

REAL 9 Football Non-Tackle Supplemental Football Rules

National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) rules are to be used with the exceptions listed below.

RULE 1. THE GAME, THE FIELD, AND EQUIPMENT

RULE 2. PERIODS, TIMING, AND PUTTING THE BALL IN PLAY

RULE 3. PLAYERS, ALIGNMENT, AND BLOCKING

RULE 4. RULING A PLAYER DOWN, RUN PLAYS, AND PASS PLAYS

RULE 5. SERIES OF DOWNS, TEAM POSSESSION, AND SCORING

RULE 6. PENALTY ENFORCEMENT

APPENDIX A. FIELD DIAGRAMS

RULE 1. THE GAME, THE FIELD, AND EQUIPMENT

SECTION 1. The Game

- a. The purpose of the league is individual and team development to allow players to learn and execute proper fundamentals and techniques in a competitive atmosphere. It allows coaches to teach, evaluate, and improve both individual and team play.
- b. Emphasis is on player safety, sportsmanship, and execution of skills rather than outcome of the game.
- c. All players and coaches are to demonstrate sportsmanship and respect at all times.
- d. The game shall be played between two teams of not more than 9 players each.
- e. The game is administered by game officials in compliance with NFHS requirements through local officiating associations.

SECTION 2. The Field

The field shall be in compliance with NFHS regulations with the following exceptions:

- a. The playing field is 40-yards in length, beginning on the 40-yard line and working in towards the near end zone.
- b. Two games may be played simultaneously on one field with a minimum of 20-yards separating the playing fields.

SECTION 2. Pregame Meeting & Coin Toss

- a. During the mandatory warm up period, the officials shall meet with each head coach and confirm the following:
 - i. All players are equipped with proper soft shell helmets, soft shell shoulder pads, and mouthpieces. Officials shall complete a visual check of each participating player.
 - ii. Identify designated team captains.
 - iii. Identify which coach will be calling timeouts.
- b. Prior to the game, the line of scrimmage official shall meet with the chain crew to confirm the following:
 - i. The chain crew is to be set on the 40 yard line.
 - ii. The down box operator is to be set on the 40 yard line.
 - iii. When the down box operator is to reset the down box to 1st down.
- c. Coin Toss
 - i. The team that wins the coin toss will choose whether to start on offense or defense.

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SECTION 3. Coaching Areas

- a. One coach from each team is permitted to coach his team from the field.
- b. From the time the ball is snapped until the conclusion of the play, coaches on the field must be 5-yards behind the deepest player in the offensive backfield, creating a **Safety Zone**.
- c. Between the end of each play and the ensuing snap, coaches may enter the field of play to coach his players.
 - i. For the safety of the players and coaches, if a coach from either team is less than 5-yards from the deepest offensive player at the snap, the covering official will verbally inform the offending coach that he is receiving a Verbal Safety Zone Warning [No Penalty].
 - ii. For a second offense by the same coach in the same half, the officials will stop play and the offending coach will receive a Safety Zone Warning [No penalty].
 - iii. For a third offense by the same coach in the same half, the offending coach must move to the sideline for the remainder of the half. An assistant coach may take the offending coaches place on the field. The team will receive a Safety Zone Violation [10-yard penalty].
- d. All other coaches are to coach from his own Team Box.
 - i. Coaches must remain in the Team Box from the time of the snap until the conclusion of the play.
 - ii. Between the end of each play and the ensuing snap, coaches are permitted to enter the field of play between the sideline and the top of the numbers (9-yards). If coaches have not returned to the Team Box at the time of the snap the team will receive a Delay of Game penalty.

SECTION 3. Equipment

- a. Regulation high school footballs must be used.
- b. Soft shell helmets, soft shell shoulder pads, and mouth guards must be worn by all participating players.
 - i. Soft shell helmets must be rated a minimum of four-stars by the Virginia Tech Helmet Rating System.
- c. Line-to-gain indicators that are 10-yards in length and a down box must be used. The home team will provide the chains, box, and chain crew (3 people).

RULE 2. PERIODS, TIMING, AND PUTTING THE BALL IN PLAY

SECTION 1. Length of Periods & Halftime

- a. The game will be played in two halves, each 25 minutes in length.
- b. Between the first and second half will be a 3 minute halftime.
 - i. Periods may only be shortened if weather conditions are deemed to be hazardous by the officials and coaches.
- c. Prior to the game, teams must participate in a mandatory warm up period no less than 3 minutes in length.

SECTION 2. Game Time and Timeouts

Game time will be kept on the field by the officials.

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Game Clock

- a. The game will be played with a running clock.
- b. The game clock will start at 25:00 on the officials whistle and ready for play signal. The game clock will be stopped for the following situations:
 - i. For a charged team timeout.
 - ii. If a player has an issue with equipment.
 - iii. If the chains need to be reset.
- c. The official responsible for keeping game time will alert teams when 05:00 remain in the half.

