

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP

FLASHES

YOUTH FOOTBALL

“THE TRADITION STARTS HERE”

Flag, Peewee, Lower
and Upper Leagues

2025 Playing Rules and Regulations

Franklin Township Youth Football Club, Inc.
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RULE 1. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY.

1. Player eligibility is determined by the player's grade level and age at the start of the Franklin Township school year. Any player that exceeds the maximum age level shall normally play at the next higher level. In unusual circumstances (IE, player retained a grade level, exceptional size, etc.), the Board of Directors (BOD) may assign a player to a specific level as deemed necessary in the interest of player safety and risk minimization.

- a. Flag: Kindergarten.
- b. Peewee: 1st or 2nd grade, maximum age of 8 years old as of August 1st.
- c. Lower: 3rd or 4th grade, maximum age of 10 years old as of August 1st.
- d. Upper: 5th or 6th grade, maximum age of 12 years old as of August 1st.

2. Players that have participated at least one season in the Franklin Township Youth Football (FTYF) Flag Division and weigh a minimum of 45 pounds may, at the election of the parent/guardian, play in the Peewee Division. The league will NOT consider advanced placement requests of the parent/guardian into the Lower and Upper Divisions.

3. No player may be a member of another football team or league during the current season. This includes, but is not limited to, participation/recruitment into any all-star star, travel, etc. team not affiliated with FTYF while the FTYF season and FTYF post-season are in progress.

4. All medical forms shall be submitted to the Commissioner prior to any practice.

RULE 2. INJURED PLAYERS.

1. The head coach shall report any player injury requiring medical attention by a doctor to the Commissioner within 24 hours. The player will not be allowed to practice or play in a game until a doctor's release is provided to the Commissioner.

RULE 3. WAITING LISTS AND REPLACEMENT PLAYERS.

1. The Commissioner will maintain waiting lists of replacement players.

2. A head coach losing a player for the remainder of the season (injury, move, quit, etc.) shall report to the Commissioner within 24 hours. The Commissioner will verify the circumstances surrounding the player's departure.

3. As deemed appropriate, the BOD may authorize a replacement player.

RULE 4. PRACTICES.

1. The Commissioner will designate practice dates and times.

2. Four (4) team events allowed per calendar week, Sunday through Saturday, including games.

3. Saturday practices are allowed if that team does not have a game.

4. Practices on Holidays prohibited.
 5. All practices will be held at the FTYF facilities. No off-site practices allowed.
 6. Practice regulations:
 - a. Unless otherwise specifically identified in writing (memo, email, etc.), all aspects of any practice shall be conducted in accordance with the USA Football® Guidelines provided by FTYF.
 - b. 2 hour time limit prior to start of the Franklin Township school year.
 - c. 1 ¾ hour time limit after the start of the Franklin Township school year.
 - d. Warm-up practice may begin no earlier than 30 minutes prior to the team's scheduled game time.
 7. The Commissioner or BOD may cancel any practice for inclement weather.
 8. The head coach is responsible to clean up the team's practice area.
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RULE 5. MANDATORY PARTICIPATION.

1. Flag: Each player shall play a minimum of 9 consecutive minutes of a half (plays missed solely due to injury, illness, etc. count toward satisfying this requirement).
 2. Pee wee, Lower and Upper: Each player shall play 10 plays per half. Tracking forms may be provided for compliance. If provided, tracking forms shall be signed by the head coach and submitted to the BOD within 30 minutes of the game ending. Violations may result in forfeiture. Waivers (due to injury, non-attendance at practice(s), etc.) shall be approved by the Commissioner (or designee) **prior to the start of the game**.
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RULE 6. MISCONDUCT.

1. Parent and spectator behavior is governed by the FTYF Parents/Spectators Code of Conduct.
 2. Any disciplinary action taken by a head coach toward a player, assistant coach, parent, fan, etc. shall be reported to the BOD (by the head coach taking the disciplinary action) within 24 hours. The BOD may take further action.
 3. Game officials will notify the BOD if any team representative (head coach, assistant coach, etc.) receives an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty during a game. The BOD may take further action.
 4. Any team representative (head coach, assistant coach, etc.) ejected from a game (including post-game ejection) shall serve a minimum two game suspension from attendance at the succeeding games. Ejected representatives may reduce the suspension by one game by working as a co-official (alternate League game determined by the BOD) before resuming team duties. Any second ejection will result in suspension from attendance for the remainder of the season. The BOD may also take further action.
 5. If disreputable behavior of any FTYF representative (head coach, assistant coach, BOD member, player, etc.) is formally reported via signed written complaint to the BOD, the individual shall appear before the BOD and explain the circumstances surrounding the complaint. The BOD may take further action.
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RULE 7. EQUIPMENT.

