

Pass Interference and illegal contact on a receiver

Pass interference is a judgment call. There can be contact beyond the line of scrimmage that is not pass interference.

It is forward-pass interference if any player of A or B who is beyond the neutral zone interferes (to interpose in a way that hinders or impedes: come into collision) with an eligible opponent's opportunity to move toward, catch or bat the pass or hinders an opponent's vision without making an attempt to catch, intercept or bat the ball, even though no contact was made.

There is no "5-yard bump and run" rule in High School Football.

The pass being uncatchable has no bearing on the ruling of pass interference.

Both receiver and defender have the right to catch the ball.

An offensive receiver on his line may contact the defender across the line from them but, contact must terminate before traveling more than 2 yards down field if the ball is thrown across the line of scrimmage.

Offensive receivers need to avoid contact with all defensive players as defenders are eligible receivers also. Any blocking down field by an offensive player is Offensive Pass interference if the ball crosses the line of scrimmage.

A defensive player must avoid contact with a receiver who is no longer a potential blocker. So a receiver is a potential blocker until there is a pass. A defender can contact an offensive receiver until the ball is thrown.

All plays are running plays until the ball is passed.

Pass interference on the defense can only happen in the area of the field where the ball is thrown. Anywhere else on the field the contact with an eligible receiver is Illegal use of hands, holding or a personal foul.

Incidental and unavoidable contact is not a foul. If a defender and receiver get their feet tangled, it is not a foul. If players are backing up to position themselves to catch a pass and bump into an eligible receiver, is not a foul.

Use good judgment in determining if contact impeded or prevented a receiver or defender from moving toward, catching, intercepting or batting the ball.

2008 NFHS Rule 7-5

ART. 7 . . . Pass interference restrictions only apply beyond the neutral zone and only if the legal forward pass, untouched by B in or behind the neutral zone, crosses the neutral zone.

ART. 8 . . . Pass interference restrictions are in effect for all A and B players until the ball is touched or the pass is incomplete. Pass interference restrictions on a legal forward pass begin for:

- a. A with the snap.
- b. B when the ball leaves the passer's hand.

ART. 9 . . . Pass interference restrictions on a legal forward pass end for all:

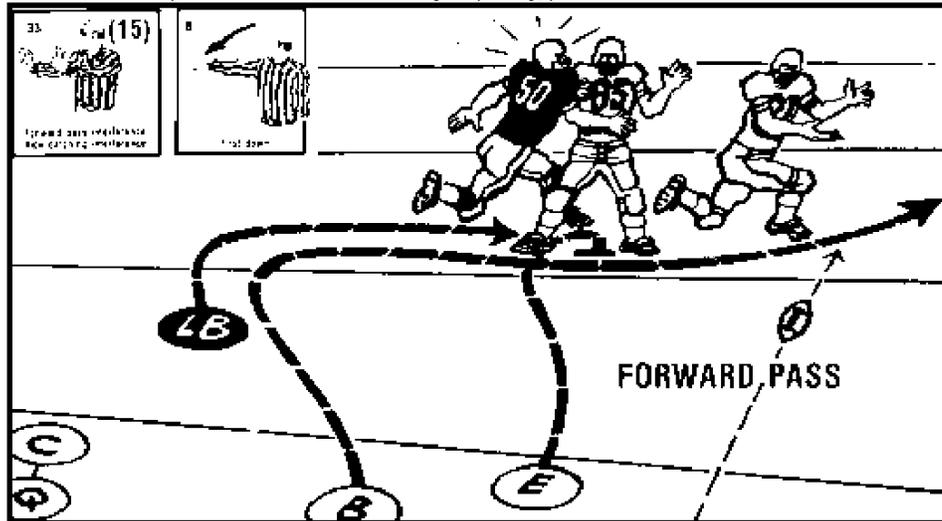
- a. A players, when B touches a legal forward pass.
- b. Eligible A players when A touches a legal forward pass. Ineligible A players may not touch the pass, but can use hands or arms in a legal block to ward off an opponent.
- c. B players when the first forward pass has been touched by A or B.

