

40-Second Play Clock Training Clinic

40

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INTRODUCTION

- Beginning with the 2019 football season, the National Federation has introduced a **40-second play clock**, closely resembling what has been in use within the NCAA since 2008, and in the NFL in one form or another since 1988.
- The new 40-second Play Clock will be used in conjunction with the familiar 25-second Play Clock to govern game flow
- Ensures a consistent interval between plays independent of officials' making the ball ready for play and referees' intervals for blowing RFP. Teams will not need to adapt their pace to different officiating crews.
- Expiration of *either* play clock prior to the snap (or free kick) results in a delay of game foul.

READY-FOR- PLAY

DEFINITION:

- Indicates that the ball may be put in play by either snap or free kick (*not substantially different from 2018*)

WHEN DOES IT OCCUR

- ***For play governed by a 25-second play clock***
When referee explicitly signals/declares RFP (*S1, as in the past*)
- ***For play governed by a 40-second play clock***
When the umpire sets the ball for the next play and moves to his pre-snap position. (*this is new in 2019*)
[Note that there is no explicit 'declaration' of the RFP in these cases when a 40-second clock governs the play.]

KEY LEARNINGS

- **Key Learning #1** – Play Clock vs. Ready-for-Play
- **Key Learning #2** – Play Clock vs. Game Clock
- **Key Learning #3** – Ready-for-play & Whistles
- **Key Learning #4** – New Signals
- **Key Learning #5** – Administrative Stoppages
- **Key Learning #6** – “Silent Wind”

PLAY CLOCK VS READY FOR PLAY

Key Learning #1 – Play Clock vs. Ready-for-Play

- The start of the play clock and the ready for play—which in the past have always occurred simultaneously—are now two separate events occurring at different times when a 40-sec play clock is governing action.
 - The 40-second Play Clock starts when the ball becomes dead by rule on the previous play
 - When the 40-second clock governs the play, the **Ready-for-Play** occurs when the ball is set in position at the succeeding spot for the next play and all officials are in pre-snap positions. The Play Clock will already be running at this time.
 - The 25-second Play Clock (when used) will start with the Ready-for-Play signal as in the past, i.e. on the referee's whistle/signal.

Key Learning #1 – Play Clock vs. Ready-for-Play

PLAY CLOCK
VS
READY FOR
PLAY

Key Takeaway

Need to de-couple the start
of the **Play Clock** from the
Ready-For-Play

PLAY CLOCK VS GAME CLOCK

Key Learning #2 – Play Clock vs. Game Clock

- If the Game Clock continues to run when the ball becomes dead, the 40-second play clock will govern the next play, unless interrupted.
- **In addition...**if the Game Clock is stopped at the end of a down because of:
 - an incomplete pass,
 - a Team A runner or a loose ball in possession of Team A going out-of-bounds, or
 - Team A advancing beyond the line-to-gain,the 40-second play clock will also govern the next play, unless interrupted.
- Under the new rule, on occasion, the Game Clock will be started independently—while the Play Clock is already running. This will occur many times during a game. *(more on this later)*

Key Learning #2 – Play Clock vs. Game Clock

PLAY CLOCK
VS
READY FOR
PLAY

Key Takeaway

*Start of **Play Clock** is independent of restart of game clock.*

RFP & WHISTLES

Key Learning #3 – Ready-for-play & Whistles

- There will be no RFP whistle or referee signal when the 40-second play clock is governing the action
- RFP whistle and referee signal only used when 25-second play clock governs the action

Referee Relief...no more
ears ringing after a game

Key Learning #3 – RFP and Whistles

PLAY CLOCK
VS
READY FOR
PLAY

Key Takeaway

With 40-second Play Clock, referee has no specific duty w.r.t. the Ready-for-Play

RFP & WHISTLES

Once again...

There will be no RFP whistle or referee signal when the 40-second play clock is governing the action. The referee is solely an 'observer' of the RFP action.

