



ROOKIE TACKLE RULEBOOK



American Development Model / 2018 National Opt-In

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1: 6-PLAYER RULES	2
2: 7-PLAYER RULES	8
3: 8-PLAYER RULES	13

3 / 6-PLAYER RULES

Rookie Tackle uses the NFHS rule book as a base and employs the following adjustments for 6-player football.

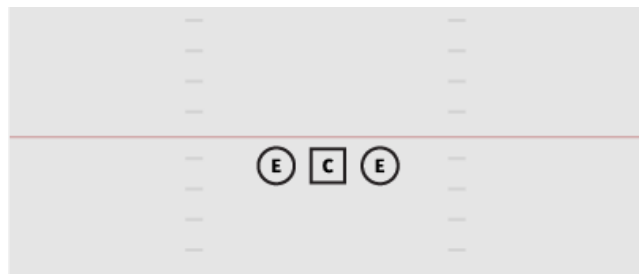
1. Because of the all players, all positions, all skills philosophy, there are no restrictions on jersey numbers or player positions.
2. All game action takes place on one half of the field with all possessions starting on the 40-yard line going toward the end zone in between the numbers.
3. A turnover on downs brings the ball back to the 40-yard line, and the teams switch sides from offense to defense, defense to offense.
4. Turnovers on interceptions or fumbles are blown dead immediately. No returns are allowed in order to protect players from running toward the 20-yard administration zone between the two fields. Play restarts on the 40-yard line with the recovering/intercepting team now on offense. There are no defensive touchdowns.
5. After each play, the ball is spotted in the middle of the field. Hash marks are not used.
6. Because of the limited field size, all 15-yard penalties are enforced as 10-yard penalties.
7. No penalty on the offense can take the ball beyond the 40-yard line to ensure the administration zone is free.
8. Penalties on the offense that are called and accepted on or behind the 40-yard line result in a loss of down.
9. Penalties on the offense called between the 40-yard line and the end zone in which yardage is lost, even if limited in enforcement by the 40-yard line, are enforced as written in terms of down lost or replayed.
10. There are no defensive safeties. Tackles behind the 40-yard line are respotted at the 40-yard line with the offense still retaining the ball as long as a down remains.
11. All personal foul penalties include an immediate substitution from the field for a minimum of one play to allow coaches to address misconduct and promote good sportsmanship. We call this a cooling off period.
12. All plays are blown dead and the ball is returned to the 40-yard line if an offensive ball-carrier or a fumbled ball crosses over midfield or at the official's discretion if coaches, administrators or players from the multiple fields and the dead zone area become close enough in proximity to be a concern for safety.
13. The game is played in four 10-minute quarters with a running clock. The clock may stop after a score to flip the field.

Special teams adjustments:

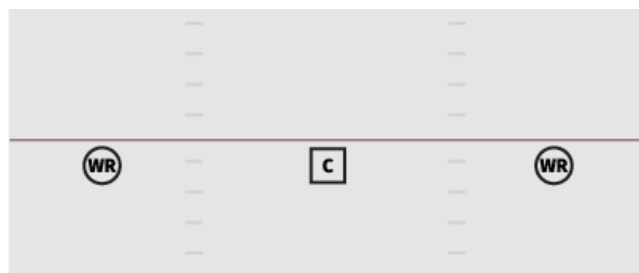
1. There are no special teams.
 - a. There are no kickoff or punts. Each possession starts with the ball on the 40-yard line, regardless of whether there is a score, turnover or turnover on downs.
 - b. There are no extra points by a kick.
 - i. All PATs are attempted through a run or pass try. Coaches can choose to go for one point from the 3-yard line or two points from the 5-yard line.

Offensive adjustments:

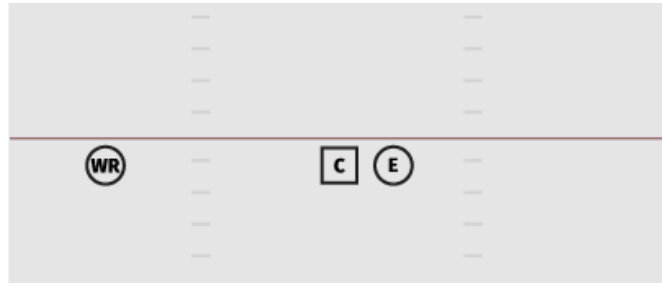
1. The quarterback-center exchange may be direct, pistol or shotgun.
2. All players are eligible to receive a pass.
 - a. Any pass to the snapper/center must travel at least 1-yard beyond the line of scrimmage.
3. All players, except for the center, may receive a handoff behind the neutral zone and become a runner.
 - a. Rule application: A player aligned on the line of scrimmage next to the center in a two-point stance may receive a handoff behind the line of scrimmage. He or she is considered an end, not a guard, and is not required to align in the backfield to be an eligible runner.
4. The player who receives the snap may not directly run with the ball. A handoff, pitch or toss must take place, and the player who receives the ball may run.
 - a. If the player who is intended to receive the snap fumbles the ball or it touches the ground before a handoff takes place, he or she is still not eligible to advance the ball, only to recover it.
5. At least three players – one of which is the center – must be on the line of scrimmage at the snap. These players must be on opposite sides of the center but may be aligned close, as if guards,



or wide as if receivers



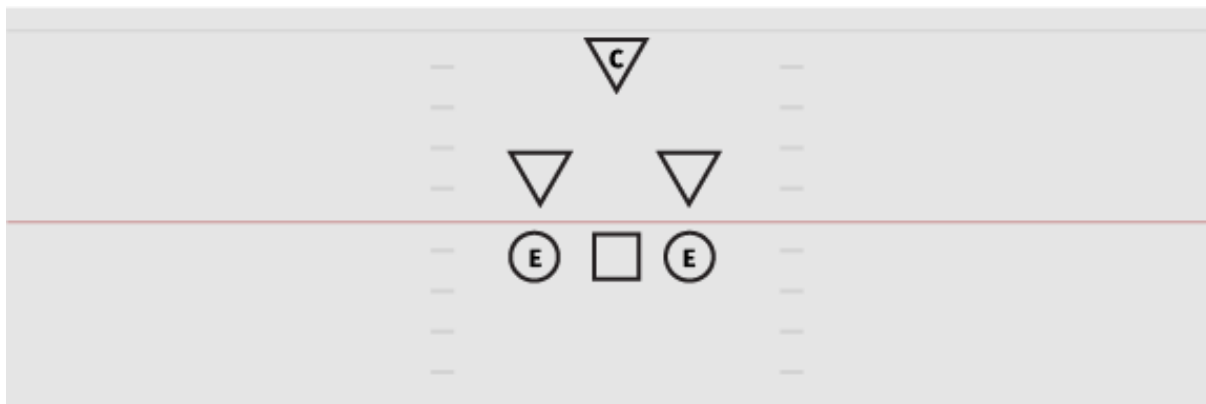
or mixed.



