



Ohio Administrative Code

Rule 3773-7-05 Fouls - intentional, unintentional, procedures and types of fouls.

Effective: [March 1, 2026](#)

(A) Procedures:

(1) Referee shall issue a warning. After the initial warning a penalty will be issued. The penalty may be a deduction of points or disqualification depending on the severity of the foul. Any points deducted for any foul must be deducted in the round which the foul occurred.

(2) The referee as soon as practical after the foul, call time and notify which contestant is being penalized and the total points the contestant is being penalized.

(3) If a bottom contestant commits a foul and in the referee's judgment is not in control, unless the top contestant is injured, the bout shall continue, so as not to jeopardize the top contestant's superior positioning at the time.

(a) The referee shall verbally notify the bottom contestant of the foul.

(b) When the round is over, the referee shall notify the judges and the inspector of the foul and the total point deduction.

(4) Only the referee can assess a foul and any point deductions. Judges may not deduct points for what they interpret is a foul.

(5) Referee shall check the fouled contestant's condition to see if they can still participate in the contest.

(6) Disqualification occurs when after any combination of three fouls or if the referee determines the foul to be flagrant.

(B) Intentional foul:



(1) If an injury results that is severe enough to terminate the bout, the contestant causing the injury loses by disqualification.

(2) If an intentional foul causes an injury and the bout is allowed to continue a mandatory two point penalty shall be assessed to the contestant committing the foul.

(3) If an injury sustained by a contestant as a result of the intentional foul causes the contestant to be unable to continue at a subsequent point, the injured contestant shall win by a technical decision, if they are ahead on the score cards. If the injured contestant is even or behind on the score cards at the time of the stoppage, the bout shall be declared a technical draw.

(C) Unintentional foul:

(1) If a bout is stopped because of an unintentional foul, the referee shall determine whether the contestant who has been fouled can continue or not. If the contestant's chance of winning has not been seriously jeopardized as a result of the foul and if the foul did not involve concussive impact to the head of the contestant who has been fouled, the referee may order the bout continued after a recuperative interval of not more than five minutes. Immediately after stopping the bout or at the end of the round the referee must immediately inform the inspector or commission representative of their determination that the foul was accidental and unintentional.

(2) If the referee determines either from their observation or that of the ringside physician that the bout may not continue because of the injury from the unintentional foul the bout will be declared a no contest if the foul occurred:

(a) During the first two rounds of a non-championship bout, or;

(b) During the first three round of a championship bout;

(3) If the unintentional foul renders the contestant unable to continue the bout; or an injury from an intentional foul later becomes aggravated by fair blows and referee stops bout because of the injury.



- (a) After the completion of the second round in a non-championship bout;
- (b) After the completion of the third round of a championship bout;
- (c) The outcome shall be determined by scoring the completed rounds and the partial round which the referee stops the bout.
- (4) A contestant may not be declared the winner of a bout on the basis of their claim that the opponent fouled them unintentionally by hitting them in the groin. If after a recuperative interval of not more than five minutes, a contestant is unwilling to continue because of the claim of being hit in the groin, the bout will be declared a no contest if the second round has not been completed in a three round bout or the third round has not been completed in a five round bout.
- (D) Types of fouls in a mixed martial arts contest.
 - (1) Butting with the head.
 - (2) Eye gouging of any kind.
 - (3) Biting.
 - (4) Hair pulling.
 - (5) Fishhooking.
 - (6) Groin attacks of any kind.
 - (7) Putting a finger into any orifice or into any cut or laceration on an opponent.
 - (8) Small joint manipulation.
 - (9) Striking to the spine or back of head.



(10) Throat strikes of any kind, including, without limitation grabbing the trachea.

(11) Clawing, twisting or pinching the flesh.

(12) No extended fingers when striking opponent to the face.

(13) Kicking the head of a grounded opponent.

(14) Kneeing the head of a grounded opponent.

(15) Stomping on a grounded opponent.

A contestant is considered grounded when their torso or three points of their body are touching the canvas. For example: two legs and the weight bearing hand is touching the canvas or floor. Applies to paragraphs (D)(13), (D)(14), and (D)(15) of this rule.

Note: A downed opponent may kick up to all legal striking points of the body.

(16) Kicking to the kidney(s) are prohibited from the upright position. Heel strikes are permitted to the kidney(s) when a fighter is on their back in the guard position.

(17) Throwing an opponent out of the ring area or fence area.

(18) Holding the shorts or glove of an opponent.

(19) Spitting on an opponent.

(20) Engaging in any unsportsmanlike conduct that causes an injury to an opponent.

(21) Holding the ropes or cage.

(22) Using abusive language or illicit gestures in the cage or ring area.



- (23) Attacking an opponent on or during the break.

- (24) Attacking an opponent who is under the care of the referee.

- (25) Attacking an opponent after the bell has sounded to end the round.

- (26) Flagrantly disregarding the instructions of the referee.

- (27) Timidity, including, without limitation, avoiding contact with an opponent, intentionally or consistently dropping the mouthpiece or faking an injury.

- (28) Interference from anyone working the corner or corner men leaving their area.

- (29) Any act in the judgment of the referee that is detrimental and places an opponent at a disadvantage.