1. Any equipment used in lieu of league provided equipment shall be approved by the BOD prior to any use.
 2. Metal cleats (spikes, tipped, etc.) are prohibited.
 3. Helmet eyes shields must be clear without the presence of **any** tint or polarization, etc. Tinted, polarized, etc., eyewear worn under the face mask is legal. Note: this restriction exists for the purpose of medical evaluation for concussion protocol, eye injury evaluation, etc.
 4. Casts shall not be worn during games. Players with casts may practice without contact after providing the BOD with a doctor's release.
 5. Footballs shall be provided by the league for each game:
 - a. Flag and Pewee: Wilson K2® or equivalent.
 - b. Lower and Upper: Wilson TDJ® or equivalent.
 6. Flags/Jerseys: Flag players' jerseys shall be tucked in the pants leaving the flags completely exposed.
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RULE 8. PLAYING RULES.

1. Governing Rules and Field Length. Unless otherwise specified, games shall be played using National Federal of State High School Associations (NFHS) rules. Flag shall use a 40 yard field.

2. Playing Direction and Coin Toss Options. Teams shall only change direction of play at halftime.

a. Flag: Visiting team shall play offense first to begin the first half (in lieu of coin toss options). Home team shall select goal to defend for the first half and will play offense first to begin the second half (in lieu of second half options).

b. Peewee: Winner of coin toss may select: to play offense first (in lieu of receiving option), to play defense first (in lieu of kicking option), a goal to defend or defer selection to second half. Second half options are to play offense first (in lieu of receiving option) or to play defense first (in lieu of kicking option).

c. Lower and Upper: NFHS Options. Second half options are to receive or kick.

3. Weight Restrictions.

a. X-men and Non X-men:

(1) Flag: NFHS.

(2) Peewee:

(a) X-men: 75.1 pounds and higher.

(b) Non X-men: 75.0 pounds and lower.

(c) Non X-men Buffer: 3.0 pounds (IE, 72.0 - 75.0 pounds).

(3) Lower:

(a) X-men: 95.1 pounds and higher.

(b) Non X-men: 95.0 pounds and lower.

(c) Non X-men Buffer: 5.0 pounds (IE, 90.0 - 95.0 pounds).

(4) Upper:

(a) X-men: 120.1 pounds and higher.

(b) Non X-men: 120.0 pounds and lower.

(c) Non X-men Buffer: 7.0 pounds (IE, 113.0 - 120.0 pounds).

b. Weigh-In's:

(1) Initial Weigh-In: All players shall be weighed by FTYF at the time of registration. Any player within the Non X-men Buffer will be subjected to a Pre-Season Weigh-in.

(2) Pre-Season Weigh-In: Pre-Season Weigh-In's shall be conducted by FTYF during the seven (7) calendar day period prior to a player's first scheduled game. Any player within the Non X-men Buffer will be subjected to a Mid-Season Weigh-In.

(3) Spot Weigh-In: Spot Weigh-In's may be conducted by FTYF on any player at any time. FTYF may take whatever action deemed necessary in the interest of player safety and risk minimization (IE, invoke X-men status, etc.).

c. Once a player obtains X-men status, the player is no longer subject to any future Weigh-In's, except Spot Weigh-In's, and the X-men status remains in effect for the remainder of the season and post-season.

d. All X-men shall have helmets marked with an "X" both front and rear with 1" tape (contrasting color) at least 4" long.

4. Timing.

a. Flag:

(1) Half length: 18 minutes.

(2) Special Timing: "Continuous game clock". The game clock may stop for an unusual delay.

b. Peewee:

(1) Half length: 18 minutes.

(2) Special Timing: "Running game clock". The game clock shall stop only for:

(a) team timeouts and will start on succeeding snap.

(b) officials' timeout (injury, penalty, etc.) and will start based upon previous game clock status.

(c) change of possession at the end of the down and will start on succeeding ready-for-play (RFP).

(d) scoring plays and point after tries (PAT's) and will start on the succeeding series RFP.

c. Lower and Upper:

(1) Half length: 20 minutes.