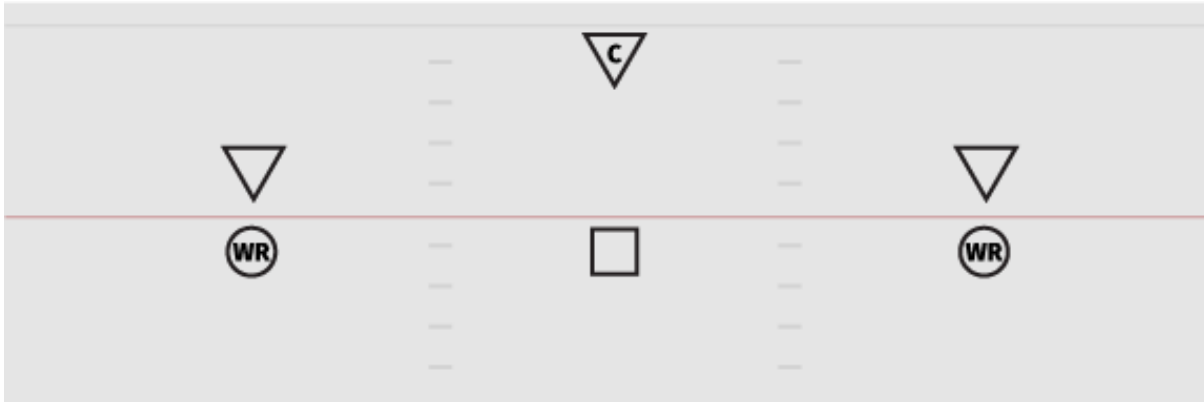
6. All players must be in a two-point stance even if aligned and functioning as traditional offensive lineman. Only the center may be in a three-point stance and only with one hand on the ball. The other hand must be off the ground.
7. The remaining three players must be aligned in the backfield but can be deployed at a coach's discretion, slot receiver, wing back, running back, etc.
8. Motion is allowed by backfield players.
9. There is no blocking below the waist by any player anywhere on the field.

Defensive Adjustments

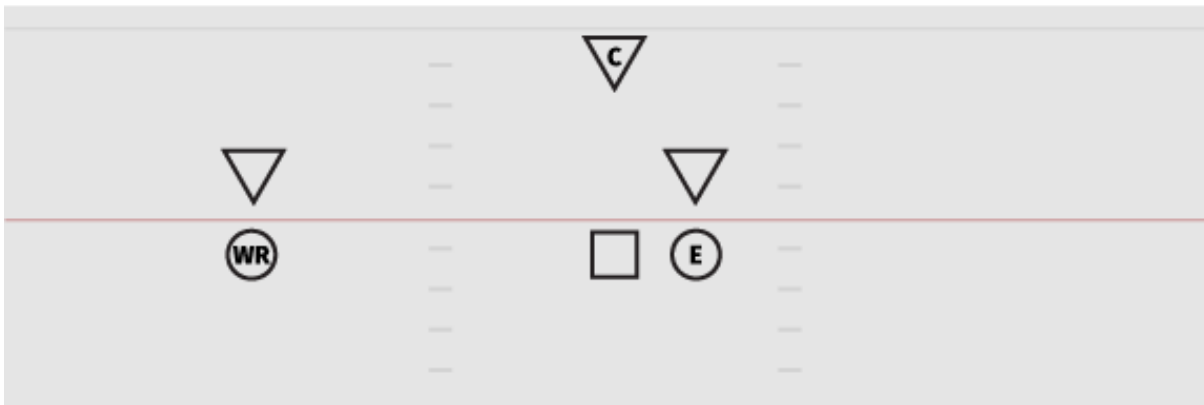
1. The center must be uncovered. The defensive player aligned directly in line with the center must be four yards behind the line of scrimmage.
2. Defensive players covering the other two players on the line of scrimmage may also align on the line of scrimmage but must remain in a two-point stance and must be aligned directly overtop the offensive line of scrimmage player. They may not shade inside or outside to the gap.



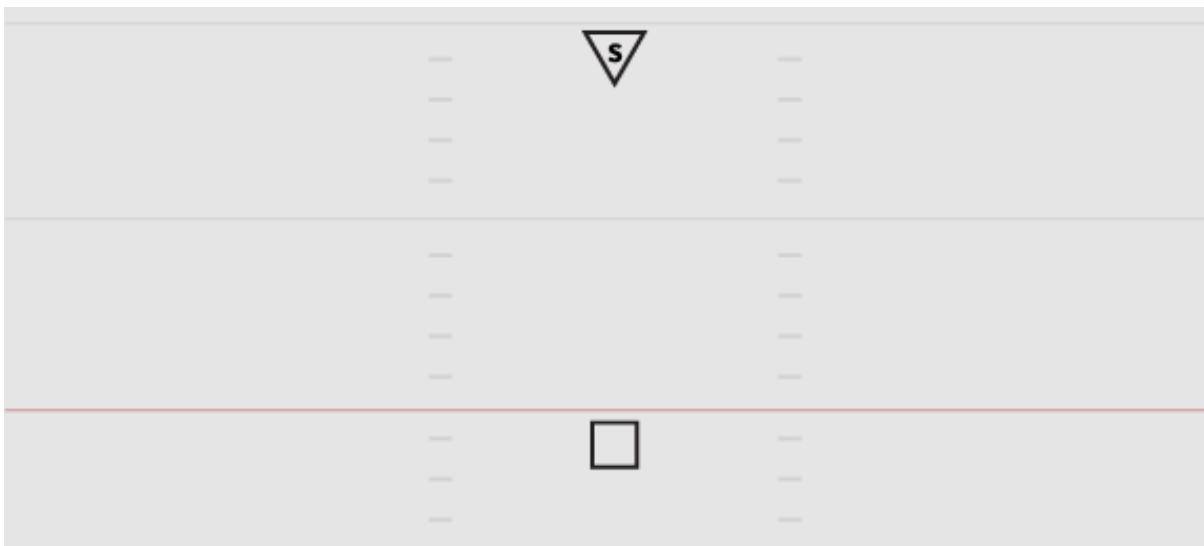
Or versus a wide player (still must be head up; cannot shade inside or outside).



