



ROOKIE TACKLE **RULES OF PLAY**

2026 SEASON



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PREFACE

The intent of this program is to gradually introduce tackle football to former flag and first year players. The success of this program will rest largely with how coaches work together to establish best match up's, how the coaches spend time on player development with "ALL" players, and how coaches keep this fun. Our intent is for kids to fall in love with the game so they will want to continue in the future. Please take this into consideration when you are working with your team this year.

The Tualatin Valley Youth Football League (TVYFL) follows the USA Football Rookie Tackle 7 Player Rules unless specified in this document. Rules set forth in this document take precedence in cases when USA Football and TVYFL rules differ. Consider these rules as a subset of the TVYFL Senior Tackle Rules of Play. Therefore, it is recommended that the TVYFL Senior Tackle Rules of Play are reviewed in addition to these rules. NFHS Rules > TVYFL Senior Tackle Rules > USA Football Rookie Tackle Rules > TVYFL Rookie Tackle Rules

The members of the Tualatin Valley Youth Football League resolve that the following rules and regulations have been adopted by a majority vote of the Board of Directors and ratified by a majority vote of the TVYFL Membership.

All Titles of the TVYFL may only be amended by a majority vote of the Board of Directors and a majority vote of all members at a duly noticed meeting of the league. These Titles are binding on all members of the TVYFL and by committing to membership in the TVYFL, all members accept all bylaws, rules, regulations, and Titles as adopted without recourse.



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2026 RULES CHANGES



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TITLE 1: PLAY & PARTICIPATION RULES & REGULATIONS

MINIMUM PLAY RULE

1. Minimum play rule
 - a. The minimum mandatory play rule for all Rookie Tackle teams shall be fifteen (15) regardless of team size.
 - b. The mandatory play rule requirement may be forfeited by any player due to disciplinary reasons as determined by either the individual Member or the individual coach. If a player is listed, due to disciplinary reasons or injury, as being ineligible to play, that player **MUST NOT PLAY IN THE GAME AT ALL**. It is recommended that the player's parents be notified before being listed as ineligible.
 - c. Plays must be from the line of scrimmage.
 - d. All players shall be provided their mandatory plays by participation in active plays, without the intent to minimize the action or integrity of the plays. Plays such as, but not limited to, having the center snap the ball to the quarterback and fall to the ground, while substitutes are playing the other positions, shall **NOT** be considered as active plays. Taking a knee is not an active play.
 - e. Enforcement of the Minimum Play Rule is by a team or Member filing a grievance that during a game a team did not follow the rule. An investigation by the Division Co-President will take place, including review of the Play Count Sheet, video evidence, and parent and player accounts. If a violation is found, the penalty will be possible suspension of the Head Coach and fines for the Association.

REQUIRED EQUIPMENT, PERSONAL ITEM RESTRICTIONS

2. The following items shall be worn by players in all divisions beginning with physical contact in practice sessions:
 - a. Helmet, Shoulder Pads, S.I.P. (Shoulder Injury Pad) if appropriate, Pants, Hip Pads, Tail Pad, Thigh Pads, Kneepads (which must fully cover the player's knee), Screened Numbered Jerseys, and Mouth Guard (strap recommended). Only helmets bearing the NOCSAE Seal of Certification may be worn. All helmets must bear the current NOCSAE approved Warning Label in a visible position.
 - i. Guardian Caps: Guardian Caps can only be worn if the participant is wearing a Shutt or VICIS Helmet. Guardian Caps are not allowed for any other brand of helmet.
 - ii. TVYFL does not allow the use of any third-party aftermarket accessories that alter the fit, form or function of the helmet or face mask as such modifications void the NOCSAE certification and render the helmet or face mask illegal for most organized play.
 - b. Shoes must be of the molded cleat or internally threaded shoes where no post is extending from the shoe (instead, the cleat post screws internally into the shoe). Maximum size of cleat is ½ inch (measured from tip of cleat to base of shoe). No all or primarily metal or metal tipped cleats may be worn. Metal rivets in the sole of the shoe, which are part of the original manufacturer's design, should not be considered illegal for play.
 - c. Jewelry of any kind is strictly prohibited under any circumstances.
 - d. Glasses should preferably be athletically approved construction with non-shattering glass (safety glass) or contact lenses.
 - e. Face shields must be clear in color.

INITIAL CONTACT

3. All Associations and Coaches shall strictly abide by all blocking and tackling rules in accordance with the NFHS rulebook.
 - a. A player shall not make initial contact with an opponent below the waist, except to tackle a ball carrier or player pretending to be a ball carrier. This includes all techniques which can be reasonably considered to cause initial contact below the waist such as "bear crawling" and "crab blocking", whether deliberate or unintentional. The penalty when this is called is for unsportsmanlike conduct as this is a bylaw infraction.
 - i. The first instance shall be a warning
 - ii. The second instance carries a fifteen (15) yard penalty.
 - iii. A third offense for the same action will result in the coach being ejected from the game and additional sanctions may occur when the Division Co-Presidents review these infractions and find them to be deliberate.



