



Youth Sports Foundation 11-man 3rd-4th Grade Rules 2025

(below are the YSF-specific rules; all other National Federation of High School-NFHS rules apply)

1. Field

- A. The playing field is a standard high school field (120 yards in length and 53 $\frac{1}{3}$ -yards in width), or a regulation 8-man field.

2. Ball

- A. Teams shall use a brown football with white stripes.
- B. Teams shall use a pee wee size football.

3. Games

- A. Quarters are 11 minutes in length. Continuous running clock, however, the clock will stop for any score, any timeout, and any punts. The clock will start again after the ball is snapped after it is stopped for a score, timeout, or punt.
- B. NFHS Rules apply to the clock keeper
- C. Two timeouts are allowed per half; with no carryover to the 2nd half
- D. Halftime will be 5 minutes long. Final decision is made by the host coordinator and head coaches on shortening the length of halftime.
- E. A twenty-five (25) second play clock is enforced between plays
- F. Home team is responsible for supplying 3 individuals to run the sideline chains and will be on the home side of the field. They will also supply a scoreboard operator and clock person. We recommend you also supply 2 field helpers who will work the sidelines and will blow their whistles when their ball is out of bounds. These two individuals ARE NOT officials and will not call penalties. The 2 helpers will also help the game officials spot the ball for play.

- G. A game ending in a tie at the conclusion of regulation play is a tied game; no overtime.

4. Coaches

- A. The game coaching staff is limited to 1 certified Head Coach and 4 Assistant Coaches.
- B. The Head Coach is the only coach that can discuss game situations or rule interpretations with officials.
- C. 2 coaches from each team are allowed in the offensive and defensive huddles during the game.
- D. Coaches and parents should do everything in their power to discourage cutting weight to play a position. If a coach gets caught doing this he/she will be banned from YSF sports.
- E. The YSF has a zero-tolerance policy for all coaches, players, and spectators' behavior during games and practices. If a head coach or assistant coach is ejected from a game, they are suspended for the next week's practices and game. The YSF could take further action if warranted. Any player or spectator ejected could also face the same consequences as coaches.



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5. Weight Limits

- A. Players have initial weigh-ins at registration
- B. Those with an initial weight at registration between 80-95 lbs inclusive must be reweighed at the jamboree, or the Monday after the jamboree. Players may be weighed in shorts only if they wish and may have their coach present.
- C. Maximum weight for Quarterback, Running Back, Wide Receiver, or any player in the backfield will be 90.4 lbs.
- D. 90.4 lbs weight limit excludes the tight end who must be lined up within 1 yard of the tackle.
- E. Any player who exceeds the weight limit must have a red dot sticker on the **front** of his/her helmet

6. Scoring

- A. After a safety, the ball will be placed on the 50-yard line.
- B. A touchdown is worth 7 points. No PATs are attempted.**

7. Special Scoring

- A. In the event of a 35-pt margin, the scoreboard will show 0-0, and the clock will run continuously only in the 3rd or 4th quarter. The only time the clock will stop during the 35 point differential is when a team calls a timeout, an official calls a timeout, or for an injury. The team who is ahead by 35 points or more shall not pass the ball or run any type of reverse or counter-running play. The clock will not run during a punting situation.

8. Kickoffs

- A. There are no Kickoffs. Play will start on the 30-yard line.

9. Tripping

- A. NO TRIPPING OF ANY PLAYER AT ANY TIME WILL BE ALLOWED. IT WILL BE A 15-YARD PENALTY.



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10. Punts

- A. Intent to punt must be declared to the opposing team and must be kicked from 5 yards behind the line of scrimmage. The clock does not run when a team punts.
- B. A team may not punt inside their opponent's 30-yard line.
- C. The return team takes possession where the ball: 1). Is spotted 25 yards downfield from the previous line of scrimmage by the official, even if the ball does not travel that far or the punting team chooses not to punt. 2). Is caught or possessed by the return team player. Minimum of 25 yards. 3). If the ball travels more than 25-yards downfield before being caught or possessed by the return team, that is where the ball will be spotted.
- D. Any punt caught, possessed or ruled down between the 10-yard line and the goal line is automatically spotted on the 10-yard line.
- E. A punt kicked into the endzone is spotted on the 20-yard line.

11. Defense

- A. A maximum of 6 players can be on the defensive line of scrimmage **and they must be heads up on the offensive player.**
- B. A defensive player can be head up on any offensive player either on or off the line of scrimmage except the center. **To clarify, a defensive player can cover any backfield player lined up outside the tackle or tight end.** Maximum of 6 players, no minimums. **Must be Heads up on the offensive player.**
- C. **Any defensive lineman covering an offensive guard or tackle must be in a 3 or 4-point stance. Any defensive player covering a tight end must be head up and can be in a 2-point, 3-point, or 4-point stance.**
- D. Any defensive player NOT on the line of scrimmage must be 5 yards off the line of scrimmage until the snap.
- E. Fumbles and interceptions are live balls and can be advanced.
- F. Horse Collar tackle penalty. In the YSF, a horse collar is defined as grabbing the back of the nameplate or inside the side or back of the jersey or shoulder pads and pulling the runner. Even if the runner is not tackled to the ground or even forced out of bounds, it is still considered a horse collar infraction. **15-yard Penalty.**
- G. An opposing player may not be tackled or pulled to the ground using any part of the helmet. **15-yard Penalty.**
- H. Inside the 5-yard line, a defensive player can cover the center but must be at the goal line. Once the offense reaches the 2-yard line, the defensive player covering the center **MUST be in a 3 or 4-point stance. That defensive player covering the center must still be at the goal line. Up to 6 other defensive players can be on the line of scrimmage, but still must be head-up on an offensive player who is either on or off the line of scrimmage. All other players can be at the goal line.**



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12. Offense

- A. You must have 7 players on the line of scrimmage and no more.
- B. The center handles the snap of the football.
- C. 2 guards, one on each side, and no more than 1-yard split from the center.
- D. 2 tackles; each on the outside and no more than a 1-yard split from the guards.
- E. 1 or 2 tight ends; the split will not be more than 1-yard from the tackle
- F. 1 or 2 split ends; **The distance between split ends and the nearest tackle must be a minimum of 7 yards. Wideouts and backfield players cannot weigh more than 90.4 lbs.**
- G. The Tight Ends may be in any stance they choose. They can be in a 2-point, 3-point, or 4-point stance.**
- H. A team cannot use an unbalanced line set; there must be 3 players on each side of the center **on the line of scrimmage.**
- I. No straight (Stiff) arms above the shoulders. 5-yard Penalty.
- J. All Blocks must be **above the waist.** 15-yard Penalty.
- K. Any player not on the line of scrimmage is a backfield player and cannot weigh more than 90.4 lbs. This includes wideouts who may not weigh more than 90.4 lbs.
- L. Anyone who receives a direct snap from the center may not run in the "A" gap; this includes a player receiving the snap in shotgun or pistol formation. 5-yard Penalty.
- M. A tight end, who weighs more than 90.4 lbs must line up within 1-yard of the tackle and cannot be a split end; all tight ends may only receive forward passes beyond the line of scrimmage.