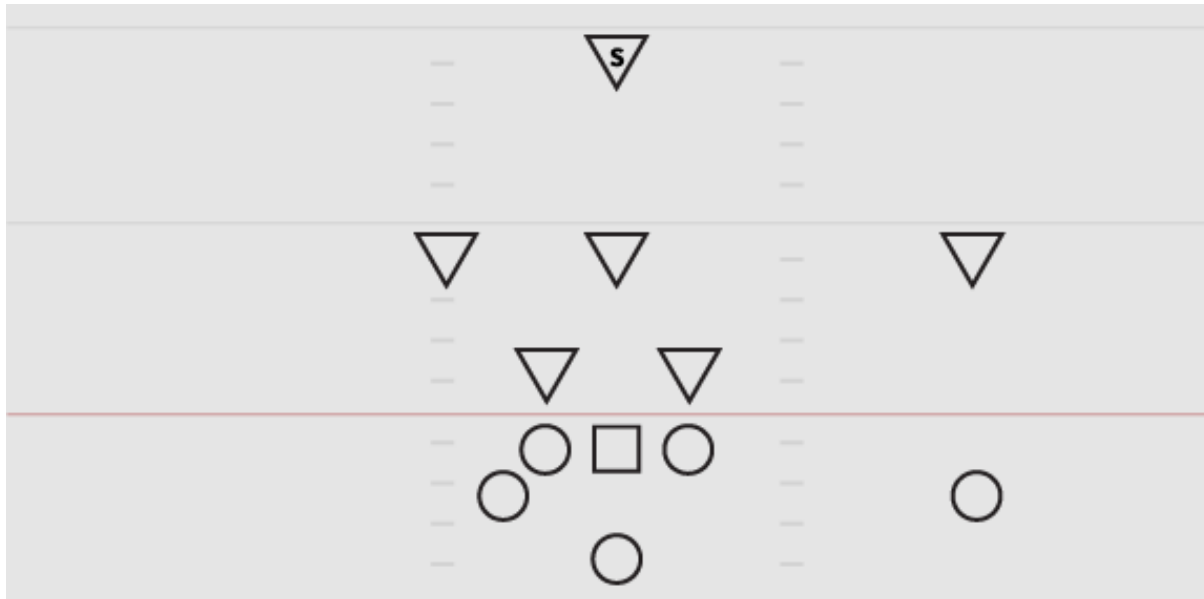
Versus a mixed formation, both defensive players are on the line of scrimmage and head up.



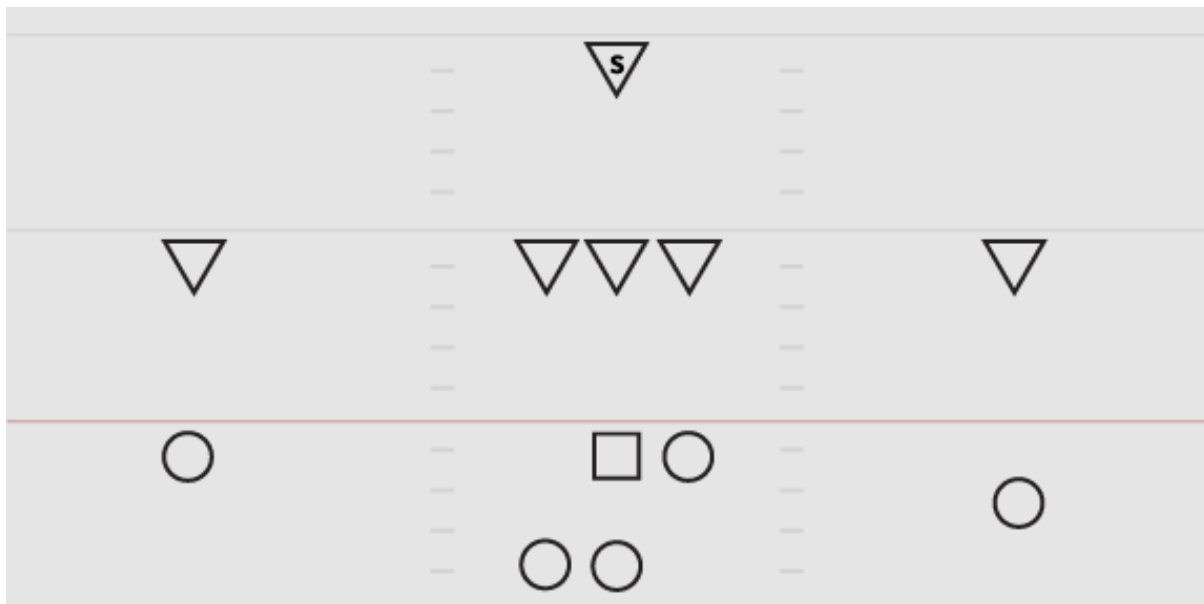
3. At least one player must be aligned at 10-yards depth as if a traditional safety.



-
4. All other players must be aligned at four-yards depth.



5. Defenses are not required to match line of scrimmage players and can align more player at depth.



6. No blitzes are allowed. Players within the box at the snap can penetrate upon the snap. Linebackers, safeties and cornerbacks (both on the line and at depth) can flow to the ball naturally after a handoff is made, but predetermining penetration to a specific gap is illegal.

-
- a. The box includes offensive players who line up within two yards of the ball and on the line of scrimmage along with the defensive players lined up directly over them.
 - b. On pass plays, anyone outside the box on the snap cannot rush the quarterback and must remain behind the line of scrimmage in pass coverage.
 - c. Coaches are encouraged to be creative with their formations but not use “the box” to delay defensive penetration.
 - d. NOTE: The restriction on blitzing is intended to encourage skill development within the passing game and allow young players to execute a successful handoff with limited penetration.
7. If the ball is inside the 4-yard line, the three non-linemen, non-deep players may align on the goal line.

