



# Official Rules Book

January 2, 2026

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## 7-on-7 Football

### SECTION 1: FIELD DIMENSIONS

#### Field Dimensions:

- a. Field Length — 45 yards long
- b. Field Width — 160 feet (60 feet to hash mark, 40 feet between)
- c. End Zone — 10 yards deep

### SECTION 2. PLAYER EQUIPMENT

#### Article 1: Footwear

Players must wear rubber soled shoes. Cleats may not be allowed at certain locations. Cleats with exposed metal are never allowed and must be removed.

#### Article 2: Additional Equipment

No sideline-to-player communication devices may be used.

#### Article 3: Uniform Standards

All teams will have two jerseys (a white and a dark jersey) with player's number on the front and back. The number on the front must be a minimum of 2" and the number on the back must be a minimum of 4".

No football jerseys of any type shall be worn. T-shirts, compression shirt, or basketball type sleeveless shirts are the only choices of acceptable jerseys. No player will be allowed to participate without a shirt.

#### Article 4: Mouthguards

All players must wear mouth guards while on the playing field.

#### Article 5: Headgear

The following headgear mandates apply to all participants:

- a. No player will be allowed to participate without a fully fastened, properly worn cap-style soft shell helmet.
- b. Must have a Virginia Tech rating of 4 star or higher.
- c. Must have no external components such as metal component parts, hard plastic pieces, no sharp or hard edges, and no exterior hard shells.
- d. Must have a fully functional retention system or chin strap.



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### **RULE 3: GAME PLAY**

A central timekeeper will be designated. All games will begin and end on this person's instructions. He will also announce the time remaining at the 10, 5, and 2 minute mark.

Visitors will have first possession and wear white (top team in bracket or first team listed will be the visitor). The home team will have first possession the 2nd half and wear a dark color (bottom team in bracket or 2nd team listed will be the home team).

Visitors (team in white) will always align their team on the right sideline facing the end zone. Home (dark jersey) will always align their team on the left sideline facing the end zone.

Ball is always placed on the right hash mark when at the 45 yard line.

Referee will announce/post the score before each offensive possession begins.

### **RULE 4: MOVING THE BALL**

Offensive Plays Must All Be Passes! (No Run plays or Kicking/Punting)

The field is marked at 15 yard intervals with cones. (3 first downs without a penalty results in a touchdown)

Possession always begins at the 45 yard line at the right hash mark. Hash mark placement of the ball must be enforced by officials, in accordance with NCAA rules, once the ball has been advanced.

No penalty will be assessed in excess of the 45 yd line. On an unsuccessful or successful offensive play from the 45 yard line resulting in an offensive penalty: The ball will be returned to the 45 yard line and **THE NEXT SUCCEEDING PLAY WILL BE FORFEITED**. I.e. 1st down will become 2nd down; 2nd down will become 3rd down; and 3rd down will result in a turnover.

Offenses always move in the same direction

No "Double Passes" are allowed.

Once a forward pass has been thrown, a backward pass (lateral) is allowed. Should a swing pass not cross the LOS and a defensive player tags the ball carrier behind the 45 yard line, it is a safety.

The offense has 40 seconds between downs to snap the ball. The 40 second play clock will start immediately after the ball has been ruled dead by a game official after a down.



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## RULE 5: SPECIAL RULES

No blocking.

Receiver/Ball carrier is legally down when touched with one or both hands. (Excessive force by shoving, pushing, or striking a blow will be penalized by automatic first down and 5 yards. Expulsion of a player(s) if ruled unsportsmanlike & flagrant).

Fumbles are dead balls at the spot with the last team retaining possession. A muffed snap is not a fumble/dead ball. The 4.0 second count remains in effect on snaps.

Two delays of game penalties in the same possession results in a turnover.

Any offensive penalty on the extra point try results in a turnover.

The QB is allowed 4.0 seconds to throw the ball. The Official timekeeper starts a stopwatch on the snap of the ball from center and stops the watch as soon as the QB releases the ball.

- a. If release is under 4.0 seconds, the play goes on.
- b. If the timekeeper sees that the clock has exceeded 4.0 seconds, he waits until the play is over (the play is not blown dead), then brings the ball back to the original line of scrimmage with loss of down. (The timekeeper will be an official)
- c. All penalties will be marked off on a 4 second count EXCEPT for pass interference.

Defensive Pass Interference is the same as NCAA rules. (1st down & spot foul up to 15 yds)

Responsibility to avoid contact is with the defense. There will be NO chucking, deliberate bumping, or grabbing. These actions will result in a 5 yd. penalty and an automatic 1st down.

Offensive pass interference is the same as NCAA rules. (15 yard penalty)

Interceptions may be returned (“no blocking” rule applies). If an interception is returned beyond the 45 yard line (the offensive origination point) it is a touchdown and point after attempt should ensue. The teammates of the person who intercepted the ball may trail the runner so as to be in position to take a backwards pass. They may not block for or screen for the runner.

