

# 7-on-7 Football Rules 2026



## GAME STRUCTURE

TOPIC	SPECIFICATION
DIVISIONS	11U (11 or under), 13U (13 or under)
BALL SIZE	Junior Ball for 11U, Youth/Intermediate Ball for 13U
FIELD SIZE	52 yards wide x 50 yards long (see diagram below). Offensive play starts on the 40-yard line. This design allows for two games to be played on one regulation sized field.
GAME LENGTH	ALL regular season games will consist of two 20-minute halves with a running clock, except for the final minute of each half, when the clock will stop for incompletions, out of bounds, touchdowns, and changes of possession (following standard football rules) and restart on the snap. Halftime is five minutes. Clock will also stop for timeouts and at referee's discretion for penalties and injuries. <b>Tournament/playoff games are 21 minutes long. The clock runs continuous during the 1st 20 minutes &amp; stops according to rules during the final 1:00.</b> <b>NOTE: All games in Spring 2026 season will follow the shorter 21-minute game play</b>
PLAYERS	7 defenders (may not line up 8 and drop one before snap) and 6 offensive players (must use a center or extra player to move table/snap)
TIMEOUTS	Each team is allowed one time-out per half (30-seconds in duration)

## EQUIPMENT

1. Each player must wear uniformed shirts.
2. No flags will be worn in 11u, 13u. Touch football will be played.
3. Metal cleats are not allowed.
4. Mouthguards **ARE REQUIRED** for all players.
5. Soft-shell helmets or loops/bands **ARE RECOMMENDED** but not required.
6. Gameday host will provide QB Tees with programmable timer for spotting and timing downs

## OFFENSIVE PLAY

1. Each OFFENSIVE possession begins at the 40-yard line. Offenses have 3 downs to reach the next first down marker (at the 25 and 10-yard lines) or score. There are no 4th downs. If the offense fails to gain a first down or score within 3 plays, it results in a turnover and the opposing team takes over at the 40-yard line.
2. The official will indicate the neutral zone and line of scrimmage by spotting the ball before each play. Once the ball is spotted, the offense will have a 25-second PLAY CLOCK to snap the ball.
3. PASS CLOCK: Offensive teams have 4 seconds to throw a pass once the snap is made (ball removed from tee). QB T-Stands will be set at 4-seconds and officials will determine whether ball was released prior to buzzer/horn sounding. It will be a loss of down and treated as a sack if not thrown in time (4.01 or greater). The clock will be stopped on a sack in the final 1:00 of the game.
4. All offensive formations must be legal sets and respect the tackle box (3-yards). Two receivers on the line of scrimmage, other receivers off the line. RB/WRs may not line-up or release inside the tackle box.
5. Motion is allowed, only one player can be in motion at the time of the snap, and that player must be moving laterally (sideways) or backwards.
6. Handoffs and running plays are not allowed. No double passes or shovel passes. NOTE: Passes may be thrown behind the line of scrimmage if outside of the tackle box, but receiver must advance beyond L.O.S. or play will be treated as a sack.
7. Fumble is a dead ball. If fumble is behind the LOS (bad snap or exchange), ball is placed where ball first touches the ground (not original LOS); offense retains possession. If fumble is behind the LOS (bad snap or exchange) at 40-yard line, ball is placed at 40-yard line; offense retains possession. If the fumble occurs in the field of play, ball is placed where it was fumbled; offense retains possession.
8. NO BLOCKING/SHIELDING: Meaning, there can be no contact between linemen, nor can there be any offensive player in advance of the ball carrier that acts in any way to prevent a defender the opportunity to down or pull the flags of the ball carrier.
9. No BALL CARRIER INITIATED CONTACT: Running backs or receivers with the ball must avoid contact with defenders. They cannot run straight over defender. If defender has position, the ball carrier must run try to avoid or around the defender.

10. In addition to play clock or pass clock expiring, a play is ruled “dead” when: A) The ball hits the ground; B) The defender touches the ball-carrier with one or both hands; C) The ball-carrier steps out of bounds; D) A touchdown, PAT or safety is scored; or E) Any part of the body other than feet or hands touches the ground.