4 / 7-PLAYER RULES

Rookie Tackle uses the NFHS rule book as a base and employs the following adjustments for 7-player football:

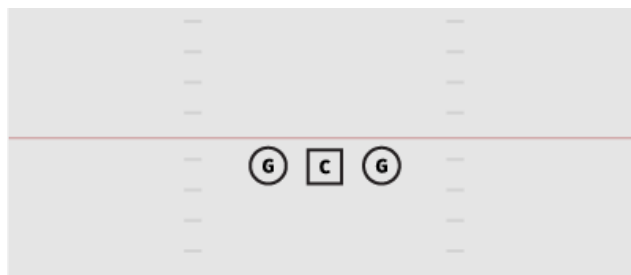
1. Because of the all players, all positions, all skills philosophy, there are no restrictions on jersey numbers or player positions.
2. All game action takes place on one half of the field with all possessions starting on the 40-yard line going toward the end zone in between the numbers.
3. A turnover on downs brings the ball back to the 40-yard line, and the teams switch sides from offense to defense, defense to offense.
4. Turnovers on interceptions or fumbles are blown dead immediately. No returns are allowed in order to protect players from running toward the 20-yard administration zone between the two fields. Play restarts on the 40-yard line with the recovering/intercepting team now on offense. There are no defensive touchdowns.
5. After each play, the ball is spotted in the middle of the field. Hash marks are not used.
6. Because of the limited field size, all 15-yard penalties are enforced as 10-yard penalties.
7. No penalty on the offense can take the ball beyond the 40-yard line to ensure the administration zone.
8. Penalties on the offense that are called and accepted on or behind the 40-yard line result in a loss of down.
9. Penalties on the offense called between the 40-yard line and the end zone in which yardage is lost, even if limited in enforcement by the 40-yard line, are enforced as written in terms of down lost or replayed.
10. There are no defensive safeties. Tackles behind the 40-yard line are respotted at the 40-yard line.
11. All personal foul penalties include an immediate substitution from the field for a minimum of one play to allow coaches to address misconduct and promote good sportsmanship. We call this a cooling off period.
12. All plays are blown dead and the ball is returned to the 40-yard line if an offensive ball-carrier or a fumbled ball crosses over midfield or at the official's discretion if coaches, administrators or players from the multiple fields and the dead zone area become close enough in proximity to be a concern for safety.
13. The game is played in four 10-minute quarters with a running clock. The clock may stop after a score to flip the field.

Special teams adjustments:

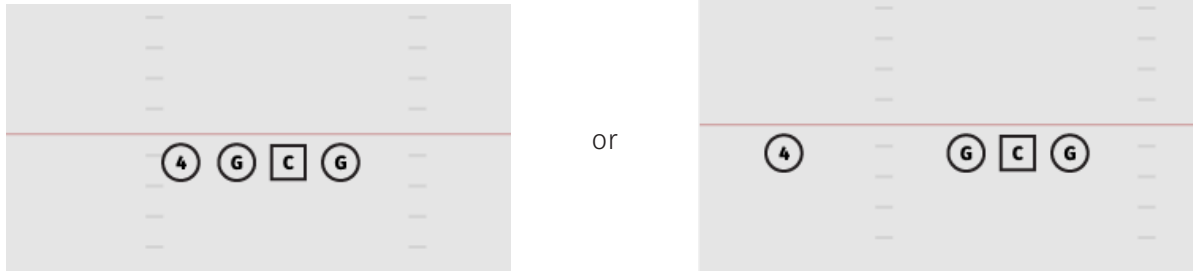
1. There are no special teams.
 - c. There are no kickoff or punts. Each possession starts with the ball on the 40-yard line, regardless of whether there is a score, turnover or turnover on downs.
 - d. There are no extra points by a kick.
 - i. All PATs are attempted through a run or pass try. Coaches can choose to go for one point from the 3-yard line or two points from the 5-yard line.

Offensive adjustments:

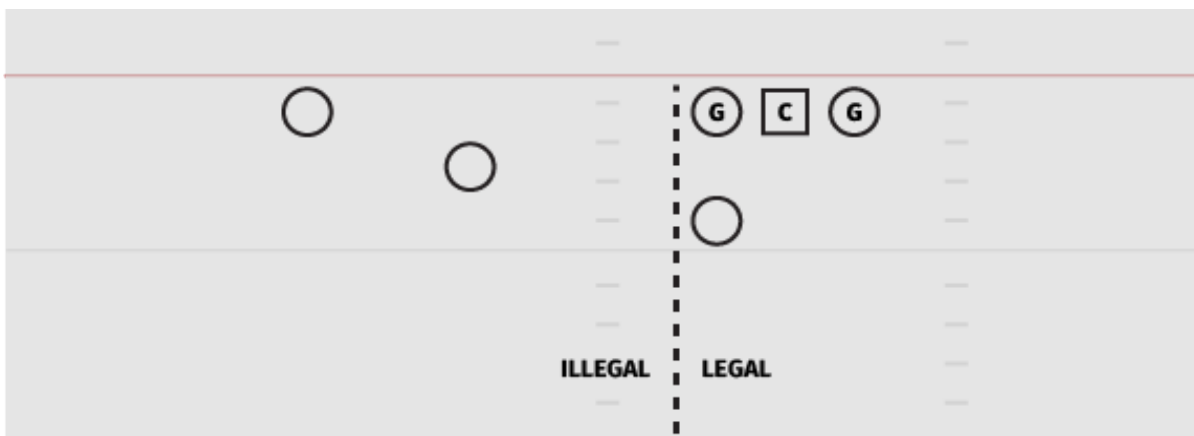
1. Each play must include three offensive linemen – a center and two guards, one on either side of the center. These players are ineligible for first touch as the receiver of a pass regardless of the numbers on their jerseys. Player rotations may result with traditional non-lineman numbers at these positions for the purpose of fundamental skill development.
2. Guards are required to play from a two-point stance. There are no three-point stances.
3. The center may only have his or her snapping hand down.
4. The distance between a guard and center may not exceed three feet (1 yard) but may be closer.
5. Because of the all players, all positions, all skills philosophy, players should change positions during the game. Therefore:
 - a. The three offensive linemen must identify themselves on each play by raising their hands as they break the huddle and approach the line of scrimmage.
 - b. Once identified as an offensive lineman, players may not shift to another position.
 - c. All three offensive linemen are ineligible for first touch on a pass, including a guard who is uncovered by an end.
6. The quarterback-center exchange may be direct, pistol or shotgun.
7. Quarterback sneaks are prohibited in all situations because the defense is not allowed to have players aligned over the center or in the center-guard A gap.



8. The offense must have four players on the line of scrimmage. No more, no less. The fourth player can be a tight end or split end. See figures below.