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TITLE 2: WEIGHT & BALL CARRIER LIMITATIONS

1. There shall be weight limitations per grade level as pertaining to the ball carrier position only.
2. For the purposes of these bylaws and administration of this league, the term ball carrier shall mean: Any offensive player touching the ball behind the line of scrimmage after the snap or on the first hand-off. This includes personnel in the backfield or receiving positions.
3. Blocking backs over the ball carrying weight limit are not allowed. These positions include, but are not limited to: Quarterback, Running Back, Wide Receiver, Flanker, Tight End, and Split End.
4. Any offensive player recovering a fumble who is over the weight limit, may not advance the ball.

BALL CARRIER WEIGHT LIMITATIONS

5. Team classification weight restrictions are as follows:
 - a. 3rd/4th: 105 Pounds

PENALTY

6. Any player, who is over the weight limit, lining up in a ball carrier eligible position, will incur a five (5) yard penalty and a dead ball foul stopping play. This will not be considered Unsportsmanlike Conduct and will not go towards a coach's ejections.



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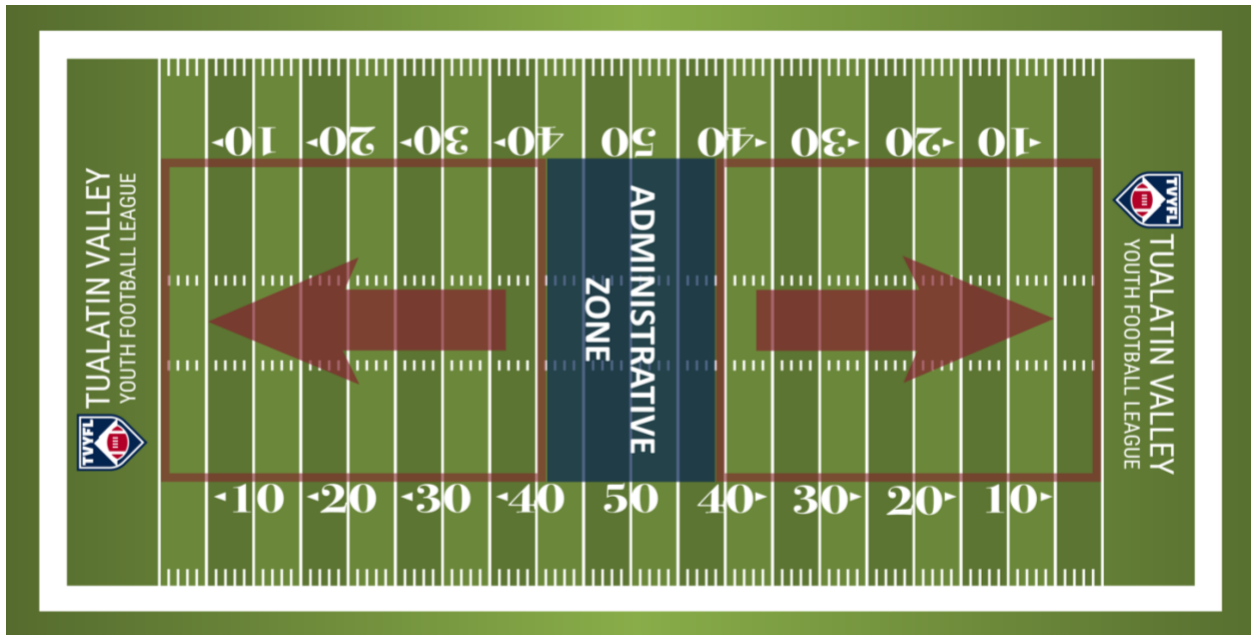
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TITLE 3: 3RD/4TH GRADE RULE VARIATIONS

BALL SIZE	TD	PAT (KICK)	PAT (RUN)	SAFETY	FG
JUNIOR	6 PTS	N/A	1 PT (3-YD), 2 PTS (5-YD)	N/A	N/A

QUARTERS	HALFTIME	BETWEEN GAMES	SPECIAL TEAMS	MAX SCORE DIFF	BALL CARRIER
15 MINS	5 MINS	10 MINS	N/A	28 PTS	105 lbs.

1. Except as provided here, the League will adhere to all rules and regulations as outlined in the current, official USA Football Rookie Tackle rule book. In the event one of the listed rules in the League Bylaws or in the adopted Titles of the League is in direct conflict with the current published USA Football rules, the Titles and Bylaws of the TVVFL will have precedence.
2. Maximum number of coaches that can be within the coaches' box during a game is three (3). No player, nonplayer or coach shall be in the restricted area when the ball is live.



1. 3rd/4th Rookie Tackle teams will use the "Junior" size football.

GAME DURATION

2. Game duration
 - a. All games will have four (4) fifteen (15) minute time quarters.
 - b. Stoppage of play will only be for the following with all other plays requiring the clock to continue to run.
 - i. Injuries
 - ii. Coaches time outs (only one (1) timeout per half); two (2) per game.
 - iii. Changes in possession. However, once the ball is spotted after a change in possession, the clock will start again.
 - c. There will be a one (1) minute break between quarters and a five (5) minute half time.

