



November 12, 2025

NFHS Basketball Weekly Rule Interpretations

Rule References: 4-6-1a & 4-6-1b – Basket Interference (2025)

Purpose

The purpose of this interpretation is to clarify the expanded definition of basket interference and ensure consistent enforcement by officials. It emphasizes that actions which unfairly affect the ball while in a scoring position—whether direct contact with the ball or manipulation of the basket/backboard—will be penalized to preserve fairness and integrity in scoring situations.

Rule Language

4-6-1a & 4-6-1b – Basket Interference:

“Basket interference occurs when a player touches the ball, backboard, or basket in a manner that unfairly affects a scoring attempt. This includes slapping or striking the backboard, causing the backboard or basket to vibrate, while the ball is on or within the basket, touching the backboard, or within the cylinder.”

Interpretation

This rule change clarifies and expands the definition of basket interference to include additional actions that unfairly affect the ball while it is in a scoring position.

Key points:

- Basket interference applies not only when touching the ball directly in the cylinder or on the rim, but also when causing movement or vibration to the basket or backboard that affects a live scoring attempt.
 - Any attempt to manipulate the basket, backboard, or ball to gain an advantage while the ball is in a scoring position is considered a violation.
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Game Scenario

- Team A attempts a lay-up. While the ball is touching the backboard and is directly above the cylinder. A Team B player slaps the backboard, causing it to vibrate, and the ball falls out without going through the basket. This is considered basket interference by Team B. The official awards the basket to Team A. **RULING:** Correct Procedure **COMMENT:** The rule ensures fairness in scoring situations by preventing players from using physical manipulation of the basket or backboard to influence the outcome of a shot.

Officials must:

- Watch for players slapping or striking the backboard while the ball is in a scoring position.
 - Penalize any interference with the basket, cylinder, or backboard that unfairly affects the ball.
 - Award the basket if the violation occurs during a live scoring attempt.
 - Understand the distinction between **basket interference** (manipulating basket/backboard) and **goaltending** (touching the ball illegally, defensive penalty only).
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Points of Emphasis for Officials and Coaches

- **Expanded definition** includes causing vibration to the basket or backboard.
- Basket interference now covers indirect actions affecting a scoring attempt, not only direct contact with the ball.
- Proper enforcement maintains fairness and prevents exploitation of the backboard or basket.
- Educate players on avoiding actions that could constitute interference.
- Distinguish between **basket interference** and **goaltending** to ensure correct rulings.