9. The four offensive players who are not playing guard or center may be deployed in positions at the coach's discretion as long as one is on the line of scrimmage (see rule 9).
10. No trips formations are allowed.
- a. For purpose of Rookie Tackle, Trips is defined as any three players outside the guard-to-guard box

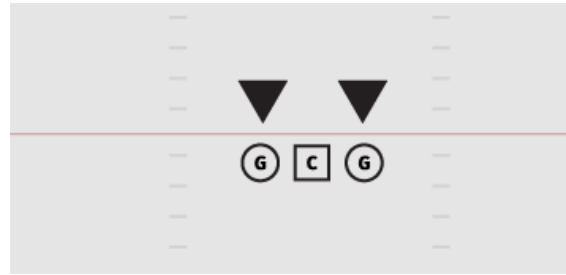


11. Motion is allowed by a backfield player as long as it does not create a trips formation..
12. All blocks below the waist, in any situation, are illegal.

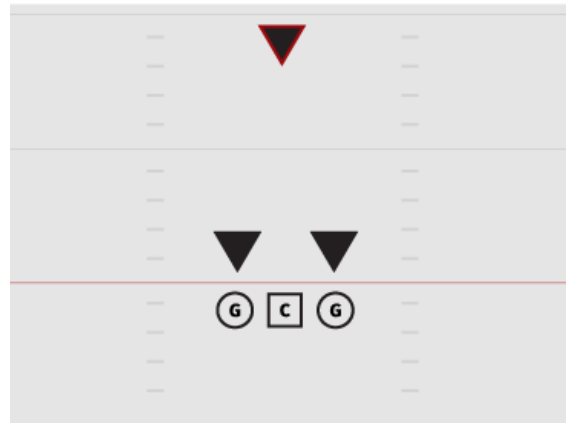
Defensive Adjustments

1. Defenses may only have two defensive linemen unless an offensive formation includes a tight end. In that case, a third defensive lineman may line up over the tight end.
2. Defensive linemen must be in a two-point stance.
3. Defensive linemen over guards must be aligned in a head up or outside shade position.

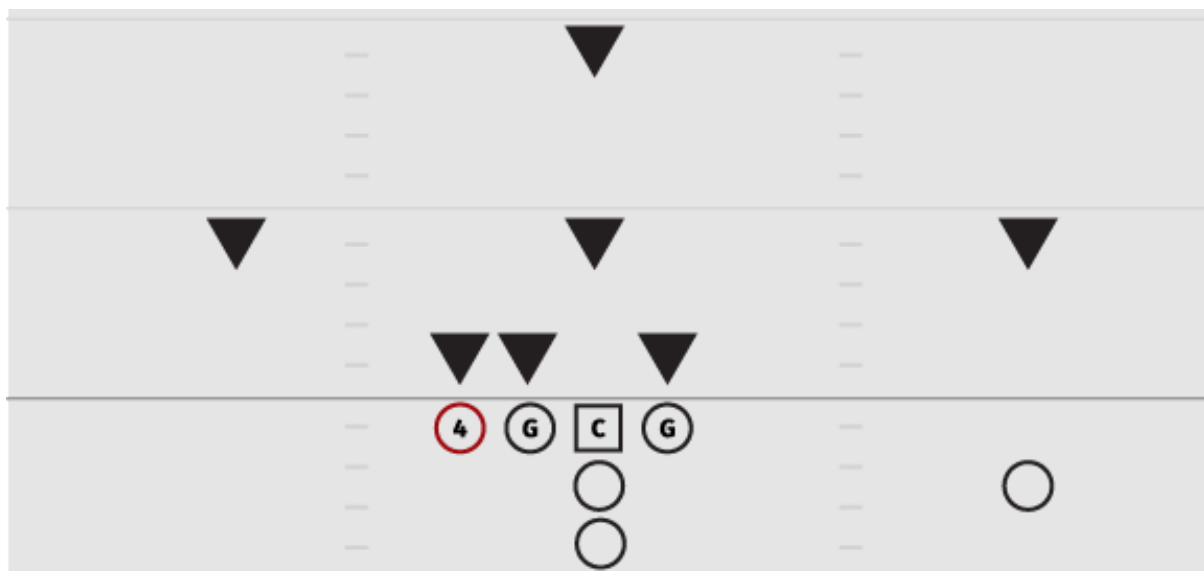
-
4. Players in an outside shade must always have one foot aligned inside the stance of the opposing guards



5. The defense must have one player at least 10 yards from the ball.



6. The remaining four players can be deployed at the coach's discretion but must be four yards off the line of scrimmage unless covering a tight end or split end on the line of scrimmage.
- a. Example: If the offense aligns with its fourth line-of-scrimmage player as a tight end, then the defense may align a player directly over the tight end on the line of scrimmage to balance the running surface.



-
- b. Defenses are not required to match the fourth player on the line of scrimmage but have the option to do so.
7. No blitzes are allowed. Players within the box at the snap can penetrate upon the snap. Linebackers, safeties and cornerbacks (both on the line and at depth) can flow to the ball naturally after a handoff is made, but predetermining penetration to a specific gap is illegal.
 - a. The box includes offensive players who line up within two yards of the ball and on the line of scrimmage along with the defensive players lined up directly over them.
 - b. On pass plays, anyone outside the box on the snap cannot rush the quarterback and must remain behind the line of scrimmage in pass coverage.
 - c. Coaches are encouraged to be creative with their formations but not use “the box” to delay defensive penetration.
 - d. NOTE: The restriction on blitzing is intended to encourage skill development within the passing game and allow young players to execute a successful handoff with limited penetration.
 8. If the ball is inside the 4-yard line, the four non-linemen, non-deep players may align on the goal line.

