

# RULE BOOK

2024



HTB FLAG FOOTBALL YOUTH LEAGUE

[www.htbffl.com](http://www.htbffl.com)



**RULES FOR THE HTB FLAG FOOTBALL  
LEAGUE YOUTH LEAGUE**

**For the Toddler, A1, A2, B, C, and D  
Divisions**

**JR and Senior Divisions**

**Ages 5 to 18**

**Field size**

- For the Toddler and A1 Divisions the field dimensions will be 15 yards wide by 30 yards deep, with two 7 yard deep end zones, and 1 fixed first down at mid field.
- For the A2, Division, the field dimensions will be 25 yards wide by 60 yards deep, with two 10 yard deep end zones, and two fixed first downs at the 20 's.
- For the B, C, D Junior and Senior Divisions the field dimensions will be 30 yards wide by 60 yards deep with two 10 yard deep end zones, and two fixed first downs at the 20 yard lines

### **Attire and Safety**

- It is strongly recommended that all players wear a mouth piece.
- It is strongly recommended that all boys wear a protective cup.
- It is the responsibility of the parents to supply and implement the use of these items.
- Cleats are recommended, but not required. No metal cleats are allowed.
- The supplied matching shirts are required to be worn, and visible at all times, if players wear hoodies, the hood must be on the head or tucked inside the shirt.
- No hard pads are allowed. Players may wear soft helmets.
- A flag belt must be worn by all players when on the field. If the flag falls off untouched, then a one hand touch will end the play.
- All offensive players must have a flag on at the start of the play. If the play is started with player(s) not wearing one, the play will

be blown dead, a five yard penalty will be assessed and the down replayed.

### **Game Clock**

- The game will consist of two (2) 20 minute halves
- The clock will continue to run unless stopped by a time out
- At the one minute mark of each half, a one minute warning will be announced. During this last minute of the half, the clock will stop on time outs, dropped passes, penalties, change of possession, and stepping out of bounds. The clock will not run during a point after attempt. Each team will receive two (2) time outs per half, and may not be carried over.
- Game clock will start at the appointed time. Teams must be at the field and prepared to play at least 15 minutes before game time. Roster exchange will occur at this time. Late player will have to wait until halftime to enter the game, unless a timeout is used. Players entering without notification will

result in the team losing all time outs for the game. If a team is late, They have fifteen minutes from game time to field a team. The time will be deducted from the game time. Furthermore, the team that is late will not have choice at either half.

### **Format**

- Each team will field 6 players on offense or defense. 7 on 7 is possible if both coaches agree.
- In the B, C, D, Junior and Senior Divisions, you must field a minimum of 5 players, or the game will result in a forfeit
- In the A division you must field a minimum of 4 players, or the game will result in a forfeit.
- If a team is playing with 4 players in the A Division or 5 in the B, C, or D Divisions, the opposing team must play with the same amount of players. (except playoffs)
- Mercy rule, if a team has a lead of 18 point or larger, then they will have 4 downs to

achieve a first down, then only 4 downs to score. The team that is down by 18 points or more will start at their own 20 yard line. The game will be deemed over, if within the last minute, the team that is ahead, by 10 points or over has possession of the ball.

### The Game

- The home team will be determined by coin toss. Home team has first choice to defer, receive the ball or choose field direction. (defer gives you choice 2nd half ).
- **There is no contact, any contact not deemed incidental will be penalized**

### Offense

- The offense has 40 seconds, to call and start execution of a play or from the time the ball is spotted, or they will be penalized for delay of game. First offence is a warning, after that is a five yard penalty unless the coach calls a time out.
- Offensive team starts on their own 5 yard line. Team has 4 downs to reach 1st down marker, if so, they get 4 more downs to

achieve a second first down, then 4 more downs to score. If not, the opposing team receives the ball on their 5 yard line.

- A no run zone is enforced at both ends of the field, If the ball is completely within the 2 yard marker the offense MUST pass the ball to score. QB can run only if the defense rushes in after the 3 mississippi count
- In the A Division, there is no no run zone
- 1 coach is allowed in the huddle and on the field while game is in play, but must back up behind the quarter back at the snap. A, B, and C Divisions only
- In the D Division the coach will be allowed on the field for the first 3 games.
- There must be a clear separation between the quarter back and center at the snap
- If the snap is dropped, the designated quarter back can pick up the ball, and complete the play. Only the qb, and no other player can pick up the ball. If a player other than the qb touches the ball, then the play is ruled dead. This includes when a in motion or wild cat play is called. The player receiving the ball must call hike.



