



2025-26 Men's Basketball Rules Changes

The following is a synopsis of the rules changes proposed by the NCAA Men's Basketball Rules Committee and approved by the NCAA Playing Rules Oversight Panel. This document also includes significant interpretations and the 2025-26 Points of Emphasis.

Proposal and Rationale		
Proposal #	Rule(s)/Page	
1	Headbands, Wristbands and Sleeves Rule 1-24.1.c	To permit headbands not wider 4 inches. Rationale: The current rule allows for headbands not wider than 2 inches. This proposal allows for the continued relaxation of the uniform rules.
2	Shot Clock Rule 1-19	To provide an interpretation that will permit the use of one working shot clock should the other become inoperable during a game. The public address announcer will periodically provide verbal updates to the time on the shot clock. Rationale: Provides a more accurate determination of the end of shot clock period with a functioning horn. Under the current rule, if one shot clock becomes inoperable, the other must be turned off.
3	Continuous Motion Rule 4-8	To amend the current Approved Ruling that defines the motion that normally starts a try. A player with the ball who is fouled after the dribble has ended and believed to be attempting a shot may complete a pivot or the one step the player is on in order to complete the shooting motion. Rationale: NCAA men's basketball has been the most restrictive with the continuous motion rule. This change liberalizes our current rule and brings us more in line with other levels of basketball.
4	Fouls Rule 4-15.2.c.2.d	Contact to the groin area will remain a Flagrant 2 foul, but this change will provide the official flexibility should they deem it appropriate upon Instant Replay review to downgrade the foul to a Flagrant 1 or common foul based on the nature of the contact or the result of the contact. Rationale: This change provides more consistency in how contact to the groin area and contact to the head area are adjudicated.
5	Out of Bounds – Player, Ball Rule 7-1.1	To penalize bench personnel who physically assist a player with the ball. Examples include assisting a player to stay inbounds when their momentum is taking them out of bounds, and pushing a player in a direction the coach wants the player to go. This would not penalize incidental contact by a player with bench personnel. Rationale: To address situations where bench personnel deliberately interfere with a player to prevent an out-of-bounds violation.

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6	Ball Awarded Out of Bounds Rule 7-3.2.b	To establish that all fouls or violations below the free throw line extended in a team's frontcourt will result in throw-ins at the nearest-designated spot under the basket and all fouls or violations above the free throw line extended will result in throw-ins at the nearest-designated spot at the 28' foot mark. Rationale: This change will result in more throw-ins on the baseline and makes it easier to officiate. Under the current rule, there is an imaginary line that extends down from the elbow to the corner of the baseline which officials use to determine where the throw-in shall occur.
7	Illegal Assist to Gain Advantage Rule 9	To establish that placing a hand(s) on the backboard or ring to gain an advantage will be a violation. Rationale: Under the current rule, this has been classified as a Class B technical foul. In certain situations, this can result in the team committing the infraction still being awarded the ball. This change also makes it easier for officials to adjudicate. If the defense commits this violation during a try it will result in a basket. Otherwise, it is a violation with ball awarded out of bounds to the offended team.
8	Administrative Technical Fouls Rule 10-2.8.a	To permit musical instruments, amplified music, canned music or artificial noisemakers during dead balls. Rationale: Under the current rule, musical instruments, amplified music, canned music or artificial noisemakers are only permitted to be played during timeouts, intermissions and Instant Replay reviews. The change will also help game operations staff as the rule in men's and women's basketball will be aligned.
9	Technical Fouls and Suspensions for Fighting Rules 10-14 Penalty and 10-15.10	To require a one-game suspension for an individual who failed to serve a suspension for physical abuse of an official or fighting, and a one-game suspension for the team's head coach when the individual who should have served their suspension failed to do so. Rationale: The Committee addressed PROP's January directive to rules committees to establish penalties when an individual fails to serve a rule-required suspension.
10	Coach's Challenge Rule 11	To establish a coach's challenge on called out of bounds plays, called basket interference/goaltending plays, and restricted area plays throughout the game. Coaches will be permitted one challenge provided they have at least one legal timeout remaining. If the challenge is successful, the coach will be awarded a second, and final, challenge and will retain their timeout. If the challenge is unsuccessful, the coach will lose their challenge and timeout. In the last two minutes of the game and any overtime period, no challenge is needed on all called basket interference goaltending plays and restricted area plays as officials will review those plays as they currently do now.

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		Rationale: In a continued effort to improve the overall flow of the game especially in the last two minutes, this change will reduce the number of reviews during this segment of the games by specifically removing the officials' voluntary ability to review out-of-bounds plays.

Points of Emphasis for 2025-26:

- Address delay of game tactics
- Limiting time spent at the monitor
- Game administration efficiency
- Reducing physicality