Play Clock

- a. The game will be played with a 25-second play clock.

Timeouts

- a. Each team is permitted one 30 second team timeout per half.

SECTION 3. Putting the Ball in Play

- a. The first play of each half will begin with the offensive team on the 40-yard line.
 - i. The near official will place the ball on the 40-yard line between the hash marks.
 1. The offense may request the ball be placed at any spot between the hash marks to start the game.
 - ii. The ball shall be snapped after the referee blows his whistle and gives the ready for play signal.

RULE 3. PLAYERS, ALIGNMENT, AND BLOCKING

Offense

The offensive team shall consist of a snapper, offensive guards, a quarterback, and the remaining five players may be any combination of running backs, tight ends, and receivers. There will be no offensive tackles.

- a. There must be a minimum of five players on the line of scrimmage at the snap.
- b. All players on the line of scrimmage, with the exception of the snapper, must be in a two-point stance at the snap.
- c. The tackle box is redefined by the offensive guards and referred to as the guard box.
 - i. The guard box disintegrates when the ball leaves it.

Defense

The defensive team shall consist of two defensive ends and minimum of one linebacker.

- a. Defensive ends must line up on the outside shoulder of the guards or wider.
- b. Linebackers must be least 4-yards from the line of scrimmage at the snap.
 - i. Only one linebacker is permitted to enter the guard box in an attempt to rush the quarterback. No other defensive team players are permitted to enter the guard box.

Blocking

- a. All blocking on the line of scrimmage must be made with the hands and arms extended.
- b. Blocking below the waist is prohibited at all times.
- c. Initiating contact with the head, elbow, forearm, or shoulder by any player is prohibited at all times.

RULE 4. RULING A PLAYER DOWN, RUN PLAYS, AND PASS PLAYS

SECTION 1. Ruling a Player Down by Two-Hand Touch

A ball carrier is ruled down when legally contacted with two hands by a defensive player.

- a. The defensive player may legally down a ball carrier by contacting him with two hands anywhere on the body below the head and neck area.
 - i. Contact to the head or neck area (defined as the top of the shoulder pads and above) is prohibited.
- b. A defensive player may not dive or leave his feet in an attempt to down a ball carrier.
- c. Grabbing or pulling by the defensive player in an attempt to down the ball carrier is prohibited.
- d. If the defensive player is in a clearly advantageous position and contacts the ball carrier with only one hand as to avoid making forcible contact, the covering official may rule the offensive player down without the touch of a second hand.

Run Plays

- a. The quarterback may not run on a direct snap.
- b. There may not be lead blocks between the guards.
- c. The ball carrier may not initiate forcible contact with the defender. The ball carrier must make an effort to change direction.
- d. The ball carrier may not hurdle or jump over defenders.

Passing Plays

- a. A defensive player must not interfere with an offensive player's attempt to complete a catch.
- b. Once the offensive player has completed the catch and established himself as a runner, a defensive player can then legally stop the offensive player's progress by touching him with two hands.

RULE 5. SERIES OF DOWNS, TEAM POSSESSION, AND SCORING

SECTION 1. Series of Downs

- a. The offense has **three** downs to gain a first down or to reach the 15-yard line.
- b. A **fourth** down is awarded only once the offense reaches the 15-yard line or beyond.
 - i. On the fourth down play, the offense may either attempt to gain a first down or attempt to score.
- c. If the offense does not gain a first down or reach the 15-yard line, the offense retains possession and next series will begin at the 40-yard line with the down box and chains reset to first and ten.

SECTION 2. Team Possession & Declaring the Ball Dead

The team on offense retains possession of the ball for the duration of the half.

Fumbles

- a. The ball becomes dead immediately if the runner loses possession of the ball. The covering official will stop play and declare the ball dead by sounding his whistle.
- b. Any attempt to recover a fumble by either team is not permitted.
- c. The offense will retain possession and the ball will be placed at the previous spot with a loss of a down.

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Interceptions

- a. The ball becomes dead immediately if a defensive player intercepts a pass. The covering official will stop play and declare the ball dead by sounding his whistle.
- b. Any attempt by the player to run with the ball following an interception is not permitted.
- c. The offense will retain possession and the ball will be placed at the 40-yard line. Down box and chains will reset to first and ten.

Rule 6. Enforcement of Penalties

A flagrant foul will result in ejection. A total of three flagrant fouls in a season by a single player will result in suspension for the remainder of a season for that player.

Due to the length of the field, 15 yard penalties will be enforced as 10 yard penalties. All other penalties remain the same. If a 10 yard penalty is assessed at the 31 yard line or further, then the penalty is assessed by extending the chains forward and placing the ball back at the 40 yard line.

Fighting is an automatic ejection.

REAL9
FOOTBALL

REAL 9 FOOTBALL FIELD DIAGRAM TWO GAME FIELD SETUP

