

2022 NMYFL 4th Grade Football Rules (11-player Football)

Field Length: 80 yards long x 40 yards wide minimum Ball Size: Pee Wee

All rules not modified below will follow the National Federation of High School Rules

Defense (See 4-3 Alignment Diagram for more specifics)

1. Defensive front is a 4-3 defense with 2 corner backs and 2 safeties.
2. Initially Defensive Lineman have to be in a 3 or 4 pt stance and head up with the Offensive guards, and the defensive ends would be head up or outside shade of where Tight ends would align next to the tackles. If there are no Tight ends the defensive end can reduce down to outside shade of the tackle or move outside with the Tight end.
3. Teams can split out their tight ends or receivers per regular football rules. If tight end splits out know that it possibly leaves the defensive end uncovered and is an advantage to the defense.
4. The middle linebacker has to be over the Center and at least 3 yards off the line.
5. Outside linebackers have to be at least 3 yards off the line and outside shade of the offensive tackles, but not stacked behind the defensive ends.
6. The corner backs need to be at least 4 yards outside the defensive ends and 1 yard off the line of scrimmage.
7. The Safeties must be at least 1 yard behind the linebackers as the last line of defense. Safeties are players free to adjust to all receiver formations. All other positions must align as indicated above.
8. When a team splits out receivers the safeties are free to move to coverage anywhere on the field just so they remain at least 1 yd behind the linebackers. The cornerbacks can be head up on any receiver at least 4 yds outside the defensive ends.
9. Blitzing by any linebackers, corner backs or safeties is strictly prohibited. Blitzing is not allowed. Linebackers must, at the snap, be at least three (3) yards off the line of scrimmage, and corners must, at the snap, be at least one (1) yard off the line of scrimmage, and be at least four (4) yards outside the "box", which is defined as at least four yards outside the normal alignment of the defensive end. In all circumstances other than goal line situations.
10. There must be at least (2) players lined up in a "safety type". These restrictions do not apply to goal line situations. Inside linebackers, corners, and safeties may not begin to cross the neutral zone until after the quarterback attempts to hand off the ball or after the quarterback leaves the box, which is defined as the area between the normal alignments of the defensive ends.
11. Inside the five yard line any defense is allowed, but only players on the line of scrimmage can rush the ball. Blitzing is still not allowed if a player is not on the line of scrimmage.
12. One coach can be on the field to assist in aligning the players the first two games of the season.
13. Coaches must be at least five yards behind the play and must be silent as soon as the quarterback is under center. Once play begins normal coaching is allowed on the field. After two games no coaches will be allowed on the field except for timeouts.

Offense

1. Offense is required to have 7 players on the line of scrimmage with 3 players on each side of the center: Center, 2 Guards, 2 Tackles, 2 Ends on each side of the line. No unbalanced lines as 7 players must be on the line of scrimmage at all times. The ends can be anywhere on the line of scrimmage and do not have to be right next to the tackles.
2. Line splits are no more than arm to shoulder width apart from lineman to lineman. Lineman are defined as center, guard, and tackle. An end is not considered a lineman, but at least one on each side must line up on the line of scrimmage. However, it is to the offense advantage to have a tight end lined up on the line as the defensive end will be lined up across from where the tight end normally lines up next to the tackles.
3. All QB, running back and receiver alignments are allowed per football rules.

4. One coach can be on the field and in the huddle to assist in aligning the players the first two games of the season. Coaches must be at least five yards behind the play and must be silent as soon as the quarterback is under center. Once play begins normal coaching is allowed on the field.
5. After two games no coaches will be allowed on the field except for timeouts. During timeouts only one coach is allowed on the field.

Weight Restrictions

1. A 4th grade player weighing over 105 pounds must have a red stripe affixed to their helmet and cannot carry the ball.
2. Red Stripe players may not line up in the offensive backfield or at wide receiver. They may line up at tight end, but under no circumstances may run the ball or receive a pass.
3. Red Stripe players may only run the ball if they are involved in a direct fumble recovery or a pass interception.

Playing Rules

1. Team benches and team fans will be on the same side of their portion of the field. Team/Coaching Box will be from 20 yd line to 20 yd line and 3 yds deep. No fans should be inside this area.
2. No game clock - the game is 60 plays long or 80 minutes (1 hr 20 min.), whichever comes first.
3. Games will be two halves. Teams will switch ends at half. Half-time is a five minute break.
4. There will be 30 plays per half. Extra points do not count as a play.
5. Extra points are 1 for a run, 2 for a pass and kick. Field goal is worth 3 points.
6. One overtime will be played to determine the final score. Each team will have an offensive possession (four downs) starting on the 10 yard line. Extra points will be attempted also. If the score remains tied after one overtime in the regular season the game will be declared a tie.
7. No Kickoffs – to begin each half and after a score teams will begin at their 20 yard line.
8. No punts – teams declare a punt and move the ball forward 20 yards, unless you are inside the opponent's 40 yard line (mid field). Then, it would be half the distance to the goal. If you are on the 20, you would move ball to the 10. Punts do not count as a play.
9. The referee's will keep track of counting plays.
10. A half cannot end on a penalty. Therefore, another play will be allowed.
11. The referee will warn both coaches at 15 minutes of game time remaining.
12. A referee in the Offensive backfield will keep track of the play clock. 45 seconds will be allowed between plays. The referee will tell the coach when the clock starts.
13. Offensive or Defensive "Off-sides/Procedure" will not count as a play, but all other penalties will.
14. A mercy rule will be used when a team gets up by 21 points. it will mean that all plays will count when a team is up 21 pts. This will include penalties, extra points, kickoffs and punts. Once the score drops below a 21-pt. difference the regular rules will be back in order.

Games Ejections

1. Any player, coach, or spectator ejected from the game for any reason will be asked to leave the playing area if a player or coach and the facility if a spectator.
2. Anyone ejected from a game will also be suspended for the next game with no exceptions. Referees' judgement is final and there is no appeal.
3. All ejections are reported in the form of a game report by the ejecting referee and the association involved leadership is contacted and must supply a representative to attend the next game, if possible, to ensure that the game suspension is in place.
4. A second suspension of the season will be possible grounds for removal from the league after review with the associations involved.

Game Management

1. Please have teams ready for play at game time when there is a previous game on same field.
2. Home team as noted on the NMYFL schedule must provide the chain crew. Please have crew ready to go at least 10 minutes before game time and please make sure the crew are adults or teenagers.
3. The chain crew is a part of the referees' crew so must be impartial during the game. No coaching, cheering or comments are allowed by the chain crew at any time, or they may be removed.
4. Winning team reports the final score on the NMYFL website within 24 hours of completion.

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