NEW SIGNALS

Key Learning #4 – New Signals

- There are a few new signals to be used in conjunction with the new play clock rules
 - Dead ball signal (covering official)
 - 25-second clock reset signal (Referee only)
 - 40-second clock reset signal. (Referee only)

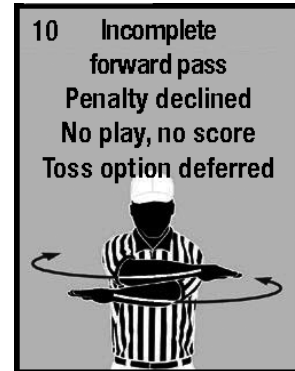
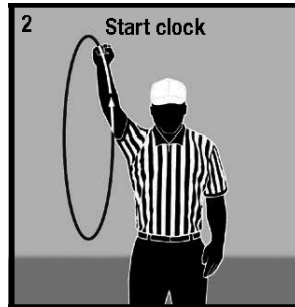
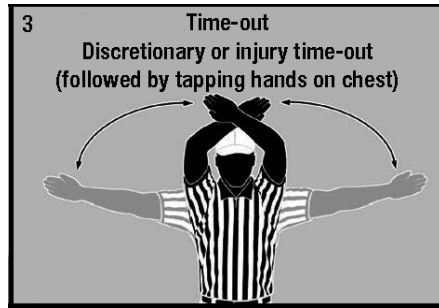
DEAD BALL SIGNAL

Dead ball signal

- “Show of Hands” signal
- One arm fully extended above shoulder, open palm
- Indicates that the covering official has ruled the ball dead. *No need for multiple officials to signal.*
- Accompanied by whistle
- Signals the FJ (or other play clock operator) to start the 40-second play clock



OTHER 'DEAD BALL' SIGNALS



Any Team A runner or loose ball goes out-of-bounds, or Team A has reached the line-to-gain

When a ball becomes dead near the sideline to indicate the game clock should continue to run

Used when a pass (legal or illegal) is incomplete

These three signals are 'equivalent' to using the S7 Dead Ball Signal and also indicate the start of the 40-second Play Clock. There is no need to also use S7 when using any of these three signals.

“SINGLE PUMP”

25-Second Play Clock Reset

- Rarely needed
- “Single Pump” (one palm face up)
- Typically repeated three times
- Alerts play clock operator (FJ) to reset play clock to 25 seconds and to start on R’s signal
- Also signals press box and sidelines that 25-second play clock will govern the next play
- Used only when unusual circumstances call for 25-second reset (e.g. delay in getting ball RFP)
- Reinforce reset with FJ via O-2-O¹



¹ O-2-O refers to any electronic crew radio communication device

“DOUBLE PUMP”

40-Second Play Clock Reset

- Rarely needed
- “Double Pump” (two palms face up)
- Typically repeated three times
- Alerts play clock operator (FJ) to reset play clock to 40 seconds and to start immediately
- Also signals press box and sidelines that 40-second play clock will govern the next play
- Reinforce reset with FJ via O-2-O



NEW SIGNALS

Key Learning #4 – New Signals

Key Takeaways

- 1. Any one of four signals (1 new, 3 familiar) used to indicate dead ball and start of 40-second play clock*
- 2. Two new referee signals used to indicate reset of the Play Clock to either 25 seconds or 40 seconds are expected to be used rarely*

ADMINISTRATIVE STOPPAGES – 25-SECOND PLAY CLOCK

Key Learning #5 – Administrative Stoppages

- If the officials stop the game clock for any of the following reasons, the play clock operator (FJ, mostly) will reset the play clock to 25 seconds and start it on the R's whistle/RFP signal¹
 - Penalty administration.
 - Charged, media, or officials timeouts (*except to award Team A a first down, or signal a ball out-of-bounds*)
 - Team B/R is awarded a first down.
 - After a legal kick down.
 - After a score (try or free kick down).
 - Start of subsequent period.
 - Start of a team's possession series in an overtime period.
 - Instant replay review.
 - Other administrative stoppage.

