

8V8

General Description:

- Eight offensive and eight defensive players are allowed on the field during live plays.
- A minimum of six players must be fielded to start or continue a contest.
- All players are eligible receivers.
- Offensive teams have four downs to successfully advance to the next zone-line-to-gain and earn a new set of downs.
- Zone lines-to-gain **1st downs** markers are located at the 20-, 40-, 40-, and 20-yard lines on a 100-yard field.
- If an 80-yard field is used, line-to-gain **1st down** markers are located on the 20-, 40-, and 20-yard lines.
- The ball will be spotted wherever the flag was at the time of the flag pull or the ball carrier left the field-of-play.
- Game officials will revert to the current National Federation of High Schools rules for any item not specifically covered in this rule book.

GAME RULES AND PENALTIES

FIELD

Football is played on a 80/ 100 yard field, 40/ 50 yards wide, with 10/ 20 yard end zones. First down are predesignated on the field and are exactly 20 yards apart.

SCORING

TOUCHDOWN: 6pts

EXTRA POINT: 1pt from 3-yard line or 2pts from 10-yard line

SAFETY: 2pts

Mercy Rule

- During tournament or league play the mercy rule will be automatically invoked if the score differential reaches 21 or more points during the final two minutes of the second half or 34 or more points at any time in the second half.

GAME CLOCK

- Games are 40 minutes (two 20-minute halves).
- Halftime is 5 minutes
- Each team will have two 1-minute time outs per half.
- Time outs will not roll over from the first half to second half.
- Clock will only stop for only timeouts, official review, play challenges, and injuries (Fake injuries will result in a 10-yard penalty and a loss of down)
- The clock will run continuously during the first 18 minutes of each half unless a team timeout is used or play is stopped by an official (ball carrier going out of bounds, timeouts, injury, first downs, incomplete passes, during a penalty, when a team scores, when the ball changes possession, during an official review, and during a play challenge.)

2 MINUTE WARNING

- A “**stop-clock**” or “**pro-clock**” will be in effect in the last two minutes of the second half, unless the point differential is greater than 21 points in the last two minutes of the second half.
- The head official will give a verbal two-minute warning as close as possible to the actual two-minute mark but will not interrupt a live play.
- The two-minute warning will stop the clock.
- **Pro- Clock-** Clock will stop with ball going out of bounds and incomplete passes.
- The time remaining on the clock will be announced after every play inside the final two minutes of the contest.
- The clock will not run during point-after-touchdown attempts (PATs) in last two minutes of each half.

HALFTIME

There will be a default 3-minute halftime break between halves. Both team captains may decide to shorten halftime.

PLAY CLOCK

The offense will have 20 seconds to get set and start the next play

Delay of Game: Automatic 5-yard penalty, redo down.

4 SECOND RUSH CLOCK ONLY STOPS WHEN DEFENSE PASSES THE L.O.S OR RUSHES

CHANGE OF POSSESSION

Directly after a change of possession, the defense will have **30** seconds to signal that they are ready before the offense may snap the ball. After the defense has stated that they are ready, the offense will have 30 seconds to get set and snap the ball.

TIMEOUTS

Each team receives 2 1-minute timeouts per half.

OVERTIME RULES (COLLEGE OVERTIME RULE)

If there is a tie after the second half, there will be an additional “overtime” period added to the game. Coin flip will be used to decide which team will receive the ball first. Overtime period will be similar to college rules in which teams will begin 20 yards out of their opponent’s end zone and receive 4 downs to score a touchdown. If a team scores a touchdown, they will also have the option of 1-point or 2-point extra point from 3-yards or 10-yards respectively. The first team to earn a higher score and stop the other team from tying the score wins the contest. If a team scores to get in the lead, but then the opposing team scores and goes for a higher extra point, and is successful, that team will be deemed the winner of the contest.

PLAYOFFS

Playoff games may require different rules, check with your head captain to make sure you understand the rules for playoff games.

OFFSIDE/ FALSE START

- If a player is caught on the wrong side of the LOS when the ball is snapped.
- If the offense jumps or moves before the ball is snapped after player is set.
- If defender jumps across line of scrimmage
 - False Start/Offsides On Offense: (ACCEPT: 5 Yard Loss From Previous Spot, Replay Down | DECLINE: Keep Play)
 - Offsides On Defense: (ACCEPT: 5 Yard Gain From Previous Spot, Replay Down | DECLINE: Keep Play)

1ST DOWN

Offense has 4 downs to get a 1st down, which are 20 yards apart and are predesignated on the field.

