

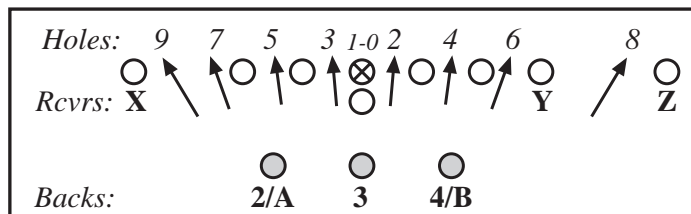
NFL Strategy (1981)

Notes on Play Nomenclature

Running Plays (Blue cards):

Running plays are called by designating the back to run the ball, the hole in the line through which the play is to run, and the name of the pattern.

Ex. — **28 Sweep**: The #2 running back (left running back) takes the ball through the #8 hole (between the Tight End and the right Wide Receiver/Flanker) in a “Sweep” pattern.



Passing Plays (Red cards) & Screens/Draws/Play Action Passes* (Purple cards):

Passing plays are called by designating Backs and their instructions (ignored in this game), the intended receiver (running backs are noted as A or B in passing plays), and the name of the pattern.

Ex. — **80 Y Cross**: Ignoring the two digit number which is not modeled in NFL Strategy (unlike running plays), the Y receiver (the Tight End) runs a “Cross” pattern.

*Note: Some purple cards do not follow this nomenclature

Defensive Plays:

Passing plays are called by designating the front formation (either a hyphenated two digit number or a Over/Under shifting to either side), what action the linemen will take, followed by the pass coverage.

Ex. — **4-3 Key Man-to-Man**: The two numerals indicates 4 linemen, with 3 linebackers. The linemen will “Key” (watch their blockers before reacting), and the pass coverage will be Man-to-Man, where each defender will cover a specific receiver.

Notes on the Clock

Realistic Clock variant:

For more realistic time usage, do not use the time card but manually advance the clock according to the following table:

	Inc./No Gain	1–20 yards	21+ yards
Pass	12 sec./1 click	24 sec./2 clicks	36 sec./3 clicks
Run	36 sec./3 clicks	48 sec./4 clicks	60 sec./5 clicks

Two-Minute Options:

During the last two minutes of each half, a play is considered to have gone out of bounds (OB) if it starts and ends on the same hash mark. A play starting in the middle cannot go out of bounds no matter where it ends.

OB Runs	24 sec/2 clicks
OB Passes	12 sec/1 click

For the ultimate in realism, use a timer to limit how long each player has to call a play, with a 5 yard penalty applied for Delay of Play!

OFFENSE

Running Plays (Calling Plays: Back - Hole - Pattern)

- 20 Fold**
Strengths: Good against 4-3 defense
- 20 Quick Trap**
Strengths: Short yardage
- 20 Trap Draw**
Strengths: Good against def. looking for a pass, using blast or twist
Weakness: Overs/Unders will stop cold
- 24 Slam**
Strengths: Basic I formation power play - blood & guts off tackle
- 24 Trap**
Strengths: Sound running play, esp if defense charging hard or strong end blasting
- 26 Power**
Strengths: Also for short yardage
- 28 Sweep**
Strengths: Yards to the outside
Weakness: Be careful; can also lose lots of yards
- 28 Toss Sweep**
Strengths: Great when def. Key and get fooled
- 29 Quick Pitch**
Strengths: Get weak-side in a hurry, chance for a lot of yards
- 34 Draw**
Strengths: Slip a runner past hard-charging front four
Weakness: Twist closes this
- 37 Slant**
Strengths: FB can sometimes break loose for large gain; also good for short yardage
- 42 Dive**
Strengths: Short yardage
- 45 Drive**
Strengths: Good against overshifting Strong-side
- 45 Give**
Strengths: "False key" play. If def. fooled, we get bundle
Weakness: Gamble; if not fooled, RB in hospital
- 49 Sweep Weak**
Strengths: Slower than Quick Pitch but more certain
- Y Reverse Left**
Strengths: If all breaks right, can roll up big yardage
Weakness: Blitz will destroy

Passing Plays (Calling Plays: Backs [ignore] - Receiver - Pattern)

- 50 X Quick Out**
Strengths: 5-yard pass, weak-side. Will escape blitz.
Weakness: Not for big yardage
- 50 Z Post**
Strengths: Quick six yds against close defense, especially Mombo/Combo
Weakness: Zones
- 54 Y Go**
Strengths: Good against Combo or Blitz; will tear up double pass coverage
- 80 Y Cross**
Strengths: Can get 1st down against both Man-to-Man & Zone
Weakness: Dangerous to throw into center
- 82 Z Slant**
Strengths: Good for a fast five, great against Blitzes
- 83 X Hook**
Strengths: Great for 3rd and long against Strong Zone; decent against Man-to-Man
- 84 Y Straight**
Strengths: Good 3rd & long, but only against Zones
Weakness: Man-to-Man
- 84 Z Square Out**
Strengths: Sound 10-15 yrd play when Cornerman must cover Z Man-to-Man
Weakness: Strong Zone & Mambo
- 85 Z Fly**
Strengths: Good against Mombo, Combo, Weak-side Zone
Weakness: Strong Zone
- 88 A & B Divide**
Strengths: Good percentage play to get 5-8 yds; good if backers are blitzing
- 89 A Hook**
Strengths: Sound med. Distance play, especially if def. covering strong side
- Shotgun X Cross**
Strengths: Good against Man-to-Man if fast X