(2) Special Timing: Except for downs with the associated RFP occurring with two (2) minutes or less in each half, the game clock shall also stop for:

- (a) out of bounds and will start with succeeding RFP.
- (b) incomplete pass and will start with succeeding RFP.
- (c) change of possession at the end of the down and will start on succeeding RFP.
- d. Halftime: Normally 5 minutes and adjusted to accommodate time schedule.
- e. Play clock: The play clock shall start with an associated RFP for each down.
 - (1) Peewee: 45 seconds.
 - (2) Lower and Upper: 35 seconds.

5. Point Differential Rules.

- a. Flag: Score is not kept.
- b. Peewee, Lower and Upper:
 - (1) A team trailing by 18 points or more shall start the succeeding series:
 - (a) at the 50 yard line following a score by the leading team.
 - (b) at the 50 yard line **in lieu of receiving** a second half kickoff.
 - (c) at the 50 yard line, if in possession of the ball after a change of possession at the end of the down, that would otherwise place the ball more than 50 yards from the opponent's goal line (IE, more than 50 yards to goal line to score a touchdown).
 - (2) A team leading by 18 points or more shall only attempt 1-point PAT's.
 - (3) The game clock shall run continuously (for remainder of game if in 2nd Half) with a point differential of 18 points or more and shall stop only momentarily during:
 - (a) team timeouts and will start on succeeding RFP.
 - (b) officials' timeouts (injury, penalty, etc.) and will start on succeeding RFP.

6. Overtime.

- a. Flag: No overtime.
- b. Peewee, Lower and Upper:
 - (1) All overtime periods will be played at the scoreboard end of the field.
 - (2) Any second overtime period will begin at the 5 yard line.
 - (3) Any third overtime period will begin at the 3 yard line.
 - (4) Except for Playoff games, if after three overtime periods the score remains tied, the game shall be declared a tie. Playoff games requiring a fourth overtime period or more will begin at the 3 yard line until a winner is determined.

7. Kicking and Safeties.

- a. Kickoffs and Possession Starts:
 - (1) Flag: No kickoffs. Offensive team takes possession at -5 yard line (IE, 35 yards to go to goal line on the 40 yard field).
 - (2) Peewee: No kickoffs. Offensive team takes possession at the A40 yard line.
 - (3) Lower: Kickoff to begin halves only. All other offensive possessions begin at A40 yard line.
 - (4) Upper: NFHS.
- b. Punts:
 - (1) Flag: Punting prohibited.
 - (2) Peewee and Lower: The coach shall declare a punt prior to snap and the ball will then be automatically placed in advance by 25 yards or half the distance to the defensive team's goal line, whichever is less, in lieu of an actual punt play. Timing note: the game clock be reduced by 10 seconds during the ball advancement to uniformly replicate time consumed for an actual punt play.
 - (3) Upper: NFHS.
- c. Field Goals (FG):
 - (1) Flag: Field goals prohibited.
 - (2) Peewee and Lower:
 - (a) Coach shall declare a FG prior to snap and the ball shall be kicked.
 - (b) The ball shall be:
 - (i) held approximately 7 yards behind the line of scrimmage (LOS).
 - (ii) kicked within 5 seconds of being snapped.
 - (c) No player (offensive or defensive) shall:
 - (i) enter the neutral zone until the ball is kicked.
 - (ii) be clearly moving toward the neutral zone at the time of the kick (exception: kicker).

§LEAGUE PENALTY [8. 7. c. (2) (a) through (c)]: Enforce as NFHS illegal formation.

- (d) If the kicked ball fails to reach the opponent's goal line: The ball becomes dead when either team gains possession after the kick and shall always belong to the receiving team. The kicking team cannot re-gain possession after the kick due to the ball being located behind the neutral zone, recovered muffed kick, etc.
 - (3) Upper: NFHS.
- d. PAT's:
 - (1) Flag: Play only from 3-yard line = 1 point.
 - (2) Peewee, Lower and Upper: Kick plays are not permitted. Coach shall declare any 2-point try prior to RFP.
 - (a) Play only from 3-yard line = 1 point.
 - (b) Play only from 5-yard line = 2 points.
- e. Safeties:
 - (1) Flag: Offensive team takes possession at 20 yard line (IE, midfield and 20 yards to go to goal line on 40 yard field).
 - (2) Peewee and Lower: Offensive team takes possession at 50 yard line.
 - (3) Upper: NFHS.

