

## NFHS Football Rule 10: Enforcement of Penalties.

### Key Concepts and Terminology in Rule 10

Before diving into the procedures, it's crucial to understand the terms used to describe various spots on the field.

- **Basic Spot:** A reference point determined by the type of play. Penalties are often enforced from the basic spot.
  - **Succeeding Spot:** The spot where the ball would next be put in play if no foul had occurred. This is usually the spot where the play ended.
  - **Spot of the Foul:** The point at which the foul occurred.
  - **Previous Spot:** The spot where the ball was last put in play (the line of scrimmage for a scrimmage down, or the free-kick line for a free kick).
  - **Behind the Neutral Zone:** On the offensive side of the line of scrimmage.
  - **Beyond the Neutral Zone:** On the defensive side of the line of scrimmage.
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### (The Fundamental Rule)

This is the cornerstone of penalty enforcement in NFHS football. It states that **most live-ball fouls are enforced from the basic spot**, with one major exception.

The principle is: "**All fouls are enforced from the basic spot, except for those by the offense that occur behind the basic spot.**"

- **Fouls by the offense behind the basic spot** are enforced from the **previous spot**.
- **All other fouls** (defensive fouls, offensive fouls beyond the basic spot) are enforced from the **basic spot**.

**So, what is the "Basic Spot"?** It depends on the type of play:

1. **Loose Ball Play:** A pass, legal kick, fumble backward, or illegal kick. The **basic spot is the previous spot** (the line of scrimmage).
  - *Example: Offensive holding on a pass play. The foul occurred behind the line of scrimmage (behind the basic spot), so the penalty is enforced from the previous spot(line of scrimmage).*

- *Example: Defensive pass interference on a pass play. The foul occurred beyond the line of scrimmage (beyond the basic spot), so the penalty is enforced from the previous spot (the line of scrimmage).*
  - 2. **Running Play:** A run, fumble forward, or backward pass that is caught or recovered by a player who is behind the spot where the ball was released. The **basic spot is where the run ends** (the spot where the runner loses possession or where the ball becomes dead).
    - \*Example: A clip by the offense at the end of a 20-yard run. The foul occurred during the run, and the basic spot is the end of the run. Since the clip occurred behind the basic spot, the penalty is enforced from the spot of the foul.\*
    - \*Example: A facemask by the defense at the end of a 20-yard run. The penalty is enforced from the basic spot (the end of the run).\*
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## Key Sections and Procedures of Rule 10

### ARTICLE 1: TYPES OF FOULS

- **Live-Ball Fouls:** Occur during a live ball (e.g., holding, pass interference, block in the back). These are enforced under the "All-But-One" principle.
- **Dead-Ball Fouls:** Occur when the ball is dead (e.g., false start, delay of game, encroachment). These are enforced from the **succeeding spot** (the next spot where the ball would be put in play).
- **Simultaneous with the Snap Fouls:** Occur at the snap (e.g., offside, encroachment). These are enforced from the **previous spot**.
- **Non-Player or Unsportsmanlike Fouls:** Occurring during a down or between downs, these are enforced from the **succeeding spot**.

### ARTICLE 2: PENALTY ENFORCEMENT

This article covers the step-by-step procedure for officials:

1. The ball is marked ready for play.
2. A foul occurs.
3. The referee signals the foul.
4. The captain of the fouled team is offered the choice of accepting or declining the penalty.
5. The penalty is enforced.

## ARTICLE 3: SPECIAL ENFORCEMENT CASES

- **Half the Distance:** No penalty can move the ball more than half the distance from the enforcement spot to the offender's goal line.
- **Automatic First Down:** Certain defensive fouls (e.g., roughing the passer) carry an automatic first down, regardless of the yardage gained.
- **Loss of Down:** Certain offensive fouls (e.g., illegal forward pass) result in a loss of down.
- **Disqualification:** Certain flagrant fouls result in the player being ejected.

## ARTICLE 4: MULTIPLE FOULS

- **Double Foul:** Live-ball fouls by both teams during the same down. The penalties cancel each other out, and the down is replayed.
  - **Multiple Live-Ball Fouls:** When one team commits multiple fouls during the same down. The offended team may choose which one penalty to enforce.
  - **Live/Dead Ball Fouls:** If one team commits a live-ball foul and the other commits a dead-ball foul, the penalties are enforced in the order of their occurrence.
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## Practical Scenarios

### 1. Scenario: Offensive Holding

- On 1st and 10 from the 50, the quarterback drops back to pass. An offensive lineman holds a defender at the 45-yard line. The pass is incomplete.
- **Analysis:** This is a loose-ball play. The basic spot is the previous spot (the 50). The foul (holding) occurred behind the basic spot. Therefore, the penalty (10 yards) is enforced from the **basic spot (the 50)**. Result: 1st and 20 from the 40.

### 2. Scenario: Defensive Pass Interference

- On 3rd and 15, a pass is thrown. A defender commits pass interference at the opponent's 30-yard line.
- **Analysis:** This is a loose-ball play. The basic spot is the previous spot. It's first down

### 3. Scenario: Block in the Back on a Punt Return

- The punt returner catches the ball at his 20 and returns it to the 50. A blocker for the receiving team commits a block in the back at the 35-yard line.
- **Analysis:** This is a running play. The basic spot is the end of the run (the 50). The foul (block in the back) occurred behind the basic spot. Therefore, the penalty (10 yards) is

enforced from the **spot of the foul (the 35)**. Result: The ball will be placed at the 25-yard line.

<b>FOUL BY</b>	<b>SPOT OF FOUL</b>	<b>END OF PLAY</b>	<b>BASIC SPOT</b>	<b>REFERENCE</b>
A	Behind Line of scrimmage	Behind Line of scrimmage	Previous spot	10-4-2d
A	Behind Line of scrimmage	Behind Line of scrimmage	Previous spot	10-4-21
A	Behind Line of scrimmage	Behind Line of scrimmage	Previous spot	10-4-2e
A	Beyond line of scrimmage	Beyond line of scrimmage	Spot of foul for Foul behind end of run or Related run End of Run or Related run for foul beyond end of run or related run	10-4-41 10-4-6c
B	Behind Line of scrimmage	Behind Line of scrimmage	Previous spot	10-4-2d
B	Beyond line of scrimmage	Beyond line of scrimmage	Previous spot	10-4-2d
B	Beyond line of scrimmage	Beyond line of scrimmage	End of run or related run	10-4-6a
B	Beyond line of scrimmage	Beyond line of scrimmage	End of run or related run	10-4-6a