.
3. Try not to disqualify unless it's a must.
4. Always improve on your signaling.
5. Make sure your signaling is always very clear.
6. After calling a foul, keep officiating.
7. Always know the status of the ball.
8. Always be alert for running and passing situations.
9. During time-outs, don't huddle around other officials.
10. Try not to let your emotions run wild when irritated.

11. Always be aware of the current game time.
12. Try not to over eat during the off-season. Stay in shape.
13. Start your off season conditioning program early.
14. Always cooperate with coaches during all situations.
15. Stay far enough away from the play to avoid being apart of the play.
16. Keep accurate records during the game.
17. Keep locker room for officials only.
18. Always see the ball prior to sounding your whistle.
19. Always be alert of the down, distance and spot of ball.
20. Always be clear when giving your explanation to the Referee.

21. Be careful on spotting the ball. Keep it accurate.
22. Always be alert for continuing action fouls.
23. Always keep the game under control.
24. Always be aware of the line-to-gain.
25. Stop the game clock if line-to-gain appears to be reached. (NFHS and NCAA).
26. Never look for fouls, only see them.
27. When you see a foul think to yourself, "That's a foul, that's a foul, NOW it's a foul" Don't be too hasty in throwing your flag.
28. When observing a play, keep your whistle in your hand until you see the ball to avoid a possible "inadvertent whistle".
29. Attempt to get the player's number when calling a foul.
30. Never look for fouls; only see them.

31. Answer questions from coaches and players respectively.
32. Always act calm and professional under all game situations.
33. Referees should conduct an extensive pre-game meeting to discuss potential game situations.
34. Always know how many players are on the field.
35. Use preventive officiating when possible.
36. Never question the judgment of any official, either during or after the game.
37. During the season and off-season, always study the rules well.
38. The 3 C's of officiating: Consistency, Communication and Control.
39. When officiating call fouls only in your zone, it will keep you out of trouble!
40. If you are in the proper position to see the play, you will always get it right.

41. Know the down and distance on all plays.
42. Communicate, Communicate, And Communicate!
43. Stay focused.
44. DELIBRATE, DELIBRATE, DELIBRATE.
45. Doubts = Legal play.
46. Try not to fully concentrate on the player; watch around the player too.
47. During a pass, never watch the ball only for a split second to see where it's going; concentrate on the receivers.
48. It's a good idea to hustle on the field. It gives players and coaches a sense that you are really into the game.
49. Don't listen to the sidelines, they only put you off.
50. Never let anyone else change your penalty, only you can change it.

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51. Don't say anything to players or coaches that you don't want said to you.
52. See the play, don't be talked into anything.
53. Go to the bathroom before the game.
54. ALWAYS call the fouls designed for safety: clipping, face mask, etc.
55. If you call it in the first quarter, call it in the fourth quarter.
56. Whether it is 0-0, 55-0, or 27-27, that illegal act that you see is a FOUL.
57. Get to the goal line before the runner does. You never know.
58. If you miss a call, let the coach (respectfully) have his say.
59. If you KNOW the down, time remaining, etc. is wrong, or that a rule has been misapplied, keep the ball dead.
60. If you miss one (and you will), keep officiating. Fretting just diverts your attention.

61. Never panic or get flustered. It just makes it worse.
62. Look the part and dress well. You'll fool a lot of people just by your presence.
63. Nobody cares about last night's game; today's game is the most important one in the world.
64. Never change your call, on what a coach say's; make sure that you know that you should change it first.
65. The ball doesn't commit fouls - players do!
66. Don't make a show; let the kids be the show and let them play!
67. Always stay calm with players and coaches when they are arguing with you. Let them make their claim and then explain the call.
68. Don't avoid or seek out a coach after the game is over.
69. Always call what you think not what the coach yells.
70. Don't become a player's buddy during the game, communicate safety and fair play.

71. Slow down. Slowing down the game will help you see and understand the intent of the rules. If you think your going too slow...slow down some more.
72. Build a good repetitive pattern and be able to concentrate on that pattern for :07 to :10 sec each time.
73. In a discussion with a coach, never be the first to speak and make the last word respectful.
74. See as many snaps as you can and learn from your own and other's mistakes.
75. Officiate every game as if you are being observed because you never know who is watching.
76. Take it one play at a time.
77. When things get chaotic - and they will, remain calm and focused.
78. Be a good dead ball official.
79. Please watch your language while officiating.
80. Get better each game.

81. If you officiate a team where you've had to flag a coach before, don't let that "history" get to you. Every game is a new game!
82. When a play is challenged, always maintain an open mind, no matter what team is going to be benefited by it.
83. Don't walk on the field. Always run or jog.
84. See the foul, get the number, and throw the flag.
85. HUSTLE!
86. Don't be a buddy with the coaches, that will make you look suspicions even if you don't intend to.
87. Ask questions of veteran officials. Their input can go a long way in your approach to "getting better".
88. Don't question officials on the field, but don't be hesitant to after the game. By all means, ASK QUESTIONS!
89. If you see it happen, it happened! Don't let someone talk you into changing your call.

90. Arrive to a game site early enough to change clothes and have a good pre game discussion.
91. Be clear in your explanation when ruling on a coach's or "up stairs ref" challenge; give specific reasoning for the call, always explain what occurred during the play.
92. Be consistent throughout the whole game; be fair to the players, coaches and the fans.
93. Concentrate, Concentrate, Concentrate! Don't let your mind wander. See leather!
94. Never issue threats to players or coaches. Don't say you will do something, if you are not prepared to do it.
95. Know your keys before every play.
96. During the game, act like you want to be there. Don't act like you're daydreaming or drowsy.
97. Put as much into the game as the players. They have worked all week for this game.
98. HAVE FUN!