



2017-18 NHL RULE CHANGES

The NHL has instituted the following [rule changes and other directions for on-ice policy and protocol](#), effective for the 2017-18 season:

Rule 78.7 – Coach’s Challenge for Off-Side on Goal: If the result of the challenge is that the play was “on-side,” the goal shall count and the team that issued the challenge shall be assessed a minor penalty for delaying the game. It is important to note that a team does not have to possess its time-out in order to issue a challenge on those plays, and will not forfeit its time-out in the event of an unsuccessful challenge. Only one coach’s challenge per team per stoppage will be permitted.

Rule 87.1 – Time-Outs: No time-out shall be granted to the team that commits an icing infraction.

Rule 80.2 and 80.4 – High-Sticking the Puck: No longer will the face-off be taken “all the way down” when a team high-sticks the puck in the attacking zone while it is on the power play. Face-off location will be determined in the same manner as when the team is at even strength (face-off in the neutral zone).

Rule 61 – Slashing: To curb slashing in and around the hands, there will be a stricter standard of enforcement. Referees have been instructed that when a player is NOT attempting to play the puck and slashes on or near an opponent’s hands, such player should be assessed a slashing penalty.

Rule 76 – Face-Offs: There will be a stricter enforcement of the face-off procedure – especially with respect to the markings inside the face-off circle. Under Section 76.4, the players will be instructed to set, so they will stand squarely facing their opponents’ end of the rink, and clear of the ice markings (where applicable). The defensive player will be instructed to set (skates and stick), then the offensive player will be instructed to set (skates and stick).

Applying the rule as written should improve the integrity of face-offs and make these plays safer for players and officials.

Player Equipment and Uniforms: As the NHL prepares for the start of the 2017-18 season, the following will serve as a reminder as it relates to the players’ uniforms and how they should be worn. As discussed by the Competition Committee and endorsed by the League’s general managers, the following areas will be emphasized:

- **Rule 9.1 – Team Uniform:** All players of each team shall be dressed uniformly, with approved design and color of their helmets, sweaters, short pants, stockings and skates. Altered uniforms of any kinds, i.e., Velcro inserts, oversized jerseys, altered collars, etc., will not be permitted. Any player or goalkeeper not complying with this rule shall not be permitted to participate in the game. For violations, **refer to Rule 9.5.**

This rule will be interpreted to include personal messaging of any kind on the game uniform or equipment, sloppy equipment (such as long hanging laces), ripped pants, etc.

The NHL also will be addressing the incorrect use of player visors. Officials have been instructed to be diligent with the observation and enforcement of this rule.

- **Rule 9.7 – Visors:** Beginning with the 2013-14 season, all players who have fewer than 25 games of NHL experience must wear a visor properly affixed to their helmet. Visors are to be **affixed to the helmets in such a fashion as to ensure adequate eye protection.**

Players wearing their visors incorrectly, if witnessed by the officials, will be removed from play and not permitted to return until their visors are properly affixed to their helmets. If a player returns to the ice (after a first offense and warning) while still in violation of the rule, he will be penalized.