SCORING

3. Scoring
 - a. Offensive touchdowns are worth six (6) points.



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- b. PATs are the coach's choice to attempt a one-point (1) try from the 3-yard line or a two-point (2) try from the 5-yard line.
- c. With no special teams, there are no field goal attempts.
- d. There are no defensive touchdowns as all turnovers are blown dead immediately. No returns are allowed to limit play back in the direction of the Administrative Zone.
 - i. Fumbles are not turnovers. It is only a turnover if recovered by the defense as the offense is allowed to attempt to recover it.
- e. There are no two-point defensive safeties. All tackles behind the 40-yard line result in a loss of down, but the offense retains the ball, and the ball is re-spotted at the 40-yard line to preserve the Administrative Zone.
- f. Forfeit: offended team wins 1-0

SCORE ISSUES

4. Any 3rd/4th grade team ahead of their opponent by more than twenty-eight (28) points, at any time during a game, is in violation.
5. A coach may submit an explanation of the circumstances to the Division Co-President by Monday following the game. However, this will not change the minimum mandatory sanctions listed below but can be used to determine if any other sanctions will be issued.
6. Minimum mandatory sanctions for a point differential of more than twenty-eight (28) points are as follows:
 - a. First violation: forfeiture of the game in question, \$100 fine and one (1) week suspension for the head coach
 - b. Second violation: forfeiture of the game in question, \$200 fine, and two (2) weeks suspension for the head coach.
 - c. Third violation: forfeiture of the game in question and the head coach is banned from the League.
 - d. Sanctions above these may be issued.

TIE SCORE RESOLUTION

7. Tie Score Resolution
 - a. Any regular season game ending in a tie will be decided through a modified Kansas Plan commencing immediately after the game, with no break after the fourth quarter.
 - b. The initial offense will be decided by a coin flip.
 - c. Each team is allowed one time out per series of downs.
 - d. Play begins at the ten (10) yard line and continues until the first team on offense either scores or turns the ball over on downs. The ball is then turned over to the other team, placed at the ten (10) yard line, and continues until their series of downs has taken place.
 - e. Each team only gets one possession, which has no time limit.
 - f. If after the completion of both offensive series in the modified Kansas plan, the score is tied, the game remains tied.
 - g. Kansas plan for playoffs and championship games will follow NFHS High School rules (25-yard version).
 - h. In no instance shall any game be replayed, or any Kansas Plan undertaken at a later date.
8. In the event of a game between teams with uniforms of the same color, the visiting team must wear pinnies for ease of team identification by officials.

COACHES ON THE FIELD

9. Coaches
 - a. One (1) Coach will be allowed on the field during play for the entire season.
 - b. Coaches should be a minimum of five (5) yards behind the deepest player at the time of the snap. This includes both offense and defense. Coaches can verbally direct players at this time but are not allowed to physically place players into position.
 - c. After breaking the huddle, the coach may not physically touch or move a player in any way. The coach on the field will be five (5) yards deeper than the deepest aligned player on their respective team at the snap of the ball. Any penalty for coach infraction will be a five (5) yard penalty and a dead ball foul stopping play. This will not be considered Unsportsmanlike Conduct and will not go towards a coach's ejections.



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TITLE 4: ROUND ROBIN FORMAT

BALL SIZE	TD	PAT (KICK)	PAT (RUN)	SAFETY	FG
JUNIOR	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

QUARTERS	HALFTIME	BETWEEN GAMES	SPECIAL TEAMS	MAX SCORE DIFF	BALL CARRIER
12 MINS	5 MINS	10 MINS	N/A	N/A	105 lbs.

1. Weigh ins will take place 30 minutes before game start time.
2. Format will mirror 3 team play in game scenario. Prior to start of game, coaches from three teams will determine which teams will play first. Those teams will play one quarter. Then teams will rotate. Teams playing in consecutive quarters should insure they are playing the wave of players who were not playing at the end of their first match-up. See below:
 - a. Team 1 vs Team 2 (1 quarter)
 - b. Team 1 vs Team 3 (1 quarter) (team 1 should start with players that were not playing at end of round 1 to insure equal playing time.
 - c. Team 2 vs Team 3 (1 quarter) (team 3 should start with players that were not playing at end of round 2 to insure equal playing time.
 - d. Repeat round 1 (team 1 vs team 2)
 - e. Repeat round 2 (team 1 vs team 3)
 - f. Repeat round 3 (team 2 vs team 3)
 - g. Continue until 1 hour and 45-minute time limit has been reached (unless coaches agree that the above is enough, which would be 3 full quarters for each team).
3. Depending on how efficient teams are rotating in and out of these change overs, each team should get a full game, or close to it. There needs to be a hard cut-off of 1 hour and 45 minutes time limit on round robin games. This allows the next game to start on time and for the officials to get a brief break in between games.
4. There will be no half times during this format as teams will play the equivalent of no more than 1 consecutive half and will get a break at that time.
5. NOTE: For round robin format only, R/T quarters will be 12-minute running time, versus 15-minute running time. Same criteria for clock stoppage to be used. (Time outs, injured player and change of possession).