

Tips for Calling Pass Interference

The NFL did exhaustive research into pass interference and the various types. They boiled it all down to these fundamental things:

There are two indicators that make a player “suspect” for pass interference:

Bite- When a player 'bites' on a move and then has to try to recover, such as when a receiver does a hook 'n' go - if he bites on the hook, he will frequently try to recover by grabbing the receiver as he goes by, etc., which can turn into pass interference

Chase- When a player is chasing an opponent, either by design or because he is beaten, he will tend to commit pass interference

There six categories of Pass Interference:

- 1. Arm Bar** - an arm across the body restricting the opponent from moving where he wants to go. An arm across the body is not enough - there must be a restriction of movement.
- 2. Hold** - actually grasping an opponent, particularly the arm, restricting him from being able to reach a pass. Classically, grabbing an arm, keeping the opponent from raising it to catch the pass.
- 3. Not playing the ball** - the player is not making a bona fide effort to reach the pass (usually not looking back for the ball), and contacts the opponent (usually body to body) restricting him from moving where he wants to go, or knocking him off his path to the ball.
- 4. Playing through the back** - even if making an effort to touch the pass, contacting an opponent through the back, restricting his ability to touch the pass.
- 5. Hook and twist** - hooking the arm around the waist or shoulders, AND twisting the opponent, restricting him from his effort to touch the pass. An arm around the body is not enough - there must be a twist or turn.
- 6. Cutoff** - even if looking back for the ball, a player cannot position himself to restrict or prevent an opponent from moving toward a pass.

The National Federation allows for face guarding being grounds as pass interference, as for all other contact or restriction must occur for pass interference to be called.

Note that two players both making an effort to reach the ball might 'bang arms' - no foul.

Pass Interference is almost always going to occur from the waist up. Player running side by side or in tandem that get their feet tangled with no obvious intent to impede - no foul.

There are 3 categories of OPI (Off. pass interference)

- 1: Blocking downfield before the ball has been touched (Commonly refereed to as the pick play)
- 2: Shoving or pushing off, and creating separation. (This is the most common type of OPI)
- 3: Driving through a defender who had established position.