



Tackle Football Rules

Players/Times:

1. Sophomore tackle is 6 players for each team on field. Junior tackle is 8 players for each team on field.
2. 8-minute quarters

The Clock will be stopped for the following reasons:

3. Official time outs
4. A requested team time out. (3 per half, each lasting 1 minute)
5. Official time out for injury or for any other reason as determined by the Official.
6. Following a touchdown until the receiving team on the following kickoff touches the ball.
7. Out of bounds & incomplete passes.
8. The teams should be ready to play as soon as time expires on each official time out.
9. Delay of game – Once the official marks the ball for play; a team will have 30 seconds to get the play off. The penalty will be 5-yards and repeat the down if your team does comply.
 - a. When a team is behind by 30 or more points in the second half, the coach of the team that is behind MAY AT HIS DISCRETION institute a continuous clock at any point during the second half. If a coach decides to employ a continuous clock, it cannot later be reversed. During a continuous clock, the only time the clock will be stopped is for an injury. The winning team may not call time out during a continuous clock.

OFFENSE:

1. Down and distance is 15 yards for first down.

2. Mandatory - There must be a 'clean exchange' of the ball. Player who receives snap must HAND OFF, TOSS, or PASS to another player before the ball passes the line of scrimmage.
3. The ball may be handed in any direction to any player during a scrimmage down behind the neutral zone. A linesman may receive a forward hand-off at any time and is not required to be 2 yards behind his line of scrimmage and does not have to face his goal prior to receiving the handoff.
EXCEPTION: The ball may not be handed forward to the snapper through his legs.
4. All players are eligible to catch a forward pass. If a forward pass is thrown to the snapper, it must travel at least one yard in flight.
5. An offensive lineman may not be in motion at time of snap.
6. Legal motion man cannot advance towards the line of scrimmage at time of snap.
7. Fumbled or loose ball can be advanced by the opposing team.
8. The ball is dead when a "passer", catches his own pass (untouched by B), and it is ruled as an incomplete forward pass.

FORMATIONS:

- Sophomore tackle: at minimum 3 offensive players must be on the line of scrimmage.
- Junior tackle: at minimum 5 offensive players must be on the line of scrimmage.

DEFENSE:

1. A defensive player may not align head up nor initiate head-to-head contact with the snapper.
2. On defense, all alignments, blitzing, and stances are permitted.

SPECIAL TEAMS:

1. Kick-off is from the 30-yard line. (20-yard line if after a safety).
2. Receiving team is 15 yards from kicking line.
3. Ball must travel 15 yards.

4. There will be no rush allowed against a punt, PAT, or field goal attempt. Kicking team has 5 seconds to kick. Punting team may not cross the line of scrimmage until ball has been kicked. Punts are returnable.

POINT SYSTEM:

1. Touchdown is worth 6 points.
2. PAT – Kick is worth 2 points, run/pass is worth 1 point.
3. Field Goal – worth 4 points.

SUBSTITUTION / PLAY RULE:

1. Substitutions are allowed as follows:
 - a. Due to the pace of this game and tendency for high scoring contests, substitutions are highly encouraged and can occur after any dead ball possession.
 - b. In the case of an injury, the player may be removed from the game. If the player (in the judgment of the player's team's trainer) is physically able to return to the game, they are allowed to be reinserted.
 - c. ***Fatigue***. If a player requests a break, or coach/parent visibly notices a winded player a substitution is encouraged. The player is allowed to return to the game when deemed ready by the adults.
2. Play Rule – Understanding game flow, all tackle coaches are still required to ensure all players participate and receive ample amount of playing time. If at any point in time, opposing coaches or SFL Board members believe a Coach or team is taking advantage of this honor system; then they are subject to council, game forfeit and/or game suspension.

Note: SFL is a recreation/developmental tackle league. The best way to achieve this goal is allowing players opportunity during live game play. SFL believes all players shall be involved in the offensive and defensive game plans during the season.

Additional Rules/Penalties:

- A. Encroachment – When a player on the defense makes contact with a player on the offensive line. PENALTY: 5 yards, repeat down.
- B. Defensive Offside – When a defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage without contact and the ball is snapped. Flag is thrown, but

