

Pregame topics

PREGAME CONFERENCE

Lead's Primary Responsibilities

Primary coverage area. Frontcourt endline and nearer sideline. Post play. Illegal screens at elbows.

Trail's Primary Responsibilities

Primary coverage area. Nearer sideline, division line, backcourt endline. Rebound coverage. Drives starting in primary. Last second shot, basket interference, goaltending. Bring subs in.

Stay in your primary. It must be obvious to come out of your primary. Seldom should have four eyes on the ball. If something is there that needs to be called, call it. We're not going to have too many double whistles if we are doing this right. Put the ball in play where it goes out of bounds or where the foul is.

On double whistles, let's both hold our preliminary signal and not give a block or player control signal. Make eye contact with each other. Give the call to whoever has the primary coverage, most often the lead official, unless you definitely have something different that happened first, in which case we'll talk about it.

For out-of-bounds help, let's get it right. Come together for a change if needed. If I have no idea and I look to you for help, just give a directional signal. No need to come to me. Just point. If you don't know, give me a jump ball signal. If I signal but I get it wrong then blow the whistle and come to me. Tell me what you saw and let me decide if I'm going to change it.

Be consistent with each other. Let's try to remember what we've called earlier in the game, and what we haven't called. Be consistent with what has already happened in the game.

Communicate at sixth and ninth fouls. We don't want to be surprised when it's time to shoot the bonus. If we know that the next foul will result in bonus free throws, then we'll be more likely to remember our shooter.
Off official should help identifying free throw shooter.

On throw ins, count five players each team, check the table, check the clock, good eye contact before putting ball in play. A hand up in the air by the off official means not ready.

Check the clock after every whistle to make sure the clock stops properly. Check the clock every time it should start to make sure it does so.

Game management: If I call a fifth foul on a player, I'll tell the coach, unless I think it's going to be a problem.

If either of us warns a coach, or the bench, let's let each other know about it. If one of us calls a technical foul on a coach, the noncalling official will remind the coach that he must sit down.

Near the end of the game, be aware of coaches calling timeouts and be sure to inform them after they have used all their time outs.

Let's not put the whistles away in the last two minutes: That wouldn't be consistent with the way we've been calling the game. We're not calling anything in the last two minutes if we haven't already called it earlier in the game, unless it's so blatant that it can't be ignored.

If the game dictates it, let the players win or lose the game at the line. We don't want to be the ones who decide the game by ignoring obvious fouls just to get the game over.

If the winning team is just holding the ball and is willing to take the free throws after strategic fouls, then let's call the foul immediately, so the ballhandler doesn't get hit harder to draw a whistle.

Let's make sure there is a play on the ball by the defense. If there's no play on the ball, if the defense grabs the jersey, or pushes from behind, or bear hugs the offensive player, we should consider an intentional foul. These are not basketball plays and should be penalized as intentional.