8. Offensive Player Numbering, Positioning and Offensive X-men Receiver/Catch/Carry/Blocking Restrictions.

- a. Offensive Player Numbering. Due to apparel limitations, numbering requirements (interior lineman #50 - #79, eligible receivers other than #50 - #79, etc.) shall not be enforced.
- b. Offensive Player Positioning.
 - (1) Flag:
 - (a) **All** offensive formations/plays shall be consistent with FTYF guidance.
§LEAGUE PENALTY [8. 8. b. (1) (a)]: All fouls (flag guarding, etc.), 5 yard penalty enforced from previous spot and replay the down.
 - (b) The offense shall be awarded a new series (first down) for advancing the ball to midfield or beyond (IE, 20 yards or less to go to goal line on the 40 yard field). The new series shall have the goal line as the line-to-gain (IE, 1st and Goal). If the offense does not score for any reason, the defense will be awarded the ball for a possession start.
 - (2) Peewee:
 - (a) Quarterback sneaks (immediate/designed delayed charge) through A-gaps (between the center and an offensive guard) are prohibited.
 - (b) All offensive players shall convene/participate in any offensive huddle formations.
 - (c) In the event FTYF utilizes 9-player offenses/defenses, wide receivers shall be removed from the offensive formations and the corresponding cornerbacks shall be removed from the defensive formations. No other formation adjustments are permitted.
 - (3) Peewee, Lower and Upper:
 - (a) **All** offensive plays/formations shall be consistent with FTYF guidance. The head coach may utilize a team timeout to stop the game to specifically request a discussion with FTYF regarding plays/formations. Without the utilization of the team timeout, the head coach may request a discussion with FTYF with the game continuing. Following the FTYF/head coach discussion, FTYF will direct the game officials to impose whatever penalty deemed appropriate. The penalty for non-compliance includes, but is not limited to, restoration of the team timeout, unsportsmanlike penalties, termination of games in progress with forfeiture, vacation of previous wins, suspension/removal of coach(es), etc. Overall compliance will be exclusively monitored by FTYF with the ability to impose a penalty at any time. Game officials may report concerns to FTYF at any time.
§LEAGUE PENALTY [8. 8. b. (2) (a)]: Enforce as NFHS illegal formation.

- c. Offensive X-men Receiver/Catch/Carry/Blocking Restrictions.
 - (1) Offensive X-men are always ineligible receivers throughout a down regardless of positioning (off the LOS) at the snap.
 - (2) Except to be a kicker (who shall not become a runner beyond the LOS), offensive X-men shall not carry/advance the ball:
 - (a) as a runner (after hand off, snap, etc.)
 - (b) after a caught pass, regardless of whether the pass is forward/backward or tipped/untipped.
 - (c) after a fumble recovery.

In (a) through (c), the offensive X-man shall be ruled down immediately upon possession of the ball.

(3) Offensive X-men shall not **initiate** blocking with an opponent unless positioned as an interior lineman (IE, snapper, guard or tackle with traditional alignment/spacing) at the snap. Offensive X-men positioned other than an interior lineman (IE, quarterback, fullback, running back, wide receiver, tight end, etc.) shall not initiate blocking with an opponent throughout the down. These restrictions do not apply on free kick plays, after the ball is legally kicked on a scrimmage kick play and after the loss of possession.

§LEAGUE PENALTY [8. 8. c. (3): Enforce as NFHS illegal blocking - 15-yard penalty.

9. Defensive Player Positioning and Defensive X-men Catch/Carry Restrictions.

a. Defensive Player Positioning.

(1) Flag:

(a) **All** defensive plays/formations shall be consistent with FTYF guidance.

(b) The defense cannot cross the LOS for 3 seconds after the ball is snapped or the ball is handed off.

§LEAGUE PENALTY [8. 9. a. (1) (a) through (b)]: All fouls (flag pulling, etc.), 5 yard penalty enforced from the succeeding spot and replay the down.

(2) Peewee, Lower and Upper:

(a) **All** defensive plays/formations shall be consistent with the FTYF guidance. The head coach may utilize a team timeout to stop the game to specifically request a discussion with FTYF regarding plays/formations. Without the utilization of the team timeout, the head coach may request a discussion with FTYF with the game continuing. Following the FTYF/head coach discussion, FTYF will direct the game officials to impose whatever penalty deemed appropriate. The penalty for non-compliance includes, but is not limited to, restoration of the team timeout, unsportsmanlike penalties, termination of games in progress with forfeiture, vacation of previous wins, suspension/removal of coach(es), etc. Overall compliance will be exclusively monitored by FTYF with the ability to impose a penalty at any time. Game officials may report concerns to FTYF at any time.

