

SCRUM ENGAGEMENT SEQUENCE 2014

For games of all Levels

The scrum engagement is managed in sequence by the referee to ensure that it occurs safely, squarely and in synchronisation.

The Law requires that referees will call the scrum engagement in the sequence CROUCH, BIND and then, when both front rows are ready, SET. If any part of the scrum set-up is not right, the referee should call the front rows up and re-start the process.

1. CROUCH

Front rowers should adopt a CROUCH position with their head and shoulders at or above the level of the hips, feet square, and knees bent sufficiently to make a simple forward movement into engagement. Players should keep their head straight, in order to maintain the normal and safe alignment of the cervical spine.



Once all front-rowers are crouched, there must be a non-verbal pause, during which time the referee should be checking that:

- the distance between opposing front rows should be close enough that players' heads are interlinked (approximately ear to ear)
- the height of the two packs is the same
- all players are balanced, and are set up straight (not at an angle)



2. BIND

The BIND call requires each prop to bind on the side or back of their opposing prop (not on the arm or shoulder). Props should grab onto the jersey, not just rest their hand in place.



Once all front-rowers are bound, there must be a non-verbal pause, during which time the referee should check that all players are balanced and stationary.



3. SET

On the SET call, and not before, the front rows should engage the opposition firmly with a short horizontal movement and the props should draw with their outside binds. In this position, all players must be able to maintain body shape and pressure on the opposition scrum.



At community level in Australia, referees do not have to indicate to the scrum half when to feed the ball at every scrum. However, referees must ensure that the scrum is stationary and stable before the feed (no hit and chase off the mark). A call of "steady" may, on occasion, assist in steadying the scrum. When the scrum is steady, the ball should be fed without delay.