



Uniform Numbers, Colors and Messaging: Frequently Asked Questions Football

(This document includes specific NCAA Football Rules references where applicable.)

1. What words, logos and symbols are allowed on the jersey?

Other than the uniform number, here are the only items allowed by rule on the jersey (Rule 1-4-5-a-2):

Words

- Player's name—within the nameplate on the back
- School name
- Mascot name

Logos

- NCAA
- Conference
- School
- Mascot
- Postseason Game
- Memorial
- Military

Flags

- American flag
- State flag

2. What size restrictions are there for these?

Any of these items on the jersey may not cover an area larger than 16 square inches. That would be equivalent to a square having 4 inches on each side (Rule 1-4-5-a-3).

3. Are any words other than the player's name allowed in the nameplate on the back?

No, with this lone exception: The U. S. military academies are allowed to substitute character concepts such as Honor, Integrity, Valor, etc. Other colleges and universities may only use the player's name.

4. May the jersey contain any other words, slogans, messaging, etc.?

No, the jersey is restricted to the items listed above. No other words are allowed on the jersey.

5. Are words allowed on wristbands and other attachments?

By rule any player may have game information on the wrist or arm, which includes on a wristband (Rule 1-4-6-f). The rules do not specifically address other wristbands, arm sleeves, etc. with regard to words or messaging.

6. *What about messaging for causes, organizations, etc.?*

The rules do not specifically address words or symbols that reference charitable causes, political candidates or political issues, social media, religious or club affiliation, etc.

7. *Are there rules that cover the eyeshade?*

Yes, the eyeshade that some players wear under the eyes to reduce sun reflection must be solid black: No words, numbers, symbols, etc., are allowed (Rule 1-4-6-e).

8. *How does the unsportsmanlike acts rule apply?*

If the actions of a player interfere with the orderly game administration, then the unsportsmanlike acts rule should be applied (Rule 9-2).

9. *What are the rules about jersey colors for opposing teams?*

By rule the visiting team must wear white jerseys. This means *white*, which does not include light gray, pale yellow, etc. The home team may wear white, but only if they get written agreement with the visiting team before the season starts (Rule 1-4.5-b).

10. *Is it possible for the visiting team to wear their home (colored) jerseys?*

This is possible, under these conditions (Rule 1-4.5-b):

- The home team must agree in writing before the game.
- The home team's conference must certify that the color of the visiting team's jersey is in contrast with that of the home team.
- If the visiting team wears colored jerseys without meeting these conditions, it is assessed a 15-yard penalty before the first play from scrimmage after the opening kickoff in each half.

11. *What are the rules about the contrast of jerseys and numbers?*

By rule each team must wear a jersey that has numbers that clearly contrast with the body of the jersey (Rule 1-4.5-b).

- The number itself must clearly contrast, even if it has an outline or border.
- The number should be clearly visible from a significant distance.
- If there is any question as to whether the number and the jersey contrast, the jersey may not be worn.

12. *What is the penalty for wearing a jersey whose numbers do not contrast?*

Teams that wear a jersey during the game that does not conform to the contrasting-number rule will be given the opportunity to change into a legal jersey at the start of the game and before the start of each subsequent quarter, until the jerseys are changed. Officials shall charge the team with one of its allowed timeouts at the start of each quarter that the illegal jersey is worn (Rule 1-4-5-b).

13. What is the purpose of the rules regarding numbering and visibility?

The rules for contrasting numbers and visibility are intended to provide clearly visible numbers for the stakeholders: coaches, fans, media, television audience, etc. This means that the numbers should be clearly visible at a distance under a variety of weather and lighting conditions.

14. What is the rule regarding refusal to play?

Each team shall have its players on the field for the opening play at the scheduled time for the beginning of each half. Penalty is 15 yards from the succeeding spot. (Rule 3.4.1) Additionally, when a team is not ready to play after an intermission or timeout (other than the start of the half), and the play clock expires, it is a 5-yard penalty from the succeeding spot. (Rule 3.4.2.b.3)

Football Secretary-Rules Editor

Rogers Redding

205-936-3514

Redding.cfo@hotmail.com