



# **OFFICIAL 5 on 5 FOOTBALL PLAY RULES AND PROCEDURES**

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In the event of any conflict in language between any past, present or future printed version of these Tennessee Youth Football League Official Rules & Procedures and the TNYFL.ORG online version, TNYFL.ORG online version shall have priority.

## FORWARD

The Tennessee Youth Football League has condensed the Official TNYFL Rules Book to give quicker access to any written language pertaining to play rules and procedures specific to the TNYFL. Play rules not specifically covered herein shall be governed by current edition of the National Federation High School (NFHS) Rules Book. In the event of any conflict in rules between these Official TNYFL rules and the current published rules of the National Federation High School (NFHS), the National Federation High School (NFHS) rules and interpretations shall govern.

Any reference to a particular gender contained within the TNYFL Rules Book such as he, his, himself, man, men, or boy shall be meant to also include she, hers, herself, woman, women, and girl and are to be interpreted as gender neutral.

## PLAYING FIELD

**DIMENSIONS:** The game shall be played ideally upon a rectangular field, which measures 40 yards in length with two 10-yard end zones. The width of the field shall be same as TNFYL tackle rule.

**MARKINGS:** First down markers are positioned in set locations every 10 yards. First downs are only achieved by crossing these markers.

## EQUIPMENT

**THE BALL:** K2 or PeeWee Size

**FLAG BELTS:** Each community will be provided flag belts, which must be returned after the game. In the event they are lost or stolen, a **belt charge** may be charged to the team. A player caught with a "**tied**" or illegal flag belt will be ejected from the game and an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty assessed to their team. The type of flag is Triple Flag Belt.

**CLEATS:** Only molded cleats will be allowed for outdoor play. Screw-ins, metal or metal tipped cleats will not be permitted. Each indoor facility will have their own policy regarding the use of cleats.

**ATTIRE:** No billed hats will be allowed on the field of play. No jewelry will be allowed including but not limited to necklaces, watches, bracelets, or hooped earrings). No pants or shorts with pockets will be allowed.

**UNIFORMS:** Teams will be required to wear like color shirts or jerseys. Opposing teams may not wear similar colored shirts. The home team wears dark jerseys and visitors wear light jerseys. In same jersey color situations, the home team gets their choice. Numbers are mandatory.

## PLAYERS

**TEAMS:** The game is to be played by two teams of five players on each. More than five players on the field is illegal, while less than five (5) players is legal with a **minimum of four (4) players** needed to play. Penalty for too many players: 5 yards for illegal substitution or 10 yards for illegal participation.

**CAPTAINS:** At the beginning of the game, each team must designate a captain. The captain will act as sole representatives of their team in all communications with the officials with support of coach on field.

**ROSTERS:** Teams may carry up to 10 players on their roster. Team rosters are frozen at fee night. Players must sign the "waiver" form prior to participating in their first game. All players must participated significant time in each game.

## GAME TIMING

**LENGTH OF THE GAME:** The length of the game is 40 minutes, divided into two halves of 20 minutes. A running clock is used with no clock stoppage except to mark a penalty, runner out of bounds, change of possession or injury. The clock will start as soon as the penalty has been accessed or ball set for ready for play.

**HALFTIME:** Between the first and second halves, there shall be an intermission of **two (2) minutes**. During the intermission, play is suspended, and the teams may leave the field.

**STARTING EACH GAME:** A coin toss will determine which team has first possession. The visiting team calls the coin toss (head/tail).

**TIME OUTS:** Each team is allowed two time outs per half. Timeouts will not carry over into the second half. Charged time outs can be used at any time. The time clock will begin at the snap of the next play.

**TIME BETWEEN PLAYS:** The offensive team has **35 seconds** in which to snap the ball once the referee has spotted the ball after the previous play has been ruled dead. The referee will indicate by signaling to the offensive team when 10 seconds remains on the 35-second clock.

**MERCY RULE:** Should a team be trailing by **21 or more** points at the final "Two-Minute Warning" the clock shall not stop.

## OFFENSE

**LINE OF SCRIMMAGE:** Offensive team must have at least **Three (3) players** on the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap.

**MOTION:** Only **ONE PLAYER** can be in motion at the snap of the ball and must be **running parallel to or away from** the line of scrimmage. Please note that more than one player can initially shift, however all players must be set before the player goes in motion.

**CHARGING:** All offensive players once receiving the ball must make an attempt to avoid contact with the defense. If an offensive player lowers their shoulder, or attempts to bull through a defensive player, a 5 yard person foul penalty will be accessed from the spot of the foul.

**NO BLOCKING:** Neither the offensive or defensive player may initiate contact at any time. Offensive players are allowed to run down field, but they are not allowed to face guard/shadow block defensive players from the runner.

**ELIGIBLE RECEIVERS:** All players are eligible to run down field and catch passes. Receivers can all line up on one side -- there does not have to be a balanced wide receiver set.

**QUARTERBACK:** The Quarterback cannot directly advance the ball beyond the line of scrimmage.

**DIRECT SNAPS:** No direct snaps will be allowed. There must be a Quarterback.

**STIFF ARMING:** Stiff-arming is **illegal** and will draw an unnecessary roughness penalty. This will result in a penalty 10 yards from the spot of the foul.