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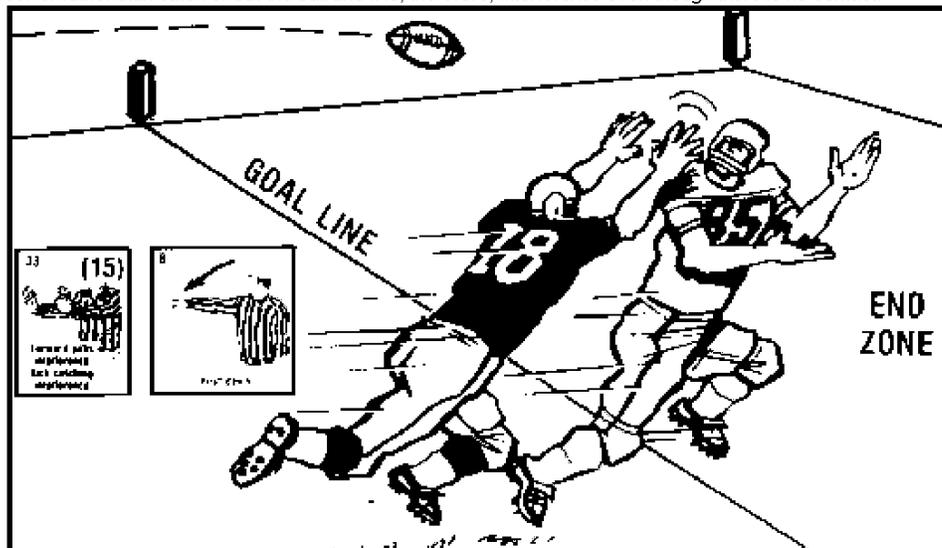
ART. 10 . . . It is forward-pass interference if:

- a. Any player of A or B who is beyond the neutral zone interferes with an eligible opponent's opportunity to move toward, catch or bat the pass.
- b. Any player hinders an opponent's vision with out making an attempt to catch, intercept or bat the ball, even though no contact was made.

7-5-10a The contact by No. 50 constitutes defensive pass interference. No. 85 is entitled to his position and is entitled to maintain that position on the field. Defensive pass interference carries a 15-yard penalty, plus an automatic first down.



7-5-10a Defensive pass interference. No. 18 has directed his attention to blocking the vision of the receiver which indicates an intent to hinder the receiver rather than catch or bat the ball and it is, therefore, interference even though there is no contact.



ART. 11 . . . It is not forward-pass interference if:

- a. Unavoidable contact occurs when two or more eligibles are making a simultaneous, bona fide attempt to move toward, catch or bat the pass.
- b. Contact by A is immediately made on a B lineman and the contact does not continue beyond the expanded neutral zone.
- c. Contact by B is obviously away from the direction of the pass.

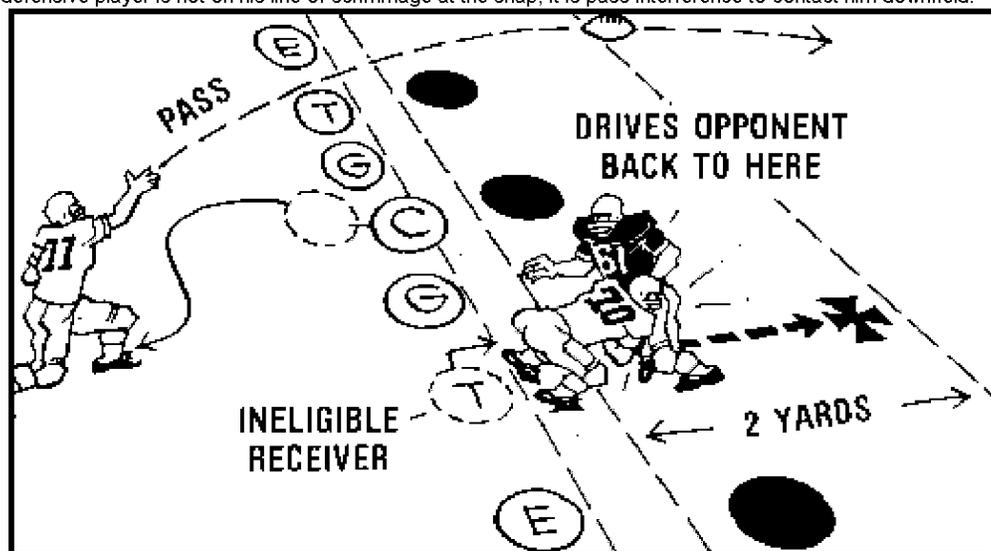
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7-5-11a When two opposing eligible pass receivers are making a simultaneous and bona fide attempt to catch or bat the ball, and there is unavoidable contact, it is not a foul. The defender and receiver both have a right to attempt to gain possession of the pass.



