



# National Basketball Association

**TO: TEAM OWNERS, GENERAL MANAGERS, COACHES AND REFEREES**  
**FROM: MIKE BANTOM**  
**DATE: DECEMBER 1, 2014**  
**RE: ILLEGAL SCREENS**

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As shown in our preseason Points of Emphasis video, illegal screens and picks are areas of focus for our referees this season. Donnie Vaden, Director of Officials, will continue to work with referees to ensure that plays are covered correctly and called consistently and we want to take this opportunity early in the season to make sure teams and referees have a common definition for what constitutes an illegal screen.

## Illegal Screens and Picks

A screen or pick situation occurs when an offensive player situates himself in the path of an oncoming defender for the purpose of slowing him down or making him change direction to prevent him from reaching a desired destination.

- For Stationary Defenders: If the offensive player attempts a screen or pick on a *stationary defender*, he merely needs to situate himself in a legal screening position before the defender starts moving. If the defender then moves or runs toward the offensive player and initiates the contact, there is either a no call or a defensive foul if the contact is significant enough to dislodge the offensive player. If the screen is behind an opponent and considered 'blind', the screener must give the defender one step of room without contact so there is an opportunity for him to change direction and avoid contact.
- For Moving Defenders: If the offensive player attempts a screen or pick on a *moving defender*, he needs to set himself in a legal screening position providing the defender with enough space to stop and/or change direction. The speed of the player determines the distance needed. The offensive player cannot just jump in front of a moving opponent at the last second.

In either case, an illegal screen or pick is committed when the offensive player fails to get into position before the contact occurs or the offensive player adjusts his position as the defender tries to avoid the screen/pick. More specifically, if an offensive player sets a legal pick on a moving defensive player who then tries to go around the pick, the offensive player cannot turn, "hedge" with his hips or legs, or otherwise try to reestablish a position in the path of the oncoming defender. If he does, an offensive foul is called. Below are some common situations where an illegal screen may occur.

## Pick and Rolls

As mentioned above, an offensive player setting a screen on a moving defender must always be in a legal screening position, providing them with enough space to stop and/or change direction. If a ball handler in a pick and roll situation begins to make a move prior to the screener arriving, the screener may not re-situate themselves and move into the defender's path. This is illegal. In addition, the screener may not set himself for a screen and turn into or otherwise impede a defender's path without giving them enough space to stop and/or change direction.

Video Examples:

[http://dmmx2.nba.com/video/redirect?&project=/bballops/bballops\\_Illegal\\_Screens\\_1](http://dmmx2.nba.com/video/redirect?&project=/bballops/bballops_Illegal_Screens_1)

[http://dmmx2.nba.com/vidеоurlredirect?&project=/bballоps/bballоps\\_Illegal\\_Screens\\_2](http://dmmx2.nba.com/vidеоurlredirect?&project=/bballоps/bballоps_Illegal_Screens_2)

[http://dmmx2.nba.com/vidеоurlredirect?&project=/bballоps/bballоps\\_Illegal\\_Screens\\_3](http://dmmx2.nba.com/vidеоurlredirect?&project=/bballоps/bballоps_Illegal_Screens_3)

[http://dmmx2.nba.com/vidеоurlredirect?&project=/bballоps/bballоps\\_Illegal\\_Screens\\_4](http://dmmx2.nba.com/vidеоurlredirect?&project=/bballоps/bballоps_Illegal_Screens_4)

### **Off-Ball Situations**

The rules for illegal screens do not change from on-ball to off-ball situations, regardless if the defender is stationary or moving.

Video Examples:

[http://dmmx2.nba.com/vidеоurlredirect?&project=/bballоps/bballоps\\_Illegal\\_Screens\\_5](http://dmmx2.nba.com/vidеоurlredirect?&project=/bballоps/bballоps_Illegal_Screens_5)

[http://dmmx2.nba.com/vidеоurlredirect?&project=/bballоps/bballоps\\_Illegal\\_Screens\\_6](http://dmmx2.nba.com/vidеоurlredirect?&project=/bballоps/bballоps_Illegal_Screens_6)

[http://dmmx2.nba.com/vidеоurlredirect?&project=/bballоps/bballоps\\_Illegal\\_Screens\\_7](http://dmmx2.nba.com/vidеоurlredirect?&project=/bballоps/bballоps_Illegal_Screens_7)

### **Handoffs**

The moment an offensive player hands the ball off to a teammate and attempts to impede a defender from reaching their desired destination, he is a screener. Therefore, he may not extend a leg, hip, or shoulder outside of the plane of his own body or otherwise move into a defender in a manner that does not provide him with enough space to stop and/or change direction in reaction to the screen.

Video Example:

[http://dmmx2.nba.com/vidеоurlredirect?&project=/bballоps/bballоps\\_Illegal\\_Screens\\_8](http://dmmx2.nba.com/vidеоurlredirect?&project=/bballоps/bballоps_Illegal_Screens_8)

### **Screens Set While Out-of-Bounds**

The following play shows a screen set while the player is out-of-bounds, which is illegal (even when there is no contact). Setting a screen while out-of-bounds or with a foot on the boundary line is an automatic violation.

Video Example:

[http://dmmx2.nba.com/vidеоurlredirect?&project=/bballоps/bballоps\\_Illegal\\_Screens\\_Violation\\_1](http://dmmx2.nba.com/vidеоurlredirect?&project=/bballоps/bballоps_Illegal_Screens_Violation_1)

### **Legal Screens - Defensive Fouls**

When an offensive player sets a legal screen as discussed above, the defender must remain legal. This means, in particular, not running over the screener, seeking out contact when it wouldn't have occurred, or pushing someone into the screen.

Video Examples:

[http://dmmx2.nba.com/vidеоurlredirect?&project=/bballоps/bballоps\\_Legal\\_Screen\\_Defensive\\_Foul\\_1](http://dmmx2.nba.com/vidеоurlredirect?&project=/bballоps/bballоps_Legal_Screen_Defensive_Foul_1)

[http://dmmx2.nba.com/vidеоurlredirect?&project=/bballоps/bballоps\\_Legal\\_Screen\\_Defensive\\_Foul\\_2](http://dmmx2.nba.com/vidеоurlredirect?&project=/bballоps/bballоps_Legal_Screen_Defensive_Foul_2)