

Pass Interference Reference Guide

There are 6 categories of pass interference that apply to both offensive and defensive players. When throwing a flag for pass interference, you should be able to put it into one of these categories. These apply only after the pass has been released. They can be remembered by the acronym **CHANGE P**:

- **Cutoff** - Positioning or veering into the receiver's path to restrict or prevent them from moving toward the ball without making a bona fide attempt to play the pass itself.
- **Hook and Turn** - Using an arm to hook the receiver around the waist or shoulders and turning or twisting their body away from the incoming flight of the ball.
- **Armbar** - Extending and placing an arm across the receiver's body in a way that materially restricts their movement or ability to catch the pass.
- **Not Playing the Ball** - Failing to make a genuine effort to reach for the pass—typically by failing to look back for the ball—while initiating body-to-body contact that knocks the receiver off their path.
- **Grab and Restrict** - Grasping or clutching the receiver's arm or body, preventing them from raising their arms or extending to catch the pass or moving towards the pass.
- **Early Contact** - This is a pre-requisite for the other 6 categories. Early contact alone is not enough for a foul.
- **Playing Through the Back** - Making contact by moving through the back of a receiver, which restricts their ability to reach or touch the pass, even if the defender is also making an attempt to play the ball.

There are 4 additional categories that apply only to offensive players and offensive pass interference. These apply anytime after the snap on any play where a forward pass is thrown beyond the neutral zone.

- **Pushoff** - Using hands or arms to forcefully shove a defender and create separation to catch a pass.
- **Playing Through the Defender** - Running directly through a defender who has already established a legal position on the field.
- **Pick Play** - Intentionally running into or blocking a defender who is covering another receiver, preventing them from pursuing their assignment
- **Blocking Downfield** - Blocking a defender beyond the neutral zone.

Full Pass Interference Rules

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. Pass interference restrictions are in effect for all A and B players until the ball is touched or the pass is incomplete.

ART. 8 . . . 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:

- a. All eligible A players when the pass has been touched by any player.
- b. All ineligible A players when B touches the pass, however it is not pass interference for ineligible A players to use hands and arms in a legal block to ward off an opponent.
- c. All B players when the pass has been touched by any player.
- d. All players when the pass is incomplete.

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

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

- a. Unavoidable contact occurs when two or more eligibles are making a simultaneous, bonafide 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.