5 / 8-PLAYER RULES

Rookie Tackle uses the NFHS rule book as a base and employs the following adjustments for 8-player football:

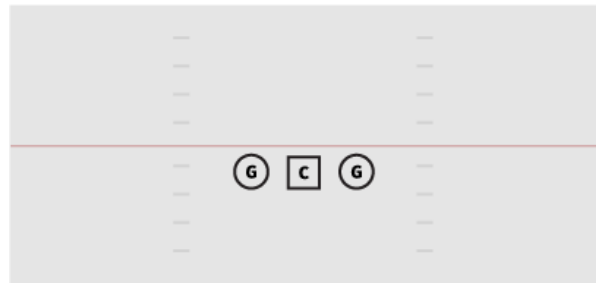
1. Because of the all players, all positions, all skills philosophy, there are no restrictions on jersey numbers or player positions.
2. All game action takes place on one half of the field with all possessions starting on the 40-yard line going toward the end zone in between the numbers.
3. A turnover on downs brings the ball back to the 40-yard line, and the teams switch sides from offense to defense, defense to offense.
4. Turnovers on interceptions or fumbles are blown dead immediately. No returns are allowed in order to protect players from running into the 20-yard administration zone between the two fields. Play restarts on the 40-yard line with the recovering/intercepting team now on offense. There are no defensive touchdowns.
5. After each play, the ball is spotted in the middle of the field. Hash marks are not used.
6. Because of the limited field size, all 15-yard penalties are enforced as 10-yard penalties.
7. No penalty on the offense can take the ball beyond the 40-yard line to ensure the administration zone.
8. Penalties on the offense that are called and accepted on or behind the 40-yard line result in a loss of down.
9. Penalties on the offense called between the 40-yard line and the end zone in which yardage is lost, even if limited in enforcement by the 40-yard line, are enforced as written in terms of down lost or replayed.
10. There are no defensive safeties. Tackles behind the 40-yard line are respotted at the 40-yard line.
11. All plays are blown dead and the ball is returned to the 40-yard line if an offensive ball-carrier or a fumbled ball crosses over midfield or at the official's discretion if coaches, administrators or players from the multiple fields and the dead zone area become close enough in proximity to be a concern for safety.
12. All personal foul penalties include an immediate substitution from the field for a minimum of one play to allow coaches to address misconduct and promote good sportsmanship. We call this a cooling off period.
13. The game is played in four 10-minute quarters with a running clock. The clock may stop after a score to flip the field.

Special teams adjustments:

1. There are no special teams.
 - e. There are no kickoff or punts. Each possession starts with the ball on the 40-yard line, regardless of whether there is a score, turnover or turnover on downs.
 - f. There are no extra points by a kick.
 - i. All PATs are attempted through a run or pass try. Coaches can choose to go for one point from the 3-yard line or two points from the 5-yard line.

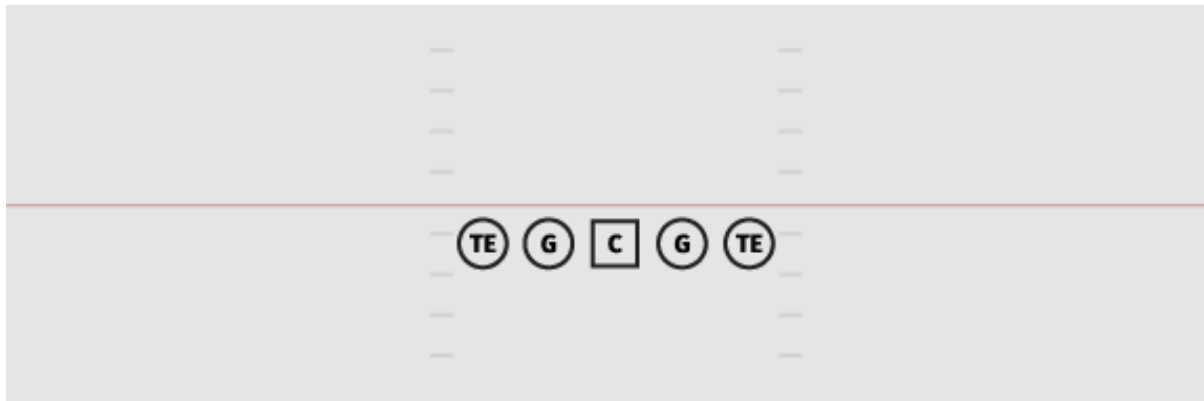
Offensive adjustments:

1. Each play must include three offensive linemen – a center and two guards, one on either side of the center. These players are ineligible for first touch as the receiver of a pass. Player rotations may result with traditional non-lineman numbers at these positions for the purpose of fundamental skill development.

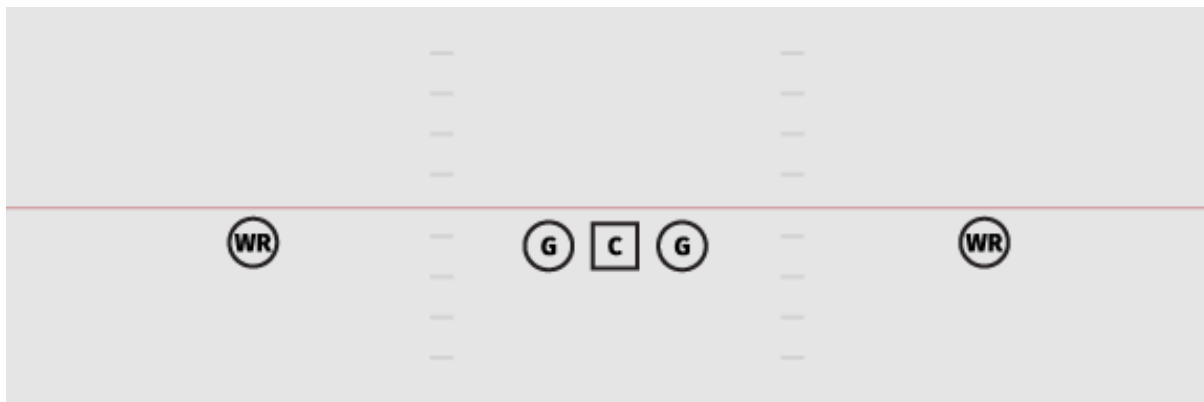


2. Guards are required to play from a two-point stance.
3. The center may only have his or her snapping hand down.
4. The distance between a guard and center may not exceed three feet (1 yard) but may be closer.
5. Because of the all players, all positions, all skills philosophy, players should change positions during the game. Therefore:
 - a. The three offensive linemen must identify themselves on each play by raising their hands as they break the huddle and approach the line of scrimmage.
 - b. Once identified as an offensive lineman, players may not shift to another position.
 - c. All three offensive linemen are ineligible for first touch on a pass.
6. The quarterback-center exchange may be direct, pistol or shotgun.
7. Quarterback sneaks are prohibited in all situations because the defense is not allowed to have players aligned over the center or in the center-guard A gap.
8. The offense must have five players on the line of scrimmage. No more, no less. The fourth and fifth players can be tight ends, split ends or a combination of the two. Only the two end players on the line of scrimmage are eligible for first touching of a pass.

