BASIC SHOT CLOCK RULES

The shot clock shall have a horn that is distinctly different from the game clock.

Coaches must teach their players to “play through” the shot clock horn. It’s very possible to have a shot clock horn and not have a shot clock violation. The shot clock horn doesn’t kill the play. The referee’s whistle kills the play.

On a jump ball the game clock starts when the ball is legally touched but the shot clock doesn’t start until a player on one of the teams has PLAYER CONTROL of the basketball.

On a missed free throw, the game clock starts when the ball is legally touched by a player on the floor, but the shot clock does not start until a player on one of the teams has PLAYER CONTROL of the basketball.

On an inbounds pass, both the game clock and the shot clock start when the ball is legally touched by a player (either A or B) on the floor. PLAYER CONTROL IS NOT NEEDED on an inbounds pass to start the shot clock. Just the act of touching by either team starts both the game and shot clocks.

You could have a situation on an inbounds pass where there are only 2 seconds remaining on the shot clock and the throw-in pass is legally touched (deflected) by either player A or B and the shot clock would run out without Team A ever gaining TEAM CONTROL of the basketball.

On a missed field goal where there has not been a shot clock violation, the new shot clock period does not start until a player on either team has PLAYER CONTROL of the basketball. In other words, just the touching of the ball after a missed field goal doesn’t start the shot clock. The shot clock operator must hold the button until a player on either team has PLAYER CONTROL of the basketball.

If the shot clock expires and the horn sounds while a try for goal is in the air and then the ball hits the rim or flange, ignore the horn and play continues as if the horn did not sound. A new shot clock period begins when a player on either team obtains PLAYER CONTROL of the basketball.

If the try by Team A is successful, a new shot clock period starts when the ball is legally touched on the floor by a player of either team on the subsequent throw-in by Team B.

If the try is unsuccessful and the ball doesn’t hit the rim or flange you have a shot clock violation, a whistle is wounded by the referee and Team B is awarded a throw-in on the end line.

If a try for goal is blocked by a player of Team B and goes out of bounds and time remains on the shot clock, Team A in-bounds the ball with the remaining time on the shot clock. The shot clock is not reset in this situation.
If a try for goal is blocked by a player on Team B, goes out of bounds and the shot clock horn sounds before the ball is whistled dead, the ball is awarded to Team B because of a shot clock violation. This might seem strange to the fans because it is a situation where Team B gets the ball even though a player on Team B was the last to touch the ball before it went out of bounds. It is important for the referee to give the proper shot clock violation signal (tapping the top of the head) so that everyone is aware of the shot clock violation.

If a player on Team B blocks a shot and the ball remains in play, the shot clock continues to run and isn’t reset unless a player on Team B gets PLAYER CONTROL of the basketball.

When a held ball is called and the arrow favors the team on offense, Team A is awarded a throw-in and the shot clock is not reset. If the arrow favors the defense Team B is awarded the ball out of bounds with a new shot clock.

On a loose ball that results in a jump ball, it is imperative to know which team first gained PLAYER CONTROL of the ball after the scramble for the loose ball.

**PLAY:** A1 is dribbling the ball in his/her front court. B1 slaps the ball away which results in a loose ball. A2 is first to gain PLAYER CONTROL of the ball, but is quickly tied up by B2 resulting in a held ball. If Team A has the arrow, Team A is awarded the ball out of bounds nearest the spot of the held ball and the shot clock is not reset. If Team B has the arrow, Team B is awarded the ball out of bounds and gets a new shot clock.

**RULING:** If Team A has the arrow, Team A is awarded the ball out of bound nearest the spot of the held ball and there is a reset of the shot clock. The reason Team A gets a new shot clock is because a player of Team B gained PLAYER CONTROL of the ball which results in a new shot clock. If Team B has the arrow, Team B is awarded the ball out of bounds nearest the spot and doesn’t get a reset if the shot clock had already started after B2 gained PLAYER CONTROL of the ball.

**PLAY:** Same play as the above two plays, but in this situation there is simultaneous possession by A2 and B2 after the loose ball. **RULING:** If the arrow favors Team A, a throw-in is awarded to Team A and the shot clock is not reset since TEAM CONTROL for Team A had not ended prior to the held ball.

