

Football Glossary - Defense

- Blitz** = A defensive term that means a defender who normally doesn't rush the quarterback rushes the quarterback.
- Bump and Run** = A type of pass coverage a defensive back uses. The DB will bump the receiver at the line of scrimmage and attempt to throw the receiver off his pass route. Then the DB will run with the receiver.
- CB** = Abbreviation for "Cornerback".
- Cornerback** = A defensive back who usually lines-up and covers the receiver on the outside of the formation.
- Cover** = The term for a defender staying with a receiver during a pass route or the term used for a player running down to stop a kick or a punt return from being advanced.
- Coverage** = The defensive term for the scheme trying to stop the pass or the term for the special teams unit running down to stop a kick or punt return.
- Cut** = When a player changes directions quickly.
- Cutback** = When a ball carrier quickly changes directions and runs the opposite way from the way the play was originally going.
- D** = Abbreviation for "Defense".
- DB** = Abbreviation for "Defensive Back".
- DE** = Abbreviation for "Defensive End".
- DL** = Abbreviation for "Defensive Line" or "Defensive Lineman".
- DT** = Abbreviation for "Defensive Tackle".
- Defense** = The unit that tries to stop the offense (keep the offense from scoring).

- Defensive Back** = A defensive player who usually stands behind or outside the formation and is mainly responsible for stopping the offense's passing attack. Both safeties and cornerbacks are defensive backs.
- Defensive Backfield** = The area of the field behind the defensive line or the defensive backs as a unit.
- Defensive End** = A defensive lineman who lines-up on the end of the defensive line.
- Defensive Line** = The defenders who line-up opposite the offensive line and are the first line of defense.
- Defensive Lineman** = The players on the defensive line.
- Defensive Tackle** = A defensive lineman on the inside of the line.
- Dime Back** = The defensive back that comes on the field when the dime is used. That player is part of the "Dime Package".
- Dime Coverage** = A defensive coverage that uses 6 defensive backs.
- End** = An offensive or defensive player who lines-up on the end of the line.
- FS** = Abbreviation for Free Safety.
- Formation** = The alignment that the offense or defense uses.
- Free Safety** = A defensive player who lines up deep and whose usual responsibility is to stop the deep pass. Normally there are 2 safeties in the game – a FS and a strong safety. The FS is usually the faster and smaller of the 2 safeties.
- Front Seven** = The front part of the defense – the linemen and the linebackers.
- ILB** = Abbreviation for "Inside Linebacker".
- Inside Linebacker** = A linebacker that plays inside (usually inside the offensive tackles).
- Interception** = When the defense catches a pass.
- LB** = Abbreviation for "Linebacker".
- Linebacker** = A defensive player who lines up in back of the defensive line but in front of the defensive backs.
- Lineman** = Any player who is on the offensive or defensive line.

Line of Scrimmage = An imaginary line that stretches from sideline to sideline and separates the offense and defense.

Man-to-Man Coverage = When a defensive back covers a receiver by himself.

MLB = Abbreviation for "Middle Linebacker".

Middle Linebacker = A single linebacker that plays in the middle of the defense directly behind the defensive line.

NG = Abbreviation for "Nose Guard".

NT = Abbreviation for "Nose Tackle".

Nickel Back = The extra defensive back that comes onto the field for the Nickel Defense.

Nickel Defense = Defensive package with 5 defensive backs.

Nose Guard = Defensive lineman who lines-up opposite the offensive Center (aka Nose Tackle).

Nose Tackle = Defensive lineman that line-up on the offensive Center (aka Nose Guard).

OLB = Abbreviation for "Outside Linebacker".

Outside Linebacker = A linebacker who plays outside and behind the defensive line. OLBs are usually divided into strong side and weak side linebackers.

Pass Defender = A defensive player who defends against the pass.

Pass Rush = The act of the defense trying to get to the passer.

Play = A sequence of actions from the snap (or kickoff) until a tackle is made and the whistle is blown.

Rush = The act of running with the football or the act of the defense trying to get to the quarterback.

S = Abbreviation for "Safety".

SS = Abbreviation for "Strong Safety".

- Safety** = A defensive player who is usually the last line of defense or when the offense is tackled in their own end zone (earns the tackling team 2 points).
- Secondary** = Group of defensive backs or the area downfield where the DBs defend.
- Strong Safety** = A type of defensive player who usually lines-up deep and defends the deep pass. This type of safety is usually a little bigger and is a big hitter.
- Strong Side** = The side of the formation that has the tight end.
- Stunt** = When defensive lineman rush differently than usual.
- Tackle** = A type of offensive or defensive lineman or when the ball carrier is brought to the ground.
- Touchdown** = When the offense reaches the end zone. A touchdown is 6 points.
- Weak Side** = The side of an offensive formation that doesn't have the tight end. (The opposite side as the Strong Side.)
- Zone Defense** = A pass defense where the DBs and the LBs drop back into coverage and are responsible to cover a part of the field instead of a specific player.