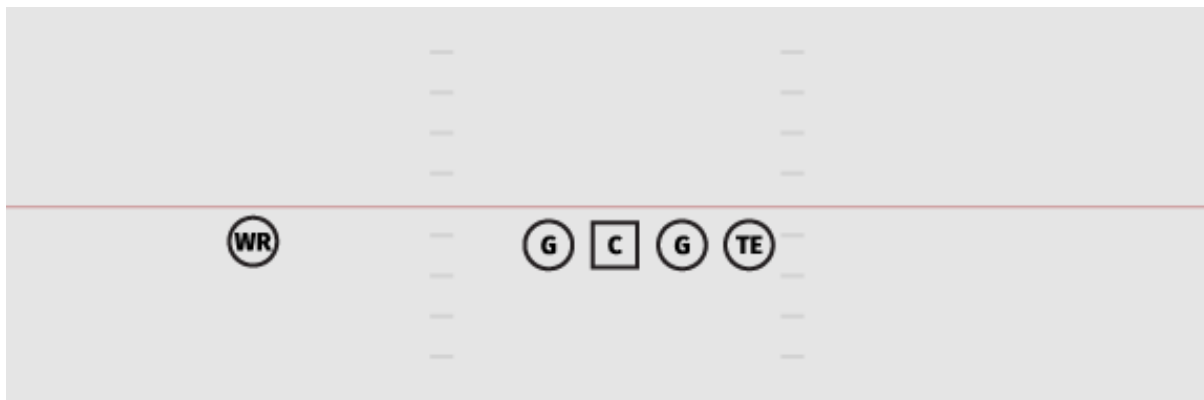
-
9. There are no unbalanced lines. The split ends/tight ends must be on opposite sides of the center.



or



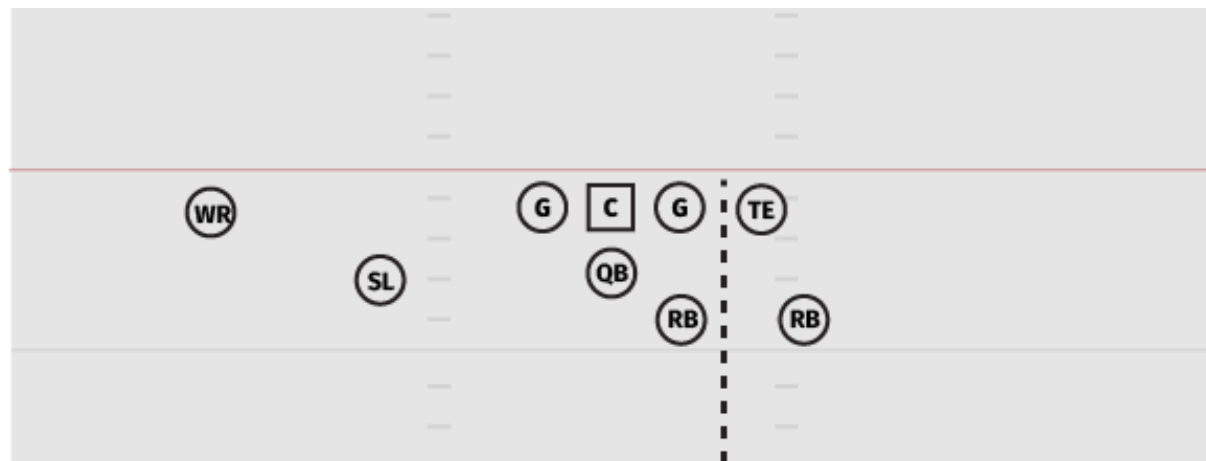
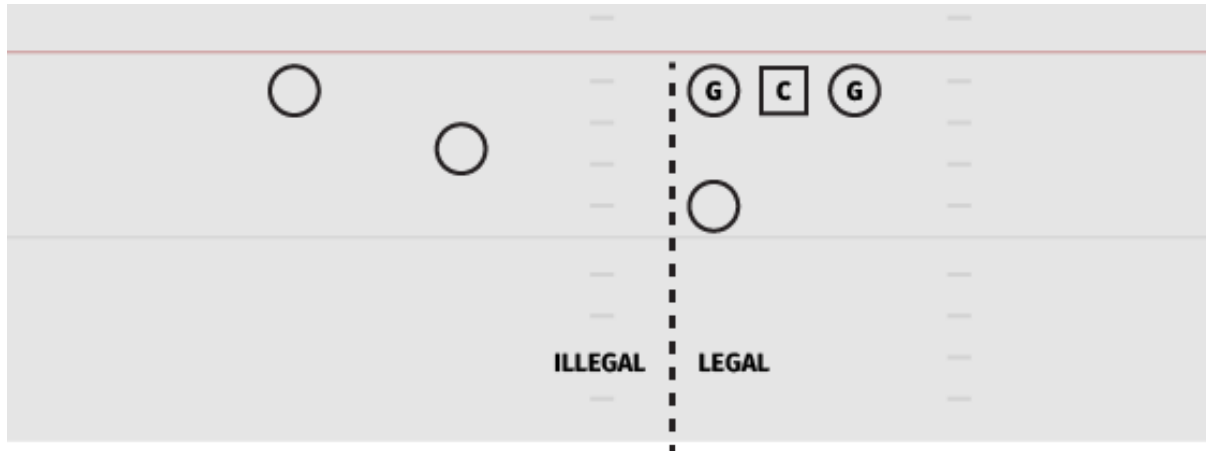
or



10. The five offensive players who are not playing guard or center may be deployed in positions at the coach's discretion as long as two are on the line of scrimmage (see rule 9).
- Multiple running backs, slot receivers, wing backs, etc., are allowed but also must be balanced.

11. No trips formations are allowed.

- a. For purpose of Rookie Tackle, Trips is defined as any three players outside the guard-to-guard box



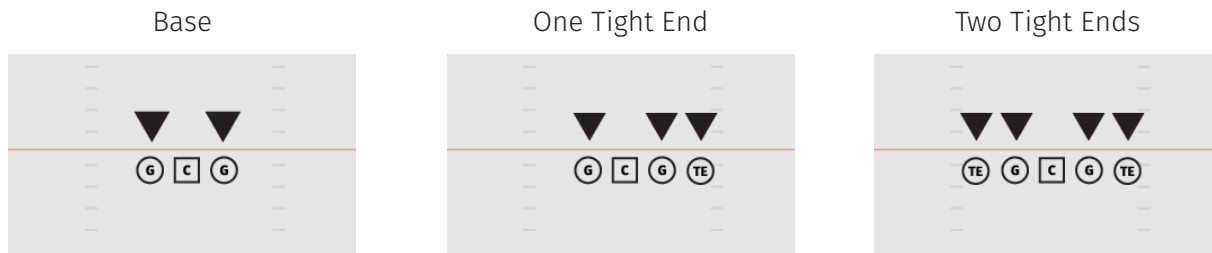
(Both legal: Even if outside the G-G box, there are only two players on that side of the field, not Trips)