On a foul by the defense and the team with the ball is not in the bonus, Team A is awarded the ball out of bounds nearest the spot of the foul and the shot clock is reset.

On a foul by the defense and the team with the ball is in the bonus or it is multiple shot foul, the shot clock is reset and will be started on the subsequent throw-in or rebound.

On an intentional foul, Team A is awarded two free throws with the lanes cleared and then is awarded a throw-in at the spot nearest the foul with a new shot clock.

On a technical foul, Team A is awarded two free throws with the lanes cleared, awarded a throw-in at half court and given a new shot clock.
If a try for goal lodges between the rim and the backboard, the team with the arrow gets the ball on the alternating possession and is given a new shot clock. It doesn’t make any difference if the offense or defense has the arrow as the shot clock would be reset when the ball hit the rim.

If the defense intentionally kicks the ball and 14 seconds or less remain on the shot clock, the shot clock is reset to 15 seconds. If 15 seconds or more remain on the shot clock, there is no reset and play resumes with the remaining time on the clock.

If a defensive player intentionally kicks the ball on an in-bounds pass the shot clock should not be started since the ball was no legally touched on the court. On the next throw-in either the remaining time, if in excess of 15 seconds, or 15 seconds should be set on shot clock because of the violation. If time was run off either the game clock or shot clock on this play, the referee shall put that time back on either or both clocks.

On a charged time-out or injured player, there is no reset of the shot clock.

There is no reset of the shot clock if a ball strikes the rim or flange as the result of a pass. It must be a shot to have the shot clock reset. A deflected pass that hits the rim would not result in a reset.

A tap by an offensive player is considered a try for goal. There would be a reset if A1 shoots an airball that is tapped by A2 before the shot clock horns sounds and then the ball hits the rim. If the tap by A2 happens after the shot clock horn sounds, it is a shot clock violation.

If A1 is fouled on a shot and there is a shot clock violation because the ball did not hit the rim, penalize the foul and disregard the shot clock violation.

On double personal fouls, double flagrant personal fouls, double intentional fouls, double technical fouls or simultaneous personal fouls the ball is given to Team A for a throw-in out of bounds at the point of interruption with no reset of the shot clock. The reason is that NFHS puts the ball back in play at the point of interruption for double anything. Therefore, the ball remains with the offense regardless of the arrow and the shot clock remains the same as it was at the point of interruption.

If there is a new shot clock with 35 seconds or less left on the game clock, the shot clock shall be turned off. It makes no difference if it is after a missed shot, change of possession or in-bounds pass. Any time there is a new shot clock with 35 seconds or less left on the game clock, the shot clock is turned off.

If there is question as to whether a score was made within the shot clock period or whether a try for goal strikes the basket ring or flange, the final decision shall be made by the referees.

**STRANGE PLAY:** A1 is dribbling the ball in his/her front court with 3 seconds remaining on the shot clock. B1 slaps the ball away and the ball goes into A’s backcourt. B1 is going for the ball and has open way to an uncontested lay-up. However, the shot clock horn sounds before B1 has PLAYER CONTROL of the basketball.

**RULING:** Shot clock violation on Team A. Team B gets the ball for a throw-in nearest the spot of where the ball was at the time of the violation. The fans of Team B will love this ruling.
VERY IMPORTANT

Officials must always be aware of the status of the shot clock during dead ball situations. Make sure the shot clock has or has not been correctly reset. Always work with the bench to insure proper shot clock administration.

If the shot clock has been incorrectly reset, new shot clocks have an automatic recall button so the shot clock operator can hit the recall button and the shot clock time will return to the time it was at the time it was improperly reset.

The Referee must always visit with the shot clock operator before the start of the game. It is best to do this at the same time you are checking the book before the ten minute mark. Go over certain shot clock situations and make sure the shot clock operator and the officials are on the same page.

The first year will be a learning for both officials and shot clock operators. Take your time and replay situations through your mind before making a final decision. Don’t panic. Just replay the play and it will all make sense.