



NCAA Formation Card: the alignment rules that draw flags

College football · 2026 NCAA rules (also the base book for Texas UIL high schools) · alignment at the snap

#	DIAGRAM	THE RULE	DIAGRAM IS	REFERENCE
1		Every player is a lineman or a back, and no more than 4 are backs. With 11 players, that means 7 on the line.	✓ LEGAL	NCAA 7-1-4-a-2, 7-1-4-a-4
2		Everyone inbounds at the snap.	FLAG	NCAA 7-1-4-a-1
3		At least 5 linemen wear numbers 50-79.	✓ LEGAL	NCAA 7-1-4-a-3
4		Kick-formation exception, new for 2026: in a scrimmage kick formation the snapper and two linemen on each side of him, lined up in the tackle box, may wear other numbers. They are ineligible, must be clearly on the line, and every back must be clearly in the backfield. (The Playbook Caller checks the kick shape, not jersey numbers.)	✓ LEGAL	NCAA 7-1-4-a-5, 2-16-10
5		A lineman numbered 50-79 on the end of the line is a legal formation, and he is an ineligible receiver.	✓ LEGAL	NCAA 7-1-4-a, 7-3-3-c
6		Against a scrimmage kick (snapper not on the end of the line), a defender within 1 yard of the line must be completely outside the snapper's frame.	FLAG	NCAA 6-3-14-a
7		Kickoff from the kicking team's 35 (Texas UIL: 40). The receiving team's restraining line is 10 yards beyond. At least 4 kicking-team players on each side of the kicker.	✓ LEGAL	NCAA 6-1-1, 6-1-2-c-3
8		Kickoff: nobody but the kicker may be more than 5 yards behind the kicking team's restraining line.	FLAG	NCAA 6-1-2-b

○ offense ▼ defense ⚙ player the check flags ○ player of interest - - - line of scrimmage / kick line Diagrams are schematic, not to scale.

3 SURPRISES: WHERE COLLEGE DIFFERS

1 High school puts no alignment limit on defenders over the snapper against a kick. College does (6-3-14-a).

2 The NFL flags a tackle on the end of the line unless he reports as eligible (NFL 7-5-1, 5-3-1). College does not: he is simply ineligible.

3 Texas high schools play this book with the UIL's exceptions. For formations, the one that matters is the kickoff from the 40 (UIL 2026-27 list, item 44).

Texas (UIL). Texas high schools use the NCAA book with the UIL's published exceptions. Everything on this card applies there, except that the kickoff is from the 40.

