

2010 Forward Pass Mechanics

Linesman — The basic responsibility for preliminary action on the line is the same as during a running play. When you read a forward pass, your primary responsibility is to your receiver, so be prepared to move downfield along the sideline at a pace that allows you to stay in control and maintain focus on your keys in your belt area. This could be quickly or more slowly depending on how the play develops and the pace and routes of the receivers. Keep in mind that you can still maintain coverage of your belt area even if reading the play would position you closer to the line of scrimmage. Movement should be deliberate and with purpose and avoid any preset distance that you feel you should always achieve. Rarely will your drift be more than five yards downfield prior to the pass being thrown; however that could be extended in certain situations such as the long pass at the end of a half to the end zone, or fourth and long when all receivers are going a greater distance. Once the pass is thrown, especially if thrown in your area of responsibility, reducing movement while the ball is in the air will improve your ability to see the play more accurately. If your receiver or your belt area (the area roughly from the line of scrimmage to about 10 yards beyond the line of scrimmage) is not threatened, assist with the tackle on your side. You are responsible for covering pass receptions in the area between the line of scrimmage and the deep officials. If the pass is thrown out of your area, observe the action of players other than the pass receiver after you have observed the pass being caught, intercepted or incomplete.

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Line judge — The basic responsibility for preliminary action on the line is the same as during a running play. When you read a forward pass, your primary responsibility is to your tackle and your receiver. If your receiver goes downfield or is threatened, he has priority over the tackle. If the pass is thrown out of your area, observe the action of players other than the pass receiver after you have observed the pass being caught, intercepted or incomplete. You are primarily responsible to rule on whether a pass is forward or backward behind the line of scrimmage, and on whether the pass was thrown from behind or beyond the line of scrimmage.



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