

NCAA FOOTBALL RULES COMMITTEE
2016 Recommended Rules Changes

1. Technology for Coaching (Rule 1-4-11)

Coaches are now allowed to make use of digital technology in the press box and the locker room, but they still may not use video images, photographs or computers on the field.

2. TV Access Inside the Limit Lines (Rule 1-2-3)

Television partners may briefly bring hand-held cameras inside the limit lines during certain dead-ball periods. The rule prohibiting them on the field of play remains in effect. (This change makes the 2015 experimental rule official.)

3. Scrimmage kick formation (Rule 2-16-10)

Clarifies that a scrimmage kick formation must include either a punter at least 10 yards behind the line of scrimmage or a kicker and holder at least seven yards behind the line of scrimmage; it must be obvious that a kick will be attempted.

4. Sliding Ball Carrier: Defenseless Player (Rule 2-27-14)

A ball carrier who obviously gives himself up and goes into a feet-first slide is included in the list of defenseless players.

5. Charged Team Timeouts (Rule 3-3-7)

The head coach may request that one of the team's three timeouts each half, and the timeout in an extra period, be one minute thirty seconds in length.

6. Starting the Game Clock in the Last Two Minutes of the Half (Rule 3-4-3)

Inside the last two minutes of a half, if the game clock is stopped to administer the penalty for a foul by the team ahead in the score, the game clock will start on the snap, at the option of the offended team.

7. Outcome of a Suspended Game (Rule 3-3-3)

When a suspended interconference game may not be resumed and the athletics directors of the two teams are not able to reach an agreement about the outcome of the game, it shall be determined by the conference policy of the home team.

8. Tripping the Ball Carrier (Rule 9-1-2)

A player may not trip an opposing ball carrier by deliberately obstructing him with the foot or lower leg. With this change, the rule is now the same for all players.

9. Blocking Below the Waist (Rule 9-1-6)

Offensive players who are outside the tackle box at the snap, and those who leave the tackle box after the snap, may only block an opponent below the waist if the force of the initial contact is directly at the opponent's front. However, they may not block an opponent below the waist in a direction toward the original position of the ball unless the ball carrier has clearly crossed the line of scrimmage.

10. Low Hits on the Passer (Rule 9-1-9)

This rule that protects the passer is modified to clarify that the tackler may not legally make forcible contact against the passer at the knee or below even if he is making a wrap-up tackle.

11. Two Unsportsmanlike Conduct Fouls By a Coach (9-2-6)

If a coach commits two unsportsmanlike conduct fouls, he is automatically disqualified from the game, which is the current rule for players.

12. Instant Replay Stoppage: Medical Observer

The Instant Replay Official may stop the game at the initiative of a medical observer in the Instant Replay booth. (This change makes the 2015 experimental rule official.)

13. Instant Replay: Expanded Targeting-Foul Authority for the Replay Official

In reviewing targeting fouls the Instant Replay Official is to examine all aspects of the action: whether the player was defenseless, the location of the forcible contact, the presence of indicators of targeting, and the use of the crown of the helmet. Also, the replay official may create a targeting foul in the case of an egregious action that was not called by the officials on the field.

Experimental Rule: Collaboration in Instant Replay

The rules committee approved a proposal for a one-year experimental exception to Rule 12-4-3. This experiment allows conferences to use a collaborative process for instant replay. Under this experiment, personnel in a separate secure location identified by the conference will assist the Instant Replay Official at the stadium in making decisions.