### OFFENSE/OFFENSIVE POSITIONS

11. CENTER: The center will be responsible for setting the ball at line of scrimmage on the QB tee. The center will be responsible for moving the tee down the field. The center is not an eligible receiver and must kneel immediately after the snap. The ball may be center-snapped (tossed/snapped from center to QB either from side-stance or between legs) but center must hold and release the trigger for the QB tee timer when the ball reaches the QB.
12. QUARTERBACK (QB): Is the person that receives the center exchange or pulls the ball from the QB tee. The QB can throw the ball. The QB cannot run with the ball across the line of scrimmage.
13. RECEIVER/RUNNINGBACK: Any player who does not initiate the snap nor receives the snap is considered an eligible receiver/back and can either receive a pass.
14. OFFENSIVE SCORING: A) touchdown= 6 points; B) PAT (point after touchdown) = 1 point from the 5-yard line (can only be a pass play) or 2 points from the 10-yard line. A team that scores a touchdown must declare prior to the snap whether it wishes to attempt a 1-point or 2-point conversion, and from which hash offense wishes to spot the ball.

### OFFENSIVE PENALTIES

OFFENSIVE PENALTY	ASSESSED FROM	RESULTS
False Start/Illegal Motion/Illegal Formation	5 Yards + LOS	Loss of Down
Illegal Forward Pass	5 Yards + LOS	Loss of Down
Delay of Game / Coach Interference	5 Yards + LOS	Loss of Down
Blocking	Line of Scrimmage (LOS)	Loss of Down
Offensive Pass Interference	Line of Scrimmage (LOS)	Loss of Down
Ball Carrier Initiated Contact	10 Yards + LOS	Loss of Down
Unnecessary Roughness/ Unsportsmanlike Conduct	15 Yards + LOS	Loss of Down

***An unsportsmanlike penalty on the offense after a Touchdown will result in no PAT and a 15-yard penalty to start the ensuing drive. If it is after the PAT then it is 15-yard penalty to start the next offensive possession.***

### DEFENSIVE PLAY

15. The DEFENSE is the team opposing the offense to prevent it from advancing the ball. All players on defense defend on the line of scrimmage or drop into pass coverage.
16. There is no blitzing/rushing the quarterback
17. The defense can cross the line of scrimmage after the ball leaves the QBs hand
18. A player is ruled down when the defender touches the ball carrier with one or two hands. The spot of the ball is determined at the point where the ball carrier was touched.
19. Defensive Jamming/Physical contact- Jamming receivers or physical contact is allowed within the first 3 yards from the line of scrimmage. All contact should be made to the body, contact may not be made to the face/head/neck area. Any hands to the face will result in 15-yard penalty from the line of scrimmage and a replay of the down. Any jamming or physical contact in consistency with this rule after 3 yards will result in 5-yard penalty and replay of the down.

### DEFENSE/DEFENSIVE POSITIONS

20. DEFENSIVE BACK: Any player assigned to prevent the offensive receiver from catching the ball and/or stop a ball carrier from getting upfield. Thrown balls knocked down by the defense will be ruled incomplete.
21. DEFENSIVE SCORING: A) Turnover on downs = 2 points B) Interception = 3 points C) Interception returned for touchdown = 6 points. A team that intercepts a pass and returns it past the 40-yard line untouched/downed will be awarded a touchdown and then will then attempt a PAT (this will constitute the team’s offensive possession). A team cannot be awarded both 3-points for the interception and 6-points for the interception touchdown. No defensive points are awarded on PAT conversions.

## DEFENSIVE PENALTIES

DEFENSIVE PENALTY	ASSESSED	RESULTS
Encroachment/Neutral Zone/Offsides	5 Yards + LOS	Repeat Down
Holding/Jamming beyond 3 yards	5 Yards + LOS	Repeat Down
Illegal Participation	5 Yards + LOS	Repeat Down
Defensive Pass Interference	10 Yards + LOS	1st Down
Unnecessary Roughness/Unsportsmanlike Conduct	15 Yards + LOS	1st Down
Hands to the Face	15 yards + LOS	Repeat Down

***An unsportsmanlike penalty on the defense after a Touchdown or PAT will result in a loss of down for the offense on the ensuing possession.***