TURNOVER ON DOWNS/ CHANGE OF POSSESSION

- Turnover on downs results in the offense starting from place of the ball.

OR

- Teams can elect to punt the ball on 4th down

Ball Placement

- The spot of the ball is where the flags are (pulled, out of bounds, and etc) not the ball.

PITCHING/LATERALS

- A ball carrier may throw, toss, or give the football to their teammate during a play, as long as the ball does not travel forward in the process.
- If the ball is pitched backwards, and is dropped or fumbled, the ball is down where it made contact with the ground.

FALLING/DIVING

- Ball carriers may get up after falling to the ground if their flag was not pulled.
- If a player is on the ground (any part of their body besides hands or feet), they may be touched/ flag pulled to be downed, otherwise they may get up and continue running.
- If a ball carrier is pushed to the ground, but is not touched while on the ground, then the ball is still in play. A ball carrier must be touched by an opposing team player, while the player is on the ground, to be downed.
- If a receiver catches a pass and gets touched while in mid- air, then falls to the ground, they are down where they fell.

- **NO DIVING ALLOWED**

FORWARD PROGRESS

- If a ball carrier is pushed or carried back against their will as their flag is pulled, then the ball will be spotted at the position where the flags were prior to the player being pushed back.
- **PLAYER WILL BE TOLD TO GET HIS/HER WEIGHT UP....**

DEAD BALL

- If the ball makes contact with the ground (even while still in possession of the ball carrier), the ball is considered dead at the spot in which the ball made initial contact with the ground.

STIFF ARM/ FLAG GUARDING

- An offensive player may not stiff arm or guard his or her flags by blocking them with their hands or the ball.

5- yard penalty from spot

HOLDING

- If an offensive player grabs onto a defensive player in attempt to block them from reaching another player, this is considered an offensive hold.
- Defensive players ARE NOT allowed to hold onto a player to pull their flag.
- If a defensive player holds on to the garment of an offensive player unnecessarily when it is obvious that they will no longer be able to pull the flag, then this is considered holding on the defense.
- If the hold is done in an overly aggressive manner, the defensive player may be flagged for unnecessary roughness.
- If you are concerned about your shirt or shorts being ripped, then do not continue to aggressively try and escape if you are being held on to (please don't whine).
- Holding On Offense (Continuous Penalty | ACCEPT: 5 Yard Loss From Original Spot, Redo Down | DECLINE: Keep Play)
- Holding On Defense (Continuous Penalty | ACCEPT: 5 Yard Gain From Resulting Spot, 1st Down | DECLINE: Keep Play)

UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

- Disrespecting an Official/Volunteer: If a player at anytime disrespects (use of profanity, threatening, taunting, etc) an official or volunteer (recorders, photographers, etc), this will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty for the first offense, followed by an immediate player ejection for the second offense.

UNNECESSARILY LOUD PROFANITY

- We understand we are all adults, but we do need to look out for our fan base, especially the youth. Therefore, officials are required to penalize players for use of unnecessarily loud profanity. This may result in a warning the first time, but will definitely incur a penalty on the second offense.

DISRESPECTING/VANDALIZING EQUIPMENT

- Individuals are prohibited from forcibly/frustratingly throwing, striking, kicking, or vandalizing RFB equipment in any ways. This includes pylons, cones, footballs, referee flags, game clock, the commissioner, etc.
 - **First Offense:** Automatic 10 yard penalty.
 - **Second Offense:** Ejection from the game

STRIKING

- Striking anyone at a game or event will result in an automatic ejection, as well as being escorted off the field, and local authorities contacted. **NO TOLERANCE!**

LEAVING THE BENCH

- If one or more players from a team enter the field of play to argue with officials, intervene with a fight, or to delay the game in anyway. The team will receive an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty the first and second time. The third time will result in an automatic forfeit

OFFENSE:

- Quarterbacks have **5 seconds** to throw the ball with **no rush**.
- If Quarterback is rushed time goes away and quarterback can run
- Only one offensive player may be in motion at the snap and that motion must be parallel to the line-of-scrimmage.
- Player that moves forward before ball is snapped is considered false start.
- The ball must be snapped from the ground in a fluid and continuous motion.
- On the ball is allowed to hit the ground once and can be picked up, on the second bounce the ball is considered dead and will be placed where the ball landed.
- There are no required distances between the center and other offensive players on the line.