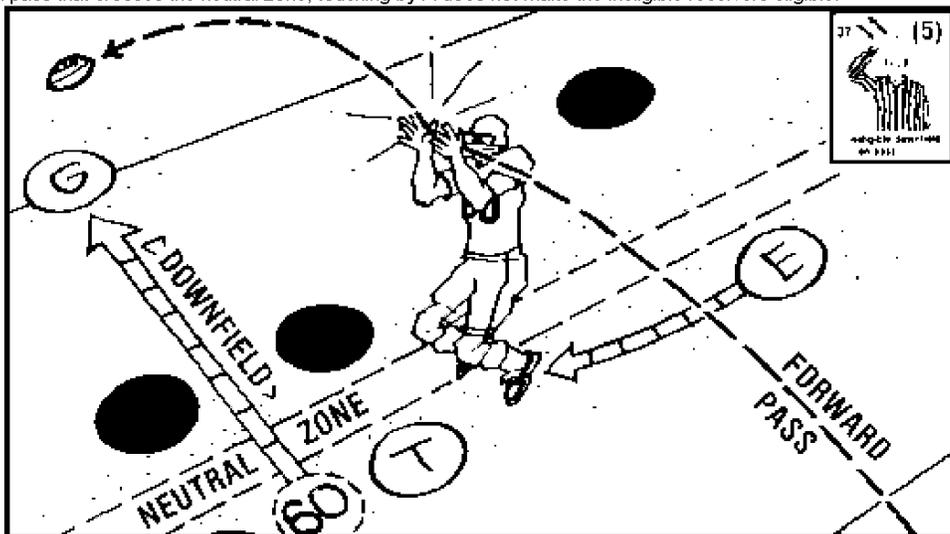
ART. 12 . . . Ineligible A players may not advance beyond the expanded neutral zone on a legal forward pass play before the last pass which crosses the neutral zone is in flight. If B touches the pass in or behind the neutral zone, this restriction is terminated. An ineligible is not illegally down field if, at the snap, he immediately contacts a B lineman and the contact does not continue beyond the expanded neutral zone.

7-5-12 An ineligible receiver may block an opponent who is within 1 yard of his line of scrimmage at the snap and drive him back up to 2 yards into the defensive secondary. The neutral zone is expanded to this extent during a forward pass which crosses the neutral zone. If the defensive player is not on his line of scrimmage at the snap, it is pass interference to contact him downfield.



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7-5-12 Ineligible receiver downfield. No. 60 was beyond the neutral zone before the forward pass which crossed the neutral zone was thrown. On a pass that crosses the neutral zone, touching by A does not make the ineligible receivers eligible.



7-5-12 Ineligible A players may not advance beyond the expanded neutral zone on a legal forward pass play if the last pass crosses the neutral zone. If B touches the pass in or behind the neutral zone, this restriction is terminated.

ART. 13 . . . An ineligible A player has illegally touched a forward pass if he bats, muffs or catches a forward pass while he is in or behind the neutral zone, unless the pass has been touched by B.

2008 NFHS Rule 9-2-Illegal use of hands and holding

Art. 3 . . . A defensive player shall not:

- d. Contact an eligible receiver who is no longer a potential blocker.