- QB is allowed 1 forward pass per play, a pitch back is allowed and does not count as a forward pass. Receivers must have 1 foot in bounds to be a legal catch. Everyone is eligible to receive the ball.
- Offensive player can set a stationary pick. Feet must be planted. Raising of arms or forward contact by the offensive player is illegal. Ball carrier must avoid defensive players. NO charging.
- A motion pick is allowed by one player only, and the player cannot change direction or impede a defensive player in any way.
- A multiple pick is illegal, and will be penalized if it is deemed by the referee that the formation was too tight to allow penetration by the defensive players.
- The cluster play is not allowed. (at snap all players surround the qb)
- If the defense intercepts the ball they can run it back for a TD, if they get flagged before scoring the spot will be marked back at the 5 yard line if the down line was not crossed.

- Flag shielding and stiff arming is not allowed.
- Diving or jumping to advance the ball or scoring, is not allowed, spinning, and jumping for the ball is allowed
- The position of the hips determines the spot of the ball,. If the hips cross the down marker before the flag is pulled, it is a first down, and if they cross the goal line, it is a score.
- Any time a player falls, or a knee touches the ground, even if untouched, the play is ended.

### Scoring

- Touch Down - 6 points,
- extra point -1 (run or pass from 2 yd line)
- 2 point conversion (run or pass from 5 yd line)
- Safety 2 points

## Defense

- At the snap of the ball the referee will count 3 mississippi, defensive players must wait for the full completion of the count before crossing the line of scrimmage. No Blitzing is allowed
- If the quarter back hands off the ball, then the count will stop and the defense may cross the line of scrimmage.
- Stepping in front of an offensive player and causing contact is not allowed.
- 1 coach may be in the defensive huddle, but must back out of the way at the snap
- In the D Division, the coach is allowed on the field for the first 3 games. Junior and Senior Divisions the coach is not allowed on the field

### Junior and Senior division additional rules

- In addition or superseding those rules above
- On fourth down will declare a punt or to go for a first down. If such attempt

fails, the opposing team will receive the ball on the spot.

- An intercepted ball and runback will be placed on the spot of the flagging unless there is a score.
- There is a free blitz per set of four downs. The defenders must go on the snap. No delay is allowed and will be called an offside. Defenders that blitz from the line must be head to head with an offensive player i. e. the center. If not head to head it will be called an illegal blitz and penalty assessed. Multiple players may blitz but must be 7 yards back.
- There is a blitz allowed on all point after attempts, same as above.

### Penalties

- Defensive- Off-sides: (+ 5) yards and replay the down or "o" takes result of play
- Holding the ball carrier: replay the down at the spot of the foul.

- Interference: 10 yards from original spot, automatic 1st down or result of play
- Ball stripping: 5 yards from the spot of the foul, replay the down.
- If ball stripping occurs within the 5 yard line, the result will be a touchdown.
- Personal fouls: tackling or pushing out of bounds, 10 yards and a warning (2nd, eject) If occurred within the 5 yard line then its an automatic touch down.

### Offensive

- Offensive- Off-sides or false start: (-5) yards and replay the down
- Tying flag belt (-10) and loss of down and possible ejection of player, coach, and/or parent.
- Flag shield: (-5) yards from spot of foul, down counts
- Intentional grounding enforcement for C Division and up.

- When the passer is under duress & throws the ball to an area where there is no receiver while in the pocket
- The pocket is 4yds to each side of the ball when it is set in the middle of the field
- The passer can throw the ball away legally to conserve a loss of yardage when he is outside the pocket & the pass is thrown beyond the line of scrimmage.
- The passer can also legally spike the ball into the ground after receiving the snap to stop the clock under 1 minute. The ball has to be released immediately after controlling the snap
- This rule only applies to the player that took the initial snap & never relinquishes possession of the ball to another player
- Spot of the foul and loss of down
- Interference: Blocking (-5) yards from original spot, down counts illegal forward pass: passing beyond the line of scrimmage. 5 yards from original spot, and loss of down.
- Offensive pass interference (-10) yards and replay the down

- Forward lateral: If after a forward pass, and/or past the line of scrimmage. 5 yards from the spot of the foul, and the down counts.
- Personal fouls: Charging (must avoid players) (- 10) from spot of foul, down counts
- Stiff-arming: (-10) from spot of foul, loss of down and warning (2nd, eject) (under review)
- Embellishment –poor sportsmanship (-5 yds) down counts
- Cursing, and aggressive behavior will not be tolerated and will result in a (-10 yd) penalty on the team
- Delay of game, throwing or kicking the ball (-5 yd) spectators stepping on the field or out of bounds line, one warning then (-5 yd)
- Diving to advance the ball- 15yd penalty and loss of down.
- The coaches are responsible for the conduct of their teams. This includes spectators. Unruly behavior will result in a