RECEIVING

- A player is in possession when he is inbounds (one foot) and has a clear, firm grip and control of the ball with their hands or arms.
- If there is any question by the covering official(s) as to whether a forward pass is complete, intercepted, or incomplete, it always will be ruled incomplete.
- If a receiver steps out of bounds without being forced by a defender, prior to the ball being caught, they may not be the first player to make contact with the ball after a legal forward pass.
- If a receiver's flag is pulled BEFORE they make contact with the ball that they're catching, they must be touched to be down. Otherwise, they are still in play.

Blocking:

- Contact blocking is allowed between the shoulders and waist only (a.k.a. "inside the frame").
- All blocking must INITIATE with open hands and not the elbows/shoulders, **ARMS FULLY EXTENDED** (i.e. players cannot begin a block with their shoulders).
- Blockers must be on their feet before, during and after contact is made with their opponents.
- No contact of any kind is allowed above the shoulders of an opponent or below the waist line
- **Two-on-one blocking is not permitted**
- **NO DOWNFIELD BLOCKING**
- **Illegal blocks include:**
 1. Leading with the shoulder
 2. Low/chop/cut blocks: An attempt by a player to block an opponent at the thigh level or lower.
 3. Crack-back block: A blind-side block on a player by an opponent who starts downfield and then cuts back toward the original spot of the ball to make contact.
 4. Blind-side block: Engaging an opponent who does not see the blocker approaching with anything other than fully extended arms and open palms.
 5. Clipping: A player hitting an opponent from behind.
 6. Tripping: A player using their leg or foot to stop an opponent's forward motion.
 7. Hook or hug block: A player gaining advantage of an opponent by turning or detaining the opponent by illegally tackling or using arms around the body, waist, shoulders or arms.
 8. Rolling blocks: A player on the ground attempting to block or engage an opponent by moving or turning over and over on an axis.
 9. Dive blocks: A player leaving her feet to engage an opponent.

10. Making contact with an opponent while swinging or flipping hands, arms or elbows.
11. Slapping, punching, or swinging at an opponent with hands, arms or elbows.
12. Grabbing or holding an opponent's jersey while blocking.
13. Interlocking of blocker's fingers or hands.
14. Laying on a downed defender
15. Swim moves (a player using a maneuver similar to a freestyle swimming stroke to get past an opponent) are legal. However, if the swim move results in contact to an opponent above the shoulder (neck, head, or face) it is illegal.
16. Downfield blocking for the ball carrier is allowed.
17. Blocking downfield while the ball is in the air is pass interference except if the pass is behind the line of scrimmage.
18. If a player turns to expose their back, it is not an illegal block as long as their opponent maintains contact with the player from the initial block.

- **Illegal Block (ACCEPT: 10 yard loss from spot of the foul, replay down | DECLINE: Keep play)**

Run Plays:

- The quarterback **CAN ONLY RUN IF RUSHED...**
- The offense may use multiple backward hand-offs or laterals.
- **5 SECOND RUSH CLOCK ONLY STOPS WHEN DEFENSE PASSES THE L.O.S OR RUSHES**

Pass Plays:

- Teams can make an unlimited number of backward passes and then throw a forward pass provided the player throwing the ball is behind the line of scrimmage.

DEFENSE:

Rushing:

- **5 SECOND RUSH CLOCK ONLY STOPS WHEN DEFENSE PASSES THE L.O.S OR RUSHES**
- Defensive players may not line up directly in front of an offensive lineman (i.e. head-to-head). They must "shade" (face toward each other but shoulder-to-shoulder) to one side or the other of their opponent for safety reasons or be a minimum of one yard away from the offensive lineman at the snap.
- The center is considered a defenseless player while their head is down in the snapping position and cannot be contacted until they assume a blocking position or has fired out into their pattern.
- Players rushing must be 2 yards off the line of scrimmage, you can rush any number of players.

Roughing the Passer, Kicker, Holder, Center:

- Defensive players must make a concerted effort to avoid charging into an unprotected player.
- To assist defensive players to avoid unnecessary contact with the passer the covering official will endeavor, but is not required, to announce “balls away” when the ball has left the passer’s hand.
- In general, defensive players may not “crash” the passer’s throwing arm, shoulder or body even if the ball is touched first. This rule applies to holders
- An insignificant “brush-by” may be allowed by the referee but is not guaranteed.
- Making contact with the quarterback while blocking a pass or attempting to block a pass may result in a roughing the passer penalty.
- Whether or not a ball is tipped in the air by the defense has no bearing on the play as it applies to fouls (roughing, pass interference, personal fouls, etc.).
- The defense can knock the ball down, but the ball must have left the passer’s hand.
- A roughing penalty will not be enforced if a passer initiates contact with a defensive player while in the throwing motion; for example, during the passer’s follow through their arm makes contact with an opponent’s hand, arm, or shoulder. In this instance the energy of the contact is the action of the passer and not the defender. This is a judgment call.
- It is a personal foul if the passer’s follow through hand or arm makes contact with an opponent’s head, neck or face.

