



Glossary of Water Polo Terms

Advantage Rule: A rule permitting the referee to refrain from declaring a foul, if in their judgment, such a declaration would give the advantage to the defending team.

Counterattack: A term used to describe transition play between half-court defense against an opponent and half-court offense. Generally it is used to set up the half-court offense or to exploit a player advantage over the opponent's defense for a high percentage shot.

Dribble: The method a player uses to swim with the ball.

Driver: A player who normally tries to get away from his defender in the frontcourt by quick, explosive swimming.

Exclusion: A major foul, which requires a player to go to the penalty area for 20 seconds (Also called a "kick-out"). The player may leave the penalty area before 20 seconds has expired if his team recovers the ball, or if the opposing team scores.

Face-off: A neutral throw awarded by the referee. Face-offs generally occur when two players commit a foul at the same time. The referee will call a face-off by requiring two players from opposing teams to face each other, at which point the referee will blow the whistle and throw the ball between the two players.

Free throw: A throw awarded following a regular foul in which the offended player is free to put the ball into play without interference from the defender. The player receiving a free throw has 3 seconds to put the ball in play, either by passing to a teammate, dribbling the ball or popping it in the air to him or herself.

Frontcourt: The area of the pool in front of the goal

Game clock: the clock that displays the time remaining in the period.

Goalie: A player whose primary responsibility is to defend the goal. The goalie may use two hands to defend against shots by the opposing team.

Man-down: The time of play in which a defending team has one less player, normally due to an ejection. "Man-up" is describes the same scenario from the offensive perspective. This is also called six on five.

Penalty area: the location of the pool behind the goal line where a penalized player must await reentry following an ejection.

Penalty shot: A shot awarded to the offense when a defender commits a major foul within four meters of their own goal. Any offensive player currently in the pool (except goalies) may take the shot, which is also known as a "5-meter" following the whistle of the referee. The shooting player may take the shot no closer than 5-meters and cannot fake or delay. The defending goalie may not move to block the shot until the referee blows the whistle.

Pick: The method by which an offensive player frees themselves by swimming close to a teammate as to block the defender.

Press: A type of defense where everyone is covered tightly.

Shot clock: The clock that displays the time of possession in which a team must take a shot. Also known as a 30 second clock.

Slough (pronounced "sluff"): The action taken by a defender when they drop away from the player they are defending to cover another area.

Sprint: The manner in which player starts at each quarter. Each team lines up at the their own goal line and when the referee blows the whistle the two players closest to the referee sprint to the ball which is dropped at half-court.

Strong side: The side of the pool where the ball is located.

Two-meter, Hole Set, or Center Forward: The offensive player who is located on or about the two-meter line of the opposing team's goal.

Weak side: The side of the pool opposite of where the ball is located.

Zone defense: A type of defense in which players are assigned and area to defend (rather than an opposing player).