Offensive team is responsible for retrieving and returning the ball to the previous spot or the new scrimmage spot in a timely fashion. Failure to do so can result in a delay of game penalty. The offensive center is not an eligible receiver (teams must have a center). The ball must be snapped from the ground. [ball does not have to travel between the snapper’s legs]  
The center will be responsible for setting or re-positioning the Referee’s bean bag at the line of scrimmage. On change of possession, the team moving to offense will ensure the bean bag gets to the new scrimmage line. (centers on both teams responsible).



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No taunting or “trash talking”. (5 yard penalty & expulsion if flagrant).

The offense must gain at least 15 yards in the first 3 or less plays or the defense takes over.

There is no kicking. Four down territory occurs only after offense proceeds to or inside the 15 yard line cone (third quadrant).

Fighting: the player(s) involved will be ejected from the game and tournament. If a team fight occurs, the teams involved will be ejected from the tournament and denied participation in any/all future Southwest Games events/tournaments! Throwing a punch will be disqualification from the tournament..

Any dead ball foul on a play that results in the defense getting the ball and it is unable to be penalized back to the 50 yard line will result in a loss of down penalty. The defense, now the offense, would be starting play with 2nd down.

There will be an area referred to as the tackle box that extends 3 yards on both sides of the center and extends 3 yards deep into the backfield. No eligible receiver may align within the tackle box.

No electronic communication devices or aids may be used by coaches, players, or team personnel on the field. Such devices include (but are not limited to): headsets, mobile phones, still photography cameras, video recording cameras, mobile tablets, laptops, internet devices.

## **RULE 5: SCORING**

6 points for TD

1 point for PAT from the 3 yard line, 2 point PAT from 10 yard line.

2 points if a team returns a PAT back across the 45.

Official score is kept by the field referee and game manager.

## **RULE 6: TIE BREAKER (OVERTIME)**

After a coin flip to determine first possession, teams will alternate 4 down series from the 15 yard line.

A winner is determined when one team scores during its possession and the other does not. (Federation rules).

If a second overtime period is necessary, each team must then go for two points on the conversion attempts.



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## **RULE 7: TIME**

Teams will play two 15 minute halves (continuous clock for each half - see: "starting the game").

No half-time (teams simply reset to 45 yd line & begin 2nd half with home team in possession)

No time outs. (Exception: Injuries. All games will halt until player(s) can be removed as soon as safety dictates).

Approximately 15 minutes between games - games should start every 45 minutes in pool play.

7 on 7 tournaments require that all games start/end at the same time.

Teams must be on site and ready to play when scheduled.

If a team(s) are late and can not start when the tournament officially starts, they will begin play with whatever time is left on the tournament clock – not to exceed 10 minutes of 1st half.

Forfeit will occur after 10 minutes of the 1st half.

Injury time outs may reduce the amount of time between halves and/or between games to maintain the game schedules.

## **RULE 8: SECONDARY COVERAGES**

Coverage will be the choice of each participating team.

## **RULE 9: TEAM / TOURNAMENT FEES**

Maximum of 20 players per team.

Tournament Fees: There will be a flat fee of \$350 per team. This is regardless of the minimum number of players on the roster. Maximum roster size is 20 players.

Early Bird Special: \$250 per team prior to the March 1, 2026 deadline.

Event is open to both school and select teams.

All participants must have at least one year remaining of high school eligibility.



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## **RULE 10: OFFICIALS**

1 - Referee; Field Judge; Back Judge

Timekeeper: A designated official will keep the 4 second clock.

May use 2 officials in pool play games.

## **RULE 11: TEAM AREA**

No team shall have additional athletes on the sideline or in the team tent partially dressed in a team uniform. (exceeding the maximum of 20 that are listed on the roster)

The Team Zone will be an area on the sideline where only team members may be during game play. This will be the area from the 15 yard line to the 30 yard line. Players and coaches may not be out of the Team Zone during game time.

## **RULE 12: TOURNAMENT TIEBREAKER**

Head-to-Head, Points Scored, Points Allowed will determine the pool winners or teams to advance.

In a three way tie, only the scores of games between teams in the tie will be counted. Once a winner has been declared, the remaining two teams will revert back to head-to-head to break the remaining tie.

A forfeit will be treated the same as a qualifying team in a bracket. The team forfeiting or the team that has qualified will not count in the tiebreaker scenario when determining head to head, points scored or points allowed. In essence, a bracket with a qualifying or forfeiting team becomes a three team bracket!

## **RULE 13: FAN SEATING**

Fans MUST sit behind their team when they are playing. However, after the contest, they must relinquish their position to the fans of the team scheduled to play.

Fans may not sit behind someone else's team during a contest.





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