

A WORK IN PROGRESS  
Or  
63 things you should know as a working basketball official.

by Charles Lloyd

The following suggestions are based on the experiences of basketball officials and are not intended to be the complete or definitive list. Your suggestions and additions are encouraged.

**PREGAME (AT HOME).**

1. Prepare your official's equipment and bag at least 48 hours before game time, whenever possible. Make sure everything is cleaned and pressed! Take extra shoelaces.
2. When packing your bag, start with your feet and as you move towards your head, place the respective items in your bag as you "name" them on your body.
3. Avoid traveling with your partner(s) to the same assigned game. If you are delayed, neither official will arrive "on-time."
4. Whenever possible, get the telephone number of game site and/or coach, site coordinator in the event, you are delayed or unable to cover your assignment.
5. Never accept an assignment that you cannot possibly get to on time.
6. Never take a later assignment that is so close to your first game, which may delayed or go into overtime.
7. Never turn back an assignment for a higher paying assignment.
8. Always leave enough time to arrive at the game site at least one [1] hour before game time. Don't get the label "Don't worry, he's/she's always late."
9. Whenever possible you should always remain, after your game, until the next assigned officials show up.
10. You are permitted to wear your official's trousers and undershirt, to the game, if you have never been to the site or if there are no changing facilities or the facility is nonexistent or deplorable? Get a good garment bag.
11. Only wear your officials' shoes on the court, never on the street, to and from a game.
12. Always remove and change your socks, after your last game. During hot and humid weather, you may need to change your socks between halves or games.

13. Never consume alcoholic beverages 48 hours preceding game time and/or immediately after your game, particularly within the view of players, coaches and spectators.

14. Always eat a full and balanced meal at least two hours prior to game time. Remember to hydrate (drink water).

15. Wear sandals, weather permitting, particularly after your last game. This will permit your feet to dry naturally. See # 11 and 12, above.

16. Have your feet checked by a podiatrist and get a full pedicure, before the season.

17. Carry stop watch in bag, in case clock malfunctions, or ‘... they can’t find the clock.’ Also a needle, for deflating/inflating the basketball.

18. Carry ‘score book’ pages, timer, scorer and shot clock instructions, a pen and pad.

19. Carry business card or label with your name, address and telephone number, clearly printed or written.

20. Carry extra whistles, change, safety pins and tape, for temporary repair to pants.

21. Never discuss game fees with anyone.

22. Never discuss or criticize another official with anyone. If you cannot say something positive about someone, then don’t say anything.

23. Constantly read the rule book, particularly those rules/section which may be hazy, as well as any rule or play that you have difficulty with or may have “passed on (ignored).”

24. Carry a small plastic bag to put “used” shirt, socks, etc., rather than throwing everything back into bag, after your last game.

#### PREGAME (AT GAME SITE).

25. Always warm up, but never on the basketball court.

26. Always conduct a pregame with your partner(s). Get the shooter!

27. If you have any doubts about security, take your bag and valuables, and place it at the scorer’s table, where you can see it!

28. Remember to introduce yourself to the table officials and the coaches. Always conduct a pregame with the table officials. They are the most important officials and with the floor officials are the third team in the game. KISS (keep it simple stupid). Remember to designate colors.

29. Always ask the coach(es) for the captain(s). An official should never yell on the court for any reason, including “CAPTAINS!”

30. When it is necessary to talk to a coach, always talk to both coaches!

31. Use the pregame warm-up to observe the players, dunking, take care of illegal numbers, shirts, etc., including the removal of jewelry, head coverings, etc.

32. Always write, in your assignment book, the name of your working partner, time, date of game and site.

33. Always check with the site coordinator, before forfeiting a game. Whenever possible use the game clock, set to expire at forfeit time.

34. Never chitchat with coaches or players. This always looks bad to the opposing team and coaches and sends the wrong message. A slight acknowledgment, such as a nod of the head, will usually suffice.

35. Double knot shoelaces. An official should never have to stop, during the game to tie her/his shoelaces.

36. Locate game clock. At least one official, if not both, should always “take-a-peek” at the game clock when stopping and starting the clock!

37. Whenever possible, if you have an afternoon game, in cold weather, do not leave your equipment bag in the trunk of your car, and never go into your trunk in the street!

#### DURING THE GAME (DEAD BALL).

38. Never “attempt a try” during a game.

39. If the net gets caught on the rim, immediately blow whistle to stop the clock and use the ball to untangle it. Never jump to untangle net!

40. If play resumes with designated spot, hold ball with seams vertically. If play resumes after goal, awarded or made, hold ball with seams horizontally.

41. When reporting to table ask the table officials to let the officials know when the team reaches the 6th and 9th team foul, respectively. **NEVER ASK TABLE IF TEAM IS IN THE BONUS!**

42. Both officials must know which way the alternating possession arrow is pointing. This will enable the floor officials to indicate and administer an alternating possession throw-in efficiently. Do not rely on the table.

43. When not holding the ball, always stand with your hands behind your back (at ease position), or in front. Never fold your arms across your chest or stand with your hands on your hips or in your pockets.
44. If you need to hydrate (drink water) during the game, bring your water and keep it at the table.
45. If you have the opportunity, quickly review with your partner(s) period ending coverage for lead and trail regarding: try, clock. This should definitely be covered in your pregame. Know where the game clock is located.
46. At half-time, referee should go to table ask official scorer to ‘shade-in’ personal fouls for the first half and change the arrow.
47. If there is no visible clock, ask the timer to stand up with fifteen seconds remaining in each period, and to count by ones, from “ten” to “zero.” Tell this to both coaches.
48. As the non-calling official, you should always force the switch.
49. Never take the ball to the table during a dead ball period, unless half time.
50. If you can’t explain it, don’t call it.
51. Remember officials are always applying rules during the game and use their judgment to determine if a rule has been violated, or a player has gained an advantage or been placed at a disadvantage.
52. If you warn a player, coach, the next time you must apply the rule!
53. Before you call a technical, the first thing you should ask yourself,” . . . was there any way that I could have avoided making that call?
54. Remember, good players will adjust to the officials.
55. Whenever possible seek feedback from experienced officials, listen and if you have a question refer to the officials’ mechanics and rule books, Get videotaped, if possible.
56. Always use official mechanics.
57. Remember you’re only as good as your last call.
58. Trust your partner and always balance the court.
59. If you pass (on a call) at one end, you have to pass on it at the other end too.
60. Let ‘em play... within the rules of the game.

61. Count ‘em in and count “em out (substitutes).

62. Always eye ball your partner before placing the ball in play.

63. Always hustle, never walk whenever possible.

STAY IN THE BOOK. . .