

Contact

Preamble:

- During a game in which ten players are moving at speed in a limited space, personal contact cannot be avoided – it is inevitable.
- A foul is an infraction of the rules concerning **illegal** personal contact with an opponent and/or unsportsmanlike behaviour. Incidental (**legal**) contact is permitted by rule and is therefore not to be ruled as a foul. Contact that places an opponent at a disadvantage must be called.

General Principles – establish the foundation on which all fouls are based

- Cylinder Principle
- Principle of Verticality
 - ❖ These principles establish the foundation on which personal fouls are based

Cylinder principle

- A player has a right to the space he occupies from the floor to the ceiling
- The space is defined as a normal playing position and cannot be exaggerated

Verticality principle

- Each player has the right to occupy any position (cylinder) on the playing court not already occupied by an opponent
 - The first player to the spot – owns the spot
 - This could occur “at the last split second”
 - An airborne player has the right to land on another spot that was vacant prior to him leaving the ground
 - Time and distance must be taken into consideration for a non-ball carrier

Verticality

- This principle protects the space on the floor which a player occupies and the space above him when he jumps vertically within that space
- While rebounding, it is legal for a player to enter the space of another player, if there is minimal or no contact, and retrieve the ball or tip it towards the basket
- A player leaving the ground and staying within his cylinder has not jeopardized his legal position
- As soon as a player leaves his vertical position (cylinder) and body contact occurs with an opponent who had already established their own vertical position (cylinder); that player is responsible for the contact
- A defensive player must not be penalized for leaving the ground vertically (within his cylinder) or having his hands and arms extended above him within his own cylinder

Severity of Contact

- Sometimes, severe contact in the game should be judged as incidental
 - Unintentional contact while attempting to reach a loose ball
 - Contact that occurs when opponents are in equally favourable positions when moving to a spot or going after a loose ball and consequently does not place the opponent at a disadvantage when neither player has established legal guarding position on the floor
 - Contact which does not hinder the opponent from participating in normal game movements
- Sometimes, even the slightest contact should be called as a foul
 - Hitting a shooter's elbow as the ball is being released
 - Pinning a player with a hand or elbow etc.

Conclusion

1. Every time contact occurs, the covering official makes a decision whether to blow his whistle and call a foul or judge the contact as incidental or of a nature that does not place an opponent at a disadvantage through misuse of a rule.
2. A sound understanding of Advantage/Disadvantage cannot be taught in a document.
3. In each instance, the official should ask themselves, did the player do anything wrong