Pass Coverage:

- Contacting receivers within the initial five yards from scrimmage is allowed as long as the ball is not in the air. (**Press Coverage**)
- A defender may turn an opponent “off their route” as long as the defender’s hands are “inside the frame”.
- Pass interference normally occurs above the waist; entangled feet are not considered pass interference. Incidental contact is not considered pass interference.
- **Examples of pass interference include:**
 1. Shoving or pushing off to create separation.
 2. Playing through the back.
 3. Hook and turn: grabbing the torso and turning an opponent before the pass arrives.
 4. Defender is looking at the receiver and makes significant contact materially impeding the receiver.

5. Arm bars, hooking, restricting, grabbing wrists, or turning a receiver.
6. Blocking downfield before the ball has been touched, commonly seen through “**pick plays**”.
7. Cutting off the path of a receiver by being in front of them and slowing down or being beside them and “riding” them off her path to the ball.
8. Uncatchable pass can overturn a pass interference call
9. A player may use their arms or hands to intentionally obstruct the receiver’s view (face guarding) of the ball without turning their own head to play the ball as long as noteworthy contact is not made with the receiver.
10. The remedy for defensive pass interference is 10-yard and an automatic first down or half the distance to the goal and a first down, even if it occurred in the end zone.
11. Interceptions may be returned.
12. Interceptions in the end zone that are not returned to the field of play will result in a touchback and the ball will be spotted on the 20-yard line.

Pass Interference On Offense (ACCEPT: 10 Yard Loss From Previous Spot | DECLINE: Keep Play)

Pass Interference On Defense (ACCEPT: 10 Yard Gain From Previous Spot, Automatic 1st Down | DECLINE: Keep Play)

The Kicking Game:

Kick Offs/ Throwoff

- Kick Offs will happen at the beginning of the game and the start of the 2nd half
- The kicking team will kick from their 40-yard line unless moved by penalty.
- All players of the kicking team must start with one foot on the kicking line with the exception of the kicker
- The receiving team’s restraining line will be 10-yards from the kicking team’s restraining line.
- If a kickoff goes out of bounds untouched beyond the receiving team’s restraining line, but before the 35-yard line, the ball is put in play at the point where the ball left the field of play plus a 5-yard penalty tacked on.
- If the ball goes out of bounds untouched between the 35-yard line and the goal line the ball is put in play at the 35-yard line.
- Touchbacks will be spotted at the 20-yard line.

Protected Punt:

- On any down, the offense may request protection for a protected punt.
- Both teams must maintain at least 4 players on the line until the ball is kicked.

- The offense cannot cross the line of scrimmage until the ball is kicked.
- Lineman on the defensive line may raise their arms, and or jump to distract, or try to block the kick but may not cross the line of scrimmage. Defenders may not move laterally along the line of scrimmage until the ball is kicked.
- If a protected punt has been announced and a timeout is called, the team must re-declare their intention for a protected punt.
- If a protected punt has been announced and then the kicking team runs an offensive play, the penalty shall be an immediate dead ball foul for unsportsmanlike conduct (15 yards and a loss of down).
- All touchbacks will be placed at the 20-yard line.
- Ball can be picked up after One Bounce, on the Second bounce ball is Dead

Onside Play Option:

1. This option is available at any time
2. This option is not available after a team has scored a safety.
3. Team attempting the onside must let the referee know along with opposing team.
4. The ball is placed at the offensive team's 20-yard line, going out.
5. This play is treated exactly like a fourth down play including the assessment of penalties with one exception. If a foul occurs that includes an automatic first down (ex: roughing the passer) the offense will receive a new set of downs. They will receive the 15-yard penalty and replay the down, i.e. first and five from the 35-yard line, line to gains is the 40-yard line.
6. The offense must advance the ball to the 40-yard line or beyond, after all live ball penalties have been assessed in order to retain the ball.
7. Dead ball penalties will not be considered in determining if the line-to-gain was achieved.
8. If the offense retains the ball the next zone-line-to-gain will be determined.
9. If the offense does not retain the ball the defense will take possession of the ball where it became dead (end of the run or previous line of scrimmage) and the next zone-line-to-gain will be established.
10. Interceptions returned to the end zone by the defense during an onside play are worth six points and a PAT attempt.