

Foul in the Act of Shooting

One of the more confusing issues is whether a player was fouled in the act of shooting, otherwise known as continuation. Generally, a shooting foul occurs when a defensive player makes contact with a shooter who, in the official's judgment, has started a continuous shooting motion and is in that shooting motion until he returns to a normal floor position.

On a drive to the basket or on a running shot, the shooting motion starts when the offensive player "gathers" the ball (discussed below in the Traveling section). On a jump shot, the shooting motion starts when the player starts his upward motion with the ball and continues through his release.

Three areas that sometimes lead to confusion are:

1. Jumping into Defender while Shooting

If an offensive player with the ball can draw his defender into their air (for example, on a pump fake), and he then jumps into the defender while taking a shot, a shooting foul is called automatically. However, if the defender is moving to his side, it is not a foul unless the contact is more than marginal (that is, it's not automatic). If the contact is more than marginal, the foul is deemed the fault of the offensive player and an offensive foul will be called.

2. "Rip Throughs"

If a defensive player has his arm(s) extended while guarding an offensive player with the ball in a face-to-face situation, *any* contact with the offensive player while he attempts a "rip through" (moves the ball from side-to-side between him and the defender) is an automatic foul.

- If the contact occurs during the side-to-side movement, but before the offensive player starts his upward shooting motion, a non-shooting foul is called.
- If the contact occurs after the side-to-side movement, during the offensive player's upward motion, continuation will be awarded and a shooting foul will be assessed. (Exception: if the defender is lunging his arms away from the basket and the offensive player seeks the contact on his shot, a non-shooting foul will be assessed.)

Also, if the defensive player is outside the Lower Defensive Box and his arm(s) are extended to his side and an offensive player with the ball initiates contact by extending or lunging his arm(s) in a shooting motion that is not directed toward the basket into the extended arm(s) of the defender, a non-shooting foul shall be assessed.

3. Take Fouls on Shooters

If a defender takes a foul against an offensive player to stop play and the offensive player with the ball is on the perimeter or backcourt, a shooting foul will be assessed if the offensive player has already started his upward shooting motion towards the basket at the time of contact. If he hasn't yet started his upward shooting motion at the time of contact (that is, starting his shot after contact occurs), a non-shooting foul will be assessed. (Exception: if the contact occurs with the imminent expiration of the game or shot clock, a shooting foul will be assessed regardless of whether shooting motion started before or after the time of contact, within reason.)