

General Procedures for Football Clock Operators

AGES 6/7

Ages 6/7 play 2 halves that are 30 minutes each and the clock runs continuously EXCEPT for time outs called by a team or play stopped by the referees for injuries. The clock runs during extra point attempts and any other activity on the field.

ALL OTHER AGES

Each quarter is 10 minutes in length for ages 8 and up and the clock starts and stops according to high school football rules – summarized here.

The intermission is ten minutes in length. The field clock should be set to run these minutes.

The clock operator and spotter should watch the head referee (normally lines up behind the ball.) He will **wind his arm like a windmill** to **start** the clock or **wave both hands over his head** to **stop** the clock. The head referee is the only one who can start the clock once it is stopped. Any referee may stop the clock.

Kick-offs - the clock does not start until the RECEIVING TEAM touches the ball. The clock stops when the play is over. It starts again when the ball is snapped by the offensive team.

First Downs - The clock always stops on a first down, even if the player does not go out-of-bounds. Once the ball is set, the officials will signal when to re-start the clock if the ball did not go out of bounds. If it went out of bounds, the clock starts on the snap.

Team Time-Out - Any official may signal a team time-out and the clock stops. The clock will start on the snap of the ball.

Incomplete Pass – The clock stops. It is started on the next snap.

Plays near the sideline - an official may give a winding signal to indicate the ball is in bounds and follow it by a stop-the-clock signal for an apparent first down. Be alert for both signals.

Scoring Play - The clock operator will automatically stop the clock following a touchdown, field goal, touchback or safety after the appropriate signal has been made.

Extra point – It is not a timed down. The clock does not run.

Re-Starting the clock - After the clock has been stopped, the referee will start it again on the referee's start-the-clock signal and if no such signal is given, the operator will start it on the snap. Listen for the whistle and look for the windmill, otherwise start it on the snap.

Penalties – The clock will stop for penalties (immediately for illegal procedure and encroachment) or upon conclusion of the play for other penalties. If the clock was running when the penalty occurred, the officials will start the clock when the ball is made ready for play. If the clock was stopped when the penalty occurred the clock will remain stopped until the snap. **WATCH THE OFFICIALS FOR THE SIGNALS.**