## OTHER RULES

22. **INADVERTENT WHISTLE:** On an inadvertent whistle, the play is dead where the ball carrier was when the whistle blew. The result of the play is null and void. The ball will be spotted where the ball was when the whistle blew.
23. **COACHES:** Three coaches are allowed on the sideline per team. One offensive coach is allowed on the field and in the huddle with players but must be a minimum of 5-yards behind quarterback before ball is snapped so there is no interference with game play or Referee. Prior to the snap, the coach can no longer speak, provide extra instruction or make audibles, doing so will constitute coach interference. No headphones are allowed. Defensive coaches are not allowed on the field at any time. Coaches are responsible for knowing all rules and educating their players on the rules and conduct. No arguing with refs or other coaches. First offense is a 3-point penalty awarded to the opposing team. Second offense is removal from the game.
24. **MINIMUM PLAYING TIME:** There are no minimum play time rules.
25. **SUBSTITUTIONS:** Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
26. **OVERTIME:** A coin flip will determine the team that chooses to be on offense or defense first. The ball is placed on 15-yard line. Each team is given one offensive possession (3 plays) to score plus a PAT. If the score is tied after both teams' offensive possession, the game will result in a tie except during playoffs. During playoffs, if the score remains tied, each team will have another 3-down series with the opposite team having 1st option of offense or defense. This type of play will continue until a winner is determined. There are no timeouts in overtime.
27. **MERCY RULE:** If a team is ahead by 19 points or more, the clock shall not stop in the final minute of the game.
28. **FORFEITURE:** Teams cannot play an official game with less than seven (7) players. Forfeited games can be played as an exhibition if both coaches agree to play, teams are strongly encouraged to mix players and scrimmage for fun. A rostered player may be borrowed from a different team, but the game still counts as a forfeit. A forfeited game will be logged as a 19-0 loss for the team that forfeits.
29. **BLOOD:** Any player having bleeding is to be removed from the game. Open cuts must be bandaged before returning.
30. **NUMBER OF PLAYERS:** Suggested no more than 14 players per roster for 7 vs 7.
31. **THE REFEREE IS THE AUTHORITY ON THE FIELD HIS INTERPRETATION OF THE RULES IS BINDING.**
32. **CODE OF CONDUCT:** Unsportsmanlike conduct is prohibited by all players/coaches/spectators and can result in a penalty and/or IMMEDIATE ejection from the game with the potential of a week suspension to a lifetime ban from any GMYAA athletic program. Unsportsmanlike conduct includes but is not limited to: Fighting, foul language, throwing or kicking the ball, taunting the other team or spectators, baiting or "confronting" opponents, using inappropriate gestures and/or harassment of the officials.
33. **EJECTIONS:** Any player/coach/spectator ejected from a game will serve a mandatory one (1) game suspension not including the game he or she was ejected from. A second ejection will result in a two (2) game suspension and a third will result in a 1-year suspension.
34. **STANDINGS:** Regular season standing based on "Win Percentage" will determine playoff/tournament seedings. In the case of a tie, Head-to-Head (H2H) will be the main tiebreaker, meaning the game(s) played against each other will be used first to determine seeding within the tied group(s). Example: Team A, B, and C all have equal win percentages. If Team C has defeated Team A and Team B, then Team C would be the highest seed in that group. The H2H between Team A and Team B would determine the next seed. If three or more teams are tied, and no one team has beaten all other tied teams, then the initial tiebreaker shall be lowest Average Points Against, then revert to H2H to determine remaining seed(s). Example: Team A, B, and C all have equal win percentages and no one team of the three has defeated both the other two. Thus, the highest seed would be the team with the lowest Average Points Against. The next seed would then be based on the H2H

between the remaining teams. Note: In the event the lowest Average Points Against cannot break the tie, then a coin toss by the conference coordinator will be used to break. Example: Team A, B, and C all have equal win percentages and no one team of the three has defeated both the other two. Team A and Team B both have the same Average Points Against, which is lower than Team C's. A coinflip between Team A and B will determine the highest seed, then revert to H2H to determine remaining seed(s).

**7 vs 7 Flag Field Diagram**