**15 yd unsportsmanlike penalty on the team.**

- **A team having been found to use unregistered players, will forfeit the game, a second offence will result in the coach being suspended, and would have to petition the committee for reinstatement.**

**Additional**

**All teams are required to supply the league with individual pictures of their players with name and birthdate of player on a word file. This will then be placed online for player identification.**

**You must pick up all your garbage when you leave**

**You must park in designated spots**

**You must stay behind the out of bounds line at all time (5 yd penalty after one warning)**

**There is no smoking allowed at any field**

**Cursing or fighting will result in ejection from the game. This includes spectators**

**Teams must be ready to take the field five minutes before the scheduled time, if first game**



or as soon as the prior game is completed.  
Referee will blow the whistle and call for coaches  
and captains. The teams have two minutes to  
comply. If one team is on the field and the other is  
not by the second whistle that team will lose  
choice. If both teams do not comply then the  
referee will start the game clock. This is for the  
start of the game. The teams must still be at the  
field for roster exchange 15 minutes before  
scheduled game start.

Footballs Wilson NFL

Toddler Division mini ball

A1 Division mini ball

A2 Divisions mini ball or pee wee ball

B Division pee wee ball

C Division 1<sup>st</sup> season choice pee wee or junior

Then junior ball

D and Junior Divisions junior ball

Senior Division Official ball

## CODE OF CONDUCT: Zero-Tolerance Policy

In the best interest of our athletes, we have implemented a Zero-Tolerance Policy throughout our sports programs.

Families, coaches, participants, and spectators are expected to conduct themselves in a respectable, responsible, honest, and caring manner. The HTBFFL has a zero-tolerance policy for behavior that is disrespectful, disruptive or rude. The HTBFFL of Suffolk reserves the right to ask any individual(s) to leave the field and/or facility for inappropriate behavior. Facility Supervisors and officials have the authority to ask any spectator or coach, who does not display conduct consistent with the HTBFFL Mission and Youth Sports Philosophy, to leave the game and/or practice area. This includes inappropriate comments to the officials, staff, or other participants.

### Families

1. Families shall support their players by being positive before, during and after team matches and other team events.
2. Families shall not attempt to coach or direct players in practices or matches.
3. Families shall not communicate with the officials or opponents at matches.
4. Families shall ensure that their players are fully prepared prior to practices or

games: eating well, being properly hydrated, sleeping well, have the necessary equipment i.e. shin guards, cleats, etc.

5. Families shall make their best efforts to stay current with fees. If there is a genuine reason why they can't, they must communicate this with the team manager or the Director of Coaching as early as possible to avoid any interruption in their player's ability to practice and play for their respective team.

6. Families shall participate in team events to the best of their ability: field marshalling at tournaments, helping with transportation, participating in other team events and supporting all of the players on the team in their efforts.

7. Families are encouraged to communicate with the coach regarding player development, play time, personality issues, etc., at an appropriate time. Not during practices or matches.

8. Families are expected to support HTBFFL at every opportunity i.e. volunteering for their player's team, attending Club activities, etc.  
PLAYERS:

1. Players shall at all times compose themselves and interact with respect towards their teammates, coaches, officials, sidelines and opponents.

**2. Players shall come to practices and matches ready to play: well fed, rested, with water, with proper equipment and a good attitude.**

**3. Players shall take on the responsibility of communicating positively with coaches regarding absences, lateness, injuries, field position, etc.**

**4. Players will commit to working hard, striving to improve their game and having fun.**

**5. Players shall obtain and provide written medical clearance where illness and/or injury have resulted in a doctor or hospital visit.**

**6. Players shall commit to the team for the season. If unforeseen difficulties occur, the player will inform the coach as soon as possible.**

**COACHES:**

**1. I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every game, practice or other youth sports event.**

**2. I will place the emotional and physical wellbeing of my child ahead of my personal desire to win.**

**3. I will insist that my child play in a safe and healthy environment.**

**4. I will require that my child's coach be trained in the responsibilities of being a youth sports coach and that the coach upholds the Coaches' Code of Ethics.**

- 5. I will support coaches and officials working with my child, in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.**
- 6. I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free from drugs, tobacco, and alcohol and will refrain from their use at all youth sports events.**
- 7. I will remember that the game is for youth - not adults.**
- 8. I will do my very best to make youth sports fun for my child.**
- 9. I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, fans, and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed, or ability.**
- 10. I will help my child enjoy the youth sports experience by doing whatever I can, such as being a respectful fan, assisting with coaching, or providing transportation.**
- 11. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Cursing, yelling, stepping on the field. Fighting/arguing with the referees or other team and or any disorderly behavior. The penalty for such behavior by coaches, players, or parents, may result in yardage penalty for the team, and/or ejection from the game and/or ejection from the league, depending on the severity and frequency of the infraction(s).**





