

The NFL did exhaustive research into PI and the various types. They boiled it all down to these fundamental things:

There are two indicators that make a player 'suspect' for PI:

1. Bite - when a player 'bites' on a move and then has to try to recover, such as when a receiver does a hook 'n' go - if he bites on the hook, he will frequently try to recover by grabbing the receiver as he goes by, etc., which can turn into PI.
2. Chase - when a player is chasing an opponent, either by design or because he is beaten, he will tend to commit PI.

There six categories of PI:

1. Arm Bar - an arm across the body restricting the opponent from moving where he wants to go. An arm across the body is not enough - there must be a restriction of movement.
2. Hold - actually grasping an opponent, particularly the arm, restricting him from being able to reach a pass. Classically, grabbing an arm, keeping the opponent from raising it to catch the pass.
3. Not playing the ball - the player is not making a bona fide effort to reach the pass (usually not looking back for the ball), and contacts the opponent (usually body to body) restricting him from moving where he wants to go, or knocking him off his path to the ball.
4. Playing through the back - even if making an effort to touch the pass, contacting an opponent through the back, restricting his ability to touch the pass.
5. Hook and twist - hooking the arm around the waist or shoulders, AND twisting the opponent, restricting him from his effort to touch the pass. An arm around the body is not enough - there must be a twist or turn.
6. Cutoff - even if looking back for the ball, a player can not position himself to restrict or prevent an opponent from moving toward a pass.

There must be contact to have PI (not in NF cuz of face guarding), but contact alone does not indicate PI. There must be a real '**restriction**' for PI to occur.

Note that two players both making an effort to reach the ball might 'bang arms' - no foul.

PI is almost always going to occur from the waist up. Player running side by side or in tandem who get their feet tangled with no OBVIOUS intent to impede - no foul.