



Fauquier Youth Football (FYF)

General Guidelines:

Field, Coach, Safety, Practice, and Game Rules

SPORTSMANSHIP

1. All coaches, officials, parents, players, cheerleaders, and spectators are required to adhere to the principles of good sportsmanship as defined in the FYF Code of Conduct.
 2. Head Coaches are responsible for the conduct of their players, cheerleaders, parents, and assistant coaches.
 3. Game officials are responsible for enforcing sportsmanship rules for all game participants.
 4. Any person in violation of the FYF Code of Conduct may be removed from the area and referred to the FYF Board of Directors for further disciplinary action as deemed necessary.
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SAFETY AND PRACTICE GUIDELINES

1. **Lightning & Thunder Policy**

FYF follows the VHSL lightning policy:

- A **30-minute delay** from the last lightning strike or thunderclap
 - A **maximum delay of one hour**, after which the game or practice may be suspended or canceled
- Coaches must immediately remove players from the field to a safe location.

2. **Coach Certification**

All coaches must be **USA Football certified** prior to any contact with players. Approved techniques and training guidelines must be followed at all times.

3. **Concussion Awareness**

The guiding principle is: **“When in doubt, sit them out.”**

Coaches and parents should reference USA Football’s Concussion Recognition and Response guidelines:

<https://usafootball.com/programs/heads-up-football/youth/concussion/>

4. **Heat, Hydration & Practice Progression**

Coaches must follow USA Football Heat Preparedness and Hydration guidelines:

<https://usafootball.com/programs/heads-up-football/youth/heat-hydration/>

5. **Contact Progression**

Levels and intensity of contact drills must comply with USA Football National Practice Guidelines for Youth Football:

<https://guides.usafootball.com/5593/51790/index.html>

FIELD RULES

1. The **home team** (as designated by the game schedule) must provide up to **three (3) adult volunteers** to serve as the sideline crew (chain gang).
2. The sideline crew is considered part of the officiating crew and operates under the direction of game officials.
3. Games will **not begin** until the sideline crew requirement is met.
4. Access to the **Coach’s Box** is limited to team players, coaches, and game officials only.
5. Non-participants (fans, parents, spectators) must remain **at least five (5) yards** from all field boundaries or behind designated barriers.
6. Each team is responsible for **immediate cleanup** of its sideline area following the game.

COACHES

1. Only the **Head Coach** may address game officials regarding rule explanations.

2. All coaches must wear identifiable team apparel (e.g., cap or jacket in team colors).
 3. A maximum of **six (6) approved coaches** is permitted on the sideline during games.
 - All coaches must be approved by FYF and the Board of Directors.
 4. Coaches must always remain in the Coach's Box except:
 - **7U Division:** One additional coach may be on the field but must remain within **10 yards of the sideline** before the snap.
 5. Communication is limited to **face-to-face verbal instruction** only.
 - Radio, cell phones, and electronic communication devices are prohibited.
 6. Reviewing videos or films during games is prohibited.
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EQUIPMENT

1. FYF will maintain an inventory of approved game balls and provide officials with the designated game ball.
2. **Football Sizes by Division:**
 - 7U & 9U: **K2 Composite Football**
 - 11U: **TDJ Composite Football**
 - 13U: **TDY Composite Football**
3. All players must wear the official FYF-issued game uniform.
 - Black game pants and white helmets are required unless proper sizing is unavailable.
4. All players must wear a **colored (non-clear) mouthpiece** attached to the facemask.
5. Only rubber or nylon cleats are permitted.
 - **Metal or baseball-style cleats are prohibited.**
6. Bandanas, skull caps, or any headwear worn under helmets are prohibited.
7. Only **clear face shields** are permitted.
8. Jerseys may be altered to add last names under the following conditions:
 - Every player on the team must participate

- Name must match the official roster
 - Letters must match the color number
 - Block lettering and uniform font
 - Maximum letter height: **3 inches**
 - Cost is paid by the team, not FYF
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PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Minimum Play Requirement

- Each rostered player must participate in **at least six (6) plays per game**
- Kickoffs and kick returns count toward minimum plays
- Exceptions: injury, disciplinary suspension, missed two or more practices prior to the game, or documented safety concerns
- Parents must be notified if a player does not meet minimum play time due to missed practices

2. Teams should assign an individual to track play counts during games.

3. Player Safety Concerns

- If play time is limited due to safety concerns, parents must be informed of the reason and improvement expectations.

4. All injuries preventing continued participation must be reported to a Board Member as soon as possible.

5. Player positions are not permanent and may change weekly at the Head Coach's discretion.

6. Coaches who fail to ensure minimum participation may face disciplinary action.

FORFEITS & POSTPONEMENTS

1. Game officials may declare a forfeit if:

- A team cannot field **at least 11 players** at game start

- If during the game a team drops below 11 players, officials may allow play to continue **only if**:
 - Both head coaches agree
 - Teams field equal numbers
 - No fewer than **9 players per team**
 - Two unsportsmanlike conduct penalties result in unsafe conditions
2. Forfeited games will **not be replayed**.
 3. Games postponed or suspended due to unsafe conditions may be rescheduled if possible.

GENERAL GAME RULES

All FYF games will follow the **current Virginia High School League (VHSL) Football Rules, except where modified by FYF (Apple Valley Game Rules)**.