12. Motion is allowed as long as it does not form a trips formation.

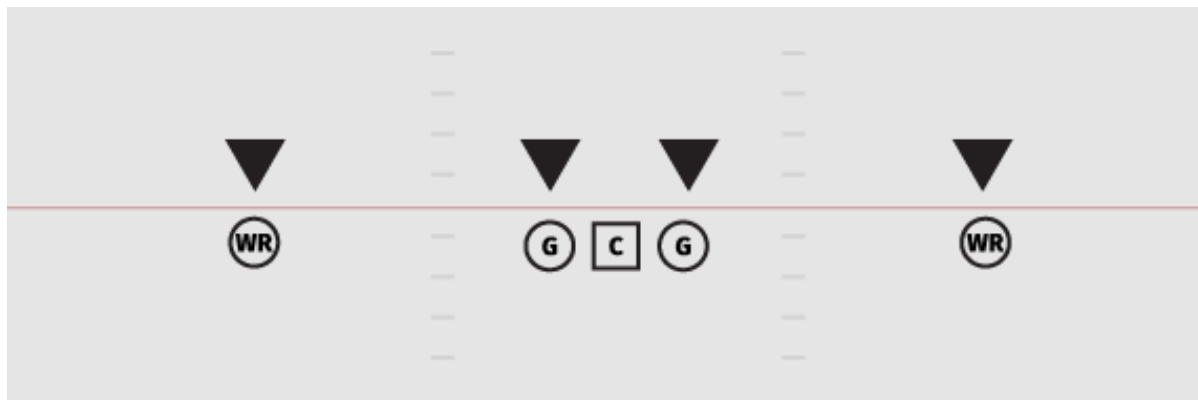
13. All blocks below the waist by any player anywhere on the field are illegal

Defensive adjustments:

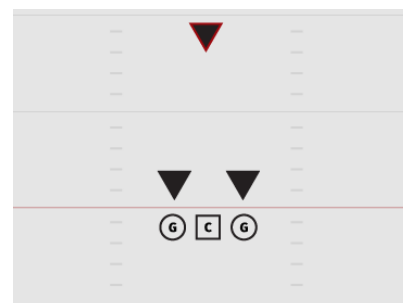
1. Defenses may only have two defensive linemen unless an offensive formation includes a tight end. In that case, a third defensive lineman may line up over the tight end. Two tight ends allows the defense to use four defensive linemen.



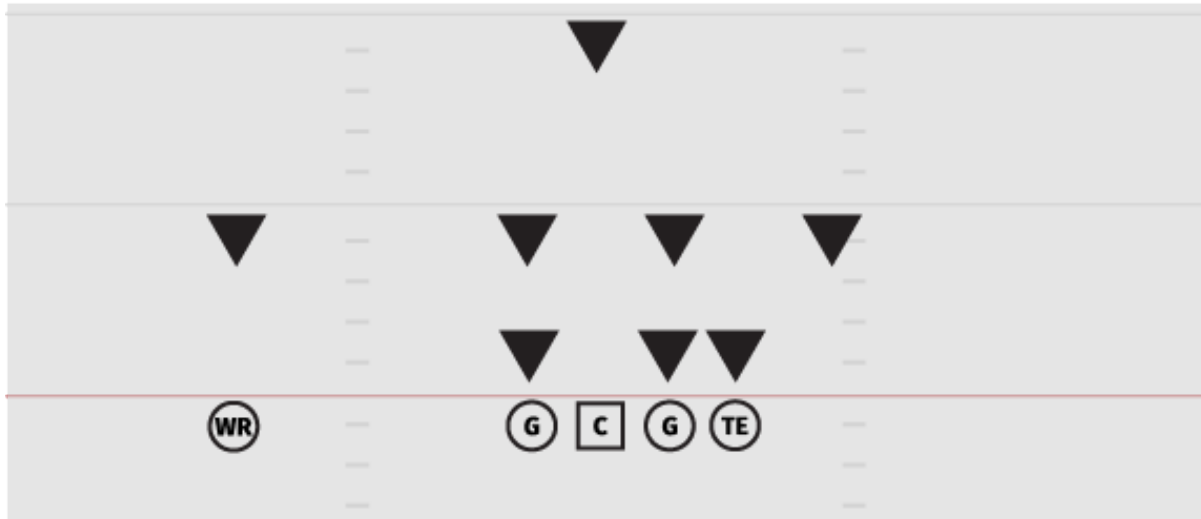
2. Defensive linemen must be in a two-point stance.
3. Defensive linemen must be aligned on the guards and/or tight ends in a head up position.
 - No shade or gap alignment
4. If the offense aligns with no tight ends, the defense may still align with four players on the line of scrimmage, but they must be positioned over the receivers they are covering.
 - With the exception of the players covering the guards, the defense is not required to have additional players on the line of scrimmage but has the option to do so.



5. The defense must have one player at least 10 yards from the ball.



-
6. All remaining players not on the line of scrimmage or at deep safety must be four yards off of the line of scrimmage.
- Defenses that choose to not match the eligible receivers on the line of scrimmage may position those players on the second level as long as they are at least 4 yards from the ball.



7. No blitzes are allowed. Players within the box at the snap can penetrate upon the snap. Linebackers, safeties and cornerbacks (both on the line and at depth) can flow to the ball naturally after a handoff is made, but predetermining penetration to a specific gap is illegal.
- The box includes offensive players who line up within two yards of the ball and on the line of scrimmage along with the defensive players lined up directly over them.
 - On pass plays, anyone outside the box on the snap cannot rush the quarterback and must remain behind the line of scrimmage in pass coverage.
8. Coaches are encouraged to be creative with their formations but not use “the box” to delay defensive penetration.
9. If the ball is inside the 4-yard line, the five non-linemen, non-deep players may align on the goal line.

**THE PRECEDING REPRESENTS PRACTICE AND IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES BASED ON OUR CURRENT LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE. RECOMMENDATIONS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE 2017 TESTING PERIOD TO ACCOMMODATE KEY ACADEMIC LEARNING FROM THE RIGOROUS SCIENTIFIC STUDY PLANNED AROUND THESE GAME MODIFICATIONS. **