- play is not stopped. After the play is completed, the offense has the option of taking the play or the penalty. PENALTY: 5 yards, repeat down.
- C. Illegal Procedure/ False Start /Illegal Motion – Once the QB begins his cadence, no one on the offense (except a man in motion) may move. Flag is immediately thrown, and the whistle blows the play dead. PENALTY: 5 yards, repeat down.
 - D. Delay of game – When the offense takes more than 30 seconds to get the play off. PENALTY: 5 yards, repeat down.
 - E. Personal Foul – Includes late hits, twisting of the facemask, illegal helmet contact. PENALTY: 15 yards from end of the run (or pass).
 - F. Unsportsmanlike Conduct – cussing, coach running on to the field to argue with the referee, etc.... PENALTY: 15 yards from end of play and possible ejection.
 - G. Roughing the passer – In the opinion of the referee, if the defensive player has the time to keep from making contact with the QB, and still continues to make contact, it is a penalty. PENALTY: 15 yards from end of play.
 - H. Calling too many timeouts – PENALTY: Delay of game, 5 yards from line of scrimmage, and no time out is given.
 - I. Clipping / Illegal block in the back – PENALTY: 15 yards from spot of the foul.
 - J. Tripping – Any attempt to trip, whether they make contact or not, is a penalty.
 - i. Defensive Tripping – PENALTY: 10 yards from end of the play.
 - ii. Offensive Tripping – PENALTY: 10 yards from spot of the foul.
 - K. Defensive pass interference – this is a spot foul. If the interference takes place more than 15 yards from the line of scrimmage, the PENALTY is 15 yards from the line of scrimmage, and an automatic 1st down. If the interference takes place less than 15 yards from the line, the PENALTY is marked at the spot of the foul.
 - L. Offensive pass interference – PENALTY: 15 yards, from line of scrimmage
 - M. Offensive holding – PENALTY: 10 yards, repeat down
 - N. Defensive holding – PENALTY: 10 yards, automatic 1st down
 - O. Passer crosses the LOS before exchange/pass – PENALTY: 5 yards, loss of down

- P. Tackling a runner by the helmet – Grabbing the helmet by the face mask or inside the helmet is illegal. If you only have this as part of a wrap-up then the contact is legal, but if this was a striking blow then it is a personal foul penalty. The key thing is to make sure no "second act" occurred where, after controlling the runner's head, the defender did something else like a body slam or neck twist.
- Q. Targeting – does not solely occur when players initiate helmet-to-helmet contact. It's defined as occurring when a player "takes aim at an opponent for purposes of attacking with forcible contact that goes beyond making a legal tackle or a legal block or playing the ball."
- R. Horse-Collar – No player shall grab the inside collar of the back or the side of the shoulder pads or jersey, and pull the runner towards the ground with that grip. This does not apply to a runner who is in the tackle box or to a quarterback who is in the pocket. (SFL adjustment/clarification: grabbing of the jersey at the corner of the shoulder or below to the sleeve is not a horse collar. Hair, Sweat shirts with hoods, etc. are not horse-collars).
- S. After Whistle Contact – After a player is tackled and the whistle is blown, there should be no further contact of players. Players that push, hit helmets, throw the ball at others, step on hands, or jump on downed players after the whistle has blown are committing a personal foul.

REQUIRED EQUIPMENT:

GAME BALL:

- i. Sophomore Division = K2
- ii. Junior Division = Wilson TDJ

PLAYER GEAR:

- A NOCSAE approved helmet of proper fit with facemask and chinstrap. The helmet shell should be less than 5 years old.
- An individual mouthpiece. The mouthpiece must have been properly pre-fitted to the player's mouth according to the manufacturer's instructions prior to any use in practice or games.
- Properly fitted shoulder pads.
- Football pants with hip, tail, thigh, and kneepads.
- Shoes with rubber soles either with molded rubber cleats or flat bottomed.
- No colored eye visors on helmets, only clear.

- Players may not wear or have affixed an exposed rigid splint and/or solid cast, regardless of composition. All situations involving a player who wants to play with any type of splint or cast that will be protected or wrapped must be approved by the Division Director and then the opposing coach(es).
- No player may practice or play a game without always having all the required equipment on him.

SPORTSMANSHIP: ZERO-TOLERANCE POLICY

The following actions **WILL NOT** be tolerated:

- Verbal / Physical abuse on the referees by players or coaches.
- Charging onto the field during the game.
- The consumption of alcohol anywhere on the South Campus property is strictly prohibited.
- Excessive arguing with the referee(s) OR opposing coach / parent.
- Profanity from coach, player or spectator.

RULES FOR COACHES:

- Each team will have one adult head coach and a maximum of three assistant coaches on the sidelines who will be responsible for the team at games. If the head coach is absent, it is his responsibility to provide his own replacement to carry out the duties of head coach. Each team will also have at least one but no more than two trainers present on the sidelines during games.
- If a complaint is filed on a coach, it will be reported to the Sportsmanship Committee. These situations will be handled case by case, depending on the seriousness of the incident. The outcome of these complaints could result in a warning, suspension from the season or removal from the league.
- It will be the Coach's responsibility to maintain control of the team's parents and players.
- Coaches are responsible for notifying their team of practices, games and make-up games.

- Any Coach ejected by the referee from a game will be suspended for one week on the first occurrence and indefinitely on the second occurrence.

Safety/Weight Considerations:

In all tackle Divisions (except Sr. level), SFL reserves the right throughout the season to consider and possibly initiate rules that could restrict or limit a child’s ability to carry and/or advance the football during games. Such rules might become necessary if above average safety concerns arise and/or issues involving a gross competitive imbalance amongst teams or players become apparent.

- i. Offensive Players > 155 pounds at registration may not receive a handoff exchange but are allowed to receive a forward pass beyond the LOS.
- ii. **NOTE:** Each season the Division Director and Sr. Board Members will evaluate the weights of all the players to determine the weight limitations. This allows the league to accommodate and/or adapt to the best interest/safety of the players.

Field Dimensions:

FIELD DIMENSIONS

