

3rd Down The graphs show 3rd down statistics for all of the regular season NFL games from 2000 through 2007. Plays within 2 minutes of the end of a half and all plays within field goal range are excluded. In Exercises 7–14, use the graphs. (See Examples 3 and 4.)

7. Do NFL coaches call more pass plays or run plays on 3rd down? Explain your reasoning.
8. Describe the pattern in the “3rd Down Success” graph.
9. For what “to go” distances are the conversion rates for running and for passing about equal on 3rd down?
10. With 2 yards to go on 3rd down, should the defense expect a pass play or a run play? Explain your reasoning.
11. With 2 yards to go on 3rd down, should the coach call a pass play or a run play? Explain your reasoning.
12. How might a quarterback’s passing efficiency influence a coach’s play selection on 3rd down and 4 yards to go?
13. The optimum mix for running and passing occurs when the conversion rates are about equal. When this happens, the overall conversion rate will be greatest. Is the pass/run ratio at an optimum mix on 3rd down and 1 yard to go? Explain your reasoning.
14. Suppose you are the coach of an NFL team. Your team is facing a 3rd down with 5 yards to go. Would you call a pass play or a run play? Explain your reasoning.