¹ Note that some of these stoppages may interrupt a running 40-second Play Clock, requiring a reset to 25 seconds

Key Learning #5 – Admin Stoppages/25-sec

Key Takeaways

In general, with the exception of:

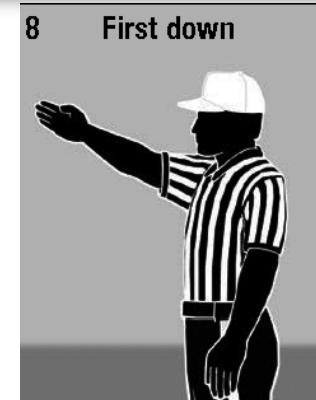
- *Incomplete pass*
- *Team A runner/ball OOB*
- *Team A awarded first down,*

*any time the game clock stops after a down ends, the **Play Clock** will be reset to 25 seconds*

ADMINISTRATIVE
STOPPAGES –
25-SECOND PLAY
CLOCK

Key Learning #6 – “Silent Wind”

- If the officials stop the game clock because Team A has advanced beyond the line to gain (awarded a first down), the 40-second Play Clock will start on the dead ball/time out signal.
- The referee will signal ‘first down.’
- Once the ball has been set ready-for-play, the referee will signal the Game Clock to restart with signal #2 (Start Clock) but will NOT sound his whistle (“Silent Wind”)²



GAME CLOCK OPERATORS (ECOs) MUST UNDERSTAND THIS FULLY

² Note that the 40-second Play Clock will be ‘in progress’ at this point in time.

“SILENT WIND”
OF GAME
CLOCK

GAME SITUATIONS

Evaluate each of the following with respect to the...

Play Clock: how many seconds? starts when?

RFP: When does it occur?

Game Clock: Does it stop? If so, when does it restart?

GAME SITUATION #1

A, 3rd and 8 from midfield. A22 runs up the middle for a gain of 4 yards. Brings up 4th down.

- **Play Clock:** 40-seconds, starts when 3rd down ends
- **RFP:** Established when U sets the ball and moves to position
- **Game Clock:** Continues to run after 3rd down ends

GAME SITUATION #2

A, 2nd and 10 from midfield. A throws pass to A88 who steps out of bounds at B's 45. Brings up 3rd down

- **Play Clock:** 40-seconds, starts when 2nd down ends (out of bounds)
- **RFP:** Established when U sets the ball and moves to position
- **Game Clock:** Stops when runner goes OOB. Restarts at the snap

GAME SITUATION #3

A, 1st and 10 from A's 20. A throws pass to A18 who catches it and runs to B's 40 where he is tackled inbounds. First down for Team A.

- **Play Clock:** 40-seconds, starts when receiver is tackled
- **RFP:** Established when U sets the ball and moves to position
- **Game Clock:** Stops for Team A first down. Restarts on R's "silent wind" after ball is set RFP

GAME SITUATION #4

A, 1st and 10 from A's 20. A throws pass to A18 who catches it and runs to B's 40 where he is tackled inbounds. Team A is guilty of holding.

- **Play Clock:** 25-seconds, starts on R's signal
- **RFP:** Established when R signals/whistles RFP
- **Game Clock:** Stops for Team A first down. Restarts on R's RFP signal

GAME SITUATION #5

A, 4th and 10 from A's 40. A's punt is fielded by B5 at his own 20. He advances to B's 35 where he is tackled. First down for Team B.

- **Play Clock:** 25-seconds, starts on R's signal
- **RFP:** Established when R signals/whistles RFP
- **Game Clock:** Stops for COP. Restarts on R's RFP signal for new Team B series

GAME SITUATION #6

A, 2nd and 6 from midfield. Game clock and 40-second play clock are running. A is having difficulty getting the right personnel on the field. As play clock is about to expire Team A coach requests a time out to regroup

- **Play Clock:** 25-seconds, starts on R's signal
- **RFP:** Established when R signals/whistles RFP
- **Game Clock:** Stops for TO. Restarts on the snap

QUESTIONS ??



CFOA (California)
40-/25-Second
Instructional Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y3CWLJRE7bU>