

HANDLING

Deliberately playing the ball with one's hand or arm. The hand or arm must move toward the ball or the hand or arm must be carried in an unnatural position before an infraction of the rule can be charged.

Every referee has a different interpretation of this rule. Buddy offered his own interpretation and some key points to keep in mind:

- If you don't see deliberate, then you don't see handling
- What is "carried in an unnatural position"?
 - Hands up and out is not necessarily unnatural, use your common sense.
- Whether advantage is gained or not does not factor into the decision.
- Harder to call when looking at player's back but not impossible
- Hard to call if you are staring at the ball
- Shot to the face or upper body
 - Cover up, get out of the way, or knock it away
 - Is the standard different for middle school games?
- Chest or groin protection only allowed in the wall
- Did the player have other options?
- When is handling a yellow card offense?
 - When it is used to stop an attack.
- When is it serious foul play and a straight red card?
 - When it is used to stop an *obvious goal scoring opportunity*.

All things considered, you MUST see a deliberate action for it to be handling.