

How To Score a Wrestling Match

High School Wrestling Individual and Team Scoring Systems

Sanctioned high school wrestling matches consist of three 2-minute periods (three 1-minute periods for Frosh/Soph) with no rest between periods. The wrestler with the most points at the end of the third period is the winner. If a wrestler pins his opponent at any time before the end of the third period, the match is over and the winning wrestler earns a win by fall (pin). If the match ends in a tie, overtime periods are added until a winner is determined.

The match can also end before the end of the six minute regulation time by technical fall (15 point advantage) or if one of the wrestlers is disqualified or can't continue the match due to injury. In the case of an injury, the injured wrestler loses by injury default.

Even though wrestling is widely recognized as an individual sport because of the head to head competition, it's also a team sport and uses a team scoring system to decide the winning team in a match. First, we will go through the individual scoring system and then the team scoring system.

1. Before we get started, you'll need to know the basic positioning of the wrestlers during a match.

- *Neutral* – Both wrestlers stand facing each other about 3 feet apart and ready to wrestle.
- *Referee's Position* – Start position where one wrestler is perched down on his hands and knees (all fours), while the other wrestler is positioned on top, alongside the bottom wrestler, kneeling on his nearside knee. The top wrestler also places his far-side arm around his opponent's waist with the hand of the other arm on the nearside elbow of his opponent. The far-side leg of the top man is placed behind the bottom wrestler.
- *Top Position (advantage)* – The person on top in the referee's position
- *Bottom Position (disadvantage)* – The person on bottom in the referee's position.

2. **Takedown = 2 Pts.** From the neutral position, when one wrestler takes the other wrestler down to the mat and controls him from the top, a takedown is scored – 2 Pts.
3. **Reversal = 2 Pts.** When a wrestler is on the bottom in the referee's position and reverses his opponent to the top in the referee's position, a reversal is scored – 2 Pts.
4. **Escape = 1 Pt.** When a wrestler is on the bottom in the referee's position and escapes to the neutral position without reversing the top man, an escape is scored – 1 Pt.
5. **Near Fall (back points/exposure) = 2 Pts.** When the bottom wrestler has his back exposed to the mat on an angle of 45 degrees or less for a count of at least 2 seconds, but less than 5 seconds, a 2 Pt. near fall is scored.
6. **Near Fall (back points/exposure) = 3 Pts.** When the bottom wrestler has his back exposed to the mat on an angle of 45 degrees or less for a count of 5 seconds or more a 3 Pt. near fall is scored.
7. **Penalty Points can be awarded to the opponent of the wrestler in violation of certain rules and conduct.** The following is a list of commonly awarded penalty points.
 - *Stalling (one or both wrestlers not initiating action or one wrestler being totally defensive and backing away from opponent)* – Initially a warning, followed by penalty of 1 Pt., with each additional incident incurring penalties of 1 Pt. – 2 Pts. – 2 Pts. – Disqualification.
 - *False Start/Illegal Start Position (starting before the whistle blows, top or bottom wrestler not aligned in the proper referee's position)* – 2 warnings, followed by 1 Pt. penalties for each additional incident – No Disqualification.
 - *Clasping (top wrestler clasping hands together without having the bottom wrestler on his back)* – Immediate 1 Pt. penalty. Each additional incident is followed by incurring penalties of 1 Pt. – 2 Pts. – 2 Pts. – Disqualification.
 - *Illegal Holds (full nelson, figure 4 the body, scissor the head, headlock without the opponent's arm, etc.)* – Immediate 1 Pt. penalty. Each additional incident is followed by incurring penalties of 1 Pt. – 2 Pts. – 2 Pts. – Disqualification.
 - *Technical Violations (grasping uniform/headgear, improper equipment (i.e. no headgear), fleeing the mat, unsportsmanlike conduct, unnecessary roughness)* – Immediate 1 Pt. penalty. Each additional incident is followed by incurring penalties of 1 Pt. – 2 Pts. – 2 Pts. – Disqualification.
 - *Cause for Ejection Penalties* – Gross misconduct, slamming or any illegal move that injures an opponent. That injury defaults the match.

8. **Overtime Scoring** – A winner must be declared in all individual matches. If a match is tied at the end of regulation, the following overtime scoring system is used in order, until a winner is declared.

- 1 minute sudden death period (first person to score wins).
- Two 30 second tie breakers (wrestlers swap referee's positions). If match is still tied, it goes to a ride-out.
- 30 second ride-out (wrestler who scored first has the choice in referee's position). If wrestler escapes from bottom position, he wins. If he is ridden-out for the 30 seconds, he loses.

9. **Team Scoring System** – A wrestling team scores points via the results of individual wrestler's matches.

- 6 Pts. – Wrestler wins by pin or forfeit, injury default, disqualification of the opponent.
- 5 Pts. – Wrestler wins by technical fall (lead of 15 Pts. during the match)
- 4 Pts. – Wrestler wins by major decision (point spread of between 8 and 14 pts.)
- 3 Pts. – Wrestler wins by regular decision (7 points or less)
- Teams can also be penalized team points for unsportsmanlike conduct and other violations of the individual wrestlers or the coaching staff.