Screens/Draws/Play Action Passes

- Flea Flicker**
Strengths: Miracle touchdown?
Weakness: Reliable as a rain dance
- Fullback Screen Right**
Strengths: Will slow up Blast defenses or when def. goes for QB
- Halfback Option Pass Right**
Strengths: Good chance against Man-to-Man
Weakness: Zone or Mombo
- Middle Flood**
Strengths: Good chance against most coverage
Weakness: Blitz; lots of traffic in middle
- Pass 24 B Delay**
Strengths: Good against anti-Run defenses or Zones
- Pass 24 B Fly**
Strengths: Big yardage against Man-to-Man
Weakness: Zones
- Pass 28 X Square Out**
Strengths: Good 3rd & long; great if def. Leaning to strong side
Weakness: Will Blitz
- Pass 37 A Shoot**
Strengths: if defense is crowding in short yardage situation
- Pass 49 Throwback**
Strengths: Active QB makes this work Def.
Weakness: TD if intercepted
- Quick Screen Left**
Strengths: Ball control screen; good against Blitz; safer than FB screen
Weakness: Rarely gets big yardage
- Rollout Flood**
Strengths: Excellent against Zone defenses
Weakness: Blitz
- X Screen**
Strengths: Best when def. Blasting

DEFENSE (Calling Plays: Formation - Linemen Action - Pass Coverage)

- Short Yardage**
Strengths: When offense needs only 1-2 yards
- 3-4 Key Mombo**
Strengths: Tight defense against runs & strong-side short passes
Weakness: Long pass
- 4-2 Key Safety X Combo**
Strengths: Tight defense against runs & weak-side short passes
Weakness: Strong-side long pass
- 4-3 Key Man-to-Man**
Strengths: Basic defense; better against runs
Weakness: Slow pass rush
- 4-3 Maximum Blitz**
Strengths: Eight man rush; very good against runs & long passes
Weakness: Quick passes
- 4-3 Sam-Will Blitz**
Strengths: Two linebackers rush; good against runs & long passes
Weakness: Quick passes, runs that get past
- Over Key Strong Zone**
Strengths: Good against strong side runs, long passes and Z
Weakness: Weak-side runs
- Under Key Double**
Strengths: Good against weak-side runs, sweeps (either side);
great against X & Z, passes
Weakness: Dangerous hole in middle
- Use Against Passes**
- 3-4 Nickel Prevent**
Strengths: When offense needs long passes quickly; stop the bomb!
Weakness: Ignores runs & short passes
- 3-4 Plug Weak Zone**
Strengths: Good pass rush, esp. good against long passes & X
Weakness: Strong-side holes
- 4-3 Blast Man-to-Man**
Strengths: Good pass rush; balanced pass defense
Weakness: Not as good against run
- 4-3 Twist Strong Zone**
Strengths: Good rush, defense against long passes and Z/Flanker
Weakness: End runs kill a twist

- Blast** Linemen charge before checking blocking pattern
- Blitz** Linebackers/safeties rush
- Combo** Combination pass coverage by weak-side cornerman and safety on X
- False Key** Blocker goes wrong way to confuse defenders
- Fold Block** Center blockers DT, guard blocks middle LB
- Key** Defensive linemen watch blockers before reacting
- Man-to-Man** Specific defenders cover specific receivers
- Mike** Middle Linebacker
- Mombo** Middle combination by two Safeties on Y
- Over** Defensive linemen overshift to Strong-side
- Play Pass** Pass starting as a fake run
- Prevent** Defense against desperation passes
- Quick Trap** Fast cross-blocking by center and guard
- Sam** Strong-side Linebacker

- Safety X** Weak-side Safety crosses to his outside
- Strong-Side** Offenses right-side, where tight end lines up
- Tight Side** Closer to sideline
- Trap** Defensive lineman allowed to charge in, & blocked from side
- Twist** Defensive linemen criss-cross to confuse blockers
- Under** Def. Linemen under shift to Off. weak-side
- Weak-side** Offenses left-side, w/o tight end
- Wide-side** Further from sidelines
- Will** Weak-side linebacker
- Zone** Pass defenders each cover zone of field rather than one man

PLAY CALLING Key:

- X** Wide Receiver, left side
- Y** Tight End
- Z** Wide Receiver, right side
- A** Left Runningback in pass play
- B** Right Runningback in pass play

