

HAND-CHECKING

Hand-checking is defined as “illegal contact by a defensive player which impedes the forward and/or lateral movement of the offensive player”. Hand-checking should be dealt with early in the game, with particular attention being paid during perimeter play and drives to the basket. Hand-checking is NOT allowed on the ball handler. Some officials have the misconception that “I’ll call it if it impedes the ball handler”. That is not the direction officials are being encouraged to follow. ONE warning is given to the player and if there is another infraction, then the foul should be called. The following are hand-checking guidelines for all officials.

It is a foul if:

1. A defender leaves his hand on an opponent;
2. A defender continually places hand(s) on an opponent;
3. A defender places two hands on an opponent;
4. A defender continually jabs an opponent;
5. An illegal arm bar is used by the defender.

Incidental contact with the hand(s) that does not impede the progress of an opponent is NOT illegal. The defensive player's action of feeling for a screen that may be set to the side or to the rear is NOT illegal.

If an offensive player slaps at the defensive player's hand or arm which is on his person, this should be an indicator to the official that such contact is impeding his/her progress. Preventative officiating can avoid fouls on both defensive and offensive players.

A stern vocal warning to defensive players early in the game will allow players to adjust to the desired level and type of contact allowed. This warning CANNOT continue throughout the entire game. All officials should be made aware that the warning has been given so that two or three separate warnings are avoided.

ALL PLAYERS WILL DO WHAT OFFICIALS ALLOW THEM TO DO. STOP THE HAND-CHECKING EARLY BY CALLING THE FOUL AND YOUR PROBLEMS WILL BE MINIMAL AS THE GAME ADJUSTS AND PROGRESSES!

Warn the players ONCE and then call the foul. This also applies to illegal arm bars placed outside of a defensive player's cylinder. An arm bar may be used when defending in post play, but it is NOT allowed when face-to-face with an opponent or when a guard is defending the ball handler.