

NFHS vs NCAA Rule Differences 2026 (Not all, but these are the major ones that involve play of the game)

The following apply to NFHS:

- Faceoff players that commit a violation may participate in the next faceoff.
- No body checking a “crouched” player on faceoff = 1 min illegal body check
- Counts: 20 second count (trail) to clear (break plane) to midline / 10 second count (lead) begins once **possessed** over midline – must “get a touch” in the offensive box (over and back is then in play)
- Timeouts **anywhere** on the field with possession or **any** dead ball
- Timeout may not be used to keep an injured player in the game – must wait until next dead ball following resumption of play. Rule 4.24.3
- 2nd flag kills play if scoring play is not in progress.
- Last two min: (stall warning) if team is ahead by 4 or fewer, they must “get it in and keep it in” the offensive box (if tied = no stall warning)
- Stall warning can be enforced throughout the game if officials feel a team is deliberately not attacking the goal.
- 12 goals or more in second half – running clock (penalty time is also running but can’t be released until faceoff has ended)
- No defender may be in the crease to assume the goalie position (1 min nonreleasable personal foul for illegal equipment)
- No “diving” – feet must be grounded, No goal mouth in NFHS.
- No body checking “defenseless”/“blindsided” player, “spearing” (IBC 2 min NR), “intentional targeting” = 3min, possible ejection. **Contact to Head/Neck now mirrors NCAA: 1min-indirect, 2min-direct, 3min-excessive (all nonreleasable)**
- Two non-releasable UC is ejection and 3minNR (1 min if second for a coach)
- All illegal sticks (including golf ball size gaps in stringing) 2min NR – can come back in game (butt end missing and strings over 2” are considered broken stick and can be fixed)
- No continuous midline/endline = illegal procedure, visitor starts with the ball
- Single stripe of eye black (remind coach before the game that a player can be sent off to fix eye black)