## DEFENSE

**NEUTRAL ZONE:** A two-yard neutral zone has been established between the offensive and defensive lines.

**RUSHING:** All players are allowed to rush on any down. The defense may not make contact or line up over the center. Unless the rusher is 5 yards off the ball, the rush cannot begin until the ball is handed to the runner.

**TACKLING:** A legal tackle is defined as pulling OFF the ball carrier's flag belt, without impeding his forward movement. **Incidental contact does not constitute a penalty against the offense or defense.** Tackling a ball carrier is illegal, as is aggressively shoving or pushing the ball carrier to the ground or out of bounds, which will result in a 10-yard penalty plus automatic first down.

**STRIPPING THE BALL:** Players attempting to strip the ball and not attempting to pull a flag are subject to a personal foul penalty: 10 yards from the end of the run.

## FIELD & BALL POSITIONING

**SPOTTING THE BALL:** The ball will be placed according to the **position of the ball** at the time the flag was pulled.

**BALL CARRIER IS NOT WEARING OR INADVERTENTLY LOSSES HIS FLAG BELT:** In the event a ball carrier is not wearing or inadvertently loses their flag belt will be down at the spot of the flag.

**BALL CARRIER INADVERTENTLY FALLS TO THE GROUND:** A ball carrier that falls to the ground is considered down and will not be allowed to get back up to play.

**FUMBLES:** There are no fumbles. When the ball carriers loses control of the ball and it touches the ground the play is ruled dead and the ball is spotted at the point it touched the ground as long as the spot is at or behind the ball carriers forward progress.

**BAD SNAPS FROM CENTER:** Any centers snap that falls and touches the ground will be ruled dead at the spot of the where the ball hit the ground. The snap must be between the legs of the center.

**BALL PLACEMENT:** The team receiving the ball at the start of the game or after any touchdown will start the ball at the **5-yard line**. There will be **NO KICKOFFS**. There is not a kickoff to start play. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has four (4) plays to make a first down. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on its 5-yard line. All possession changes, except interceptions and punts, start on the offense's 5-yard line.

**PUNTING:** The offensive team is allowed to declare a punt the ball on 4th down to better their field position. On 4th down the referee will ask the offense what they wish to do. The offense must declare what they will do i.e. go for 1st, or punt. The offense may not change their mind on 4th down unless they use a timeout. If a punt is declared the ball will be moved 20 yards.

**OVERTIME:** If both teams are tied after regulation the game will go into overtime. The format will follow the High-School/College system of each team getting 4 downs to score from the 20-yard line. Both teams get equal chances to score, if **no winner is determined after 2 overtime periods the game will be considered a TIE**.

## SCORING

**TOUCHDOWNS = 6 points**

**EXTRA POINT = 1 point** (from the 5-yard line) **or = 2 points** (from the 10-yard line). You may run, or pass for an extra point attempt. If you attempt to pass for the extra point and your pass is intercepted, the ball may be returned for the value of the extra point you are attempting.

**SAFETY = 2 points**

## OFFENSIVE & DEFENSIVE PENALTIES

**ENCROACHMENT/OFFSIDE:** A lineman will be considered offside when he/she breaks the neutral zone prior to the snap, even if there is no contact made with the opponent. You are not allowed to jump back. 5 yard penalty and replay the down.

**ROUGHING THE PASSER:** When the defender makes contact with the Quarterback in a manner that is aggressive or that is not deemed an attempt to go after the flag belt. This includes when a defender tries to deflect the pass and makes contact with the quarterback's arm or hand a 10-yard penalty from the line of scrimmage and an automatic first down. If the pass is completed, then the penalty will be assessed from the end of the play.

**NOT ENOUGH PLAYERS ON THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE:** The offense and defense are both required to have at least three (3) players on the line of scrimmage. If the either fails to have four players on the line at the start of the play, a penalty will be called. 5 yards and replay the down.

**DEFENSIVE HOLDING:** This occurs when a defender grabs the ball carrier and impedes his forward progress. This includes when the defender is attempting to pull a flag and misses and grabs the ball carriers shorts or shirt a 5-yard penalty from the spot of the foul or end of the run.

**PASS INTERFERENCE:** Defensive pass interference will result in an automatic 1st down and 5 yard penalty from spot of foul. Offensive pass interference will result in a loss of down and 5 yard penalty from previous spot.

**QB ADVANCING BALL BEYOND LINE OF SCRIMMAGE:** Quarterback cannot directly advance the ball beyond the line of scrimmage unless QB becomes an eligible receiver after the ball is handed to the runner. QB directly advancing the ball beyond the line of scrimmage will result in a 5 yard penalty from previous spot.

**FLAG GUARDING:** Flag guarding is defined as any attempt by the ball carrier to shield his/her flags from being pulled. This includes but is not limited to, swinging free hand, pushing an opponent's hand away, holding flags with free hand, lowering or dipping their shoulder, and using the ball to shield the flag. Flag guarding is a 5-yard penalty from the spot and loss of down (unless a first down is achieved after the penalty has been marked off).

**DIVING:** At no time may a ball carrier leave his feet to advance the ball. Diving will be at the sole discretion of the Referee. A 5-yard penalty from the spot (unless a first down is achieved after the penalty has been marked off) will be applied.