

Jammer Special Abilities

The jammer has some unique special abilities and procedures related to their position.

- They wear a helmet cover with a 5-sided star (the requirements for this are discussed in the *WFTDA Uniform Policy*)
- They can pass the star to the pivot (See ***Star Passes*** in the chapter called "Jam 1")
- They start the jam in a special location on the track (See ***Track Diagram*** in chapter "Jam 2")
- They score the points (See ***Scoring Points*** in chapter "Jam 2")
- They have exceptions to the rules regarding the pack and EZ responsibilities
- They don't always serve 30 seconds in the box for their penalties
- Lead jammer can call off the jam early, if they wish
- Jams do not start if one or both teams have no jammer

Exceptions to the pack and EZ rules

- Pack – The jammer is not considered part of the pack. They have no obligation to themselves attempt to reform the pack or remain in the EZ. However, they can't do things that prevent blockers from reforming or returning to the EZ, which includes taking assists from teammates.
- EZ – Jammers can engage with each other outside of the EZ. They cannot engage with blockers outside of the EZ, including taking whips off an OOP teammate.

Penalty box jammer swaps

Derby without any jammers is very boring. *Typically* there will always be an active jammer on the track. If a jammer gets a penalty and goes to the box and sits, and then the other jammer subsequently gets a penalty and goes to the box, that first jammer will *normally* be released back onto the track early, and the second jammer serves the same amount of time as the first jammer.

There are some rare but important exceptions to this when there in fact can be a "jammerless" portion of a jam and both jammers are seated *at the same time*. This may occur when jammer swaps occur, and one or both jammers have more than one penalty and are sent back to the box again. If a situation like this occurs, this is an extremely technical procedure on the part of the PBM. If you are interested in these rare jammer swap procedures, find the most

experienced NSO you know, and ask them about “jammerless jams” and “ABA jammer swaps.” There is also more information about this in the learning modules at the WFTDA LMS.

Since there’s only ever one jammer per team, there’s a specially designated seat in the penalty box for each jammer.

Lead & call off

See more details on this below in the Lead Jammer Q & A box **later in the chapter**.

Required to be on track

Each team must field a jammer at jam start. There’s a hierarchy to determine if there’s a jammer or not.

1. If there’s currently a jammer en route to, seated in, or standing in the box (even if they started the previous jam as a pivot but ended the previous jam as jammer) then that is the jammer for the upcoming jam. Anyone else who lines up in the jammer starting area is not the jammer. It’s ok to give a warning “Too many jammers” if this happens.
2. If there’s no one who meets the definition for #1, the jammer is the person touching on, behind, or straddling the jammer line who’s in possession of the jammer cover
3. If no one meets #1 or #2, but there is someone in control of the jammer cover in front of the jammer line, then that’s the jammer.
4. If no one meets any of the above conditions, there is no jammer.

If one or both teams have failed to field a jammer, you and/or the JT should call an OTO instead of starting the jam after the 30s lineup period has elapsed. A team who fails to field a jammer is given a Delay of Game penalty to be served by the Captain as a non-pivot blocker.

Jammer responsibilities during No-Pack

1. *Can skaters still cut in a No-Pack?* Yes. If an opponent has an established superior position, you still must enter behind them during a No-Pack.
2. *But what about if you’re hit out of bounds during the No-Pack?* If the skater is knocked out of bounds during the No-Pack from a block that was initiated before No-Pack was called, they must still re-enter behind everyone who has superior position (including their own teammates).

3. *Can jammers still block in a No-Pack?* Only with the other jammer. If they initiate engagement with a blocker or participate in an assist, these are potentially Illegal Contact penalties if they have game impact.
4. *Can jammers still counter block a blocker in a No-Pack?* A counterblock is when a skater is absorbing the hit from another skater, but didn't initiate the contact. Jammers are allowed to continue a counter block during a No-Pack, yes, but they are only allowed to counter block during a No-Pack to the extent necessary to remain safe or to disengage from the block safely. The blocker and jammer must stop all new engagement. New initiation during a No-Pack is potentially an Illegal Contact penalty. Continuing a counter block beyond what is needed for safety is considered a new initiation.
5. *Can jammers still counter block a blocker who's outside the EZ?* This is similar to engagement during a No-Pack. At the moment when a blocker is warned they are out of play, the skaters can still counter block to the extent required to disengage safely. Both jammer and blocker must not initiate new engagement.
6. *Where can a jammer re-enter the track from the box during a no-pack?* If a jammer is returning to the track from the penalty box, they must re-enter behind skaters who were in the EZ immediately prior to the No-Pack call.