(b) The snapper shall **always** receive protection from defensive contact that is afforded in a scrimmage kick formation regardless of the down and offensive formation.

§LEAGUE PENALTY [8. 9. a. (2) (b)]: Enforce as NFHS roughing the snapper.

(c) The "front four" defensive lineman shall align in a 3-point or 4-point stance at the snap. Allowance from penalty will be made if a lineman does not have hand(s) touching the ground as a result of a hurry-up offense, last second positioning adjustment, returning to stance following "hard count" count movement, etc.

(d) Peewee Only: A defensive lineman shall make an initial charge into a corresponding offensive lineman (directly across the LOS if lined up head-up or adjacent/across LOS if lined up in a gap) before penetrating the adjacent A-gap (between the center and a guard). If after the initial charge by the defensive lineman, the corresponding offensive lineman makes no initial attempt to block the defensive lineman, the defensive lineman may penetrate the adjacent A-gap (between the center and a guard). This requirement is in addition to the snapper protection in (b).

§LEAGUE PENALTY [8. 9. a. (2) (c) through (d)]: Enforce as NFHS illegal formation.

b. Defensive X-men Catch/Carry Restrictions. Defensive X-men **may** advance the ball after an initial interception or an initial fumble recovery. No X-men may advance the ball after any subsequent loose ball.

10. Short-handed Teams. In the event a team has fewer than 11 players available to participate (absence, illness, injury, etc.), the team may continue with available players. An allowance from penalty will be made for formation requirements, etc. The opposing team may participate with a corresponding number of players at the opposing coach's discretion (no obligation to do so).

11. Team Box Personnel. Each team will be allowed one head coach and two assistant coaches in the team box.

12. On-field Coaches.

a. May be on the field during offense and/or defense.

(1) Flag. One coach for all games.

(2) Peewee. Two coaches (one huddle coach and one lineup coach) on offense and one coach on defense for all games.

(3) Lower. One coach for first 4 games, not including jamboree.

(4) Upper. One coach for first 2 games, not including jamboree.

Note: If the teams have an unequal number of games played and the criteria results in only one team permitted to have on-field coaches, both teams may have on-field coaches for the game.

- b. The coach shall be located approximately 15 yards away from the LOS at the start of the down.
- c. Once the offensive huddle has broken, the on-field coach(es):
 - (1) May provide verbal instructions/instructional gestures indicating proper initial player positioning for the formation.
 - (2) Shall not provide verbal instructions/instructional gestures indicating any blocking assignments, alternate play calls, alternate player positioning, etc., for the formation.
 - (3) Shall not provide any instruction after the ball is snapped.

§LEAGUE PENALTY [8. 11. b. through c. (3)]: First foul, 5 yard penalty. Subsequent fouls, 15 yard penalty. Stop play upon foul if prior to snap. Enforce as NFHS offensive or defensive foul.

RULE 9. INCOMPLETE GAMES.

- 1. Games that are terminated due to inclement weather conditions, darkness, etc. shall be considered final if the game has reached halftime.
 - 2. Games that are terminated due to inclement weather conditions, darkness, etc. prior to halftime may be considered final at the direction of the Commissioner. Time, score, known playoff impact, ability to reschedule, etc. are factors that will be considered.
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RULE 10. POST-SEASON SEEDING CRITERIA.

- 1. Teams shall be seeded based on the criteria below (in the order listed).
 - 2. Once a tie between two teams is broken based on consideration of the seeding criteria, the tie is broken and subsequent criteria is of no significance.
 - 3. Once a tie between three or more teams is broken based on consideration of the seeding criteria, the subsequent criteria shall be used to break the remaining ties. The criteria is not reconsidered from the beginning to resolve the remaining ties.
 - 4. Seeding criteria:
 - a. Criteria #1: Highest winning percentage.
 - b. Criteria #2: Head-to-head highest winning percentage.
 - c. Criteria #3: Total points allowed.
 - d. Criteria #4: Coin Toss (if 2 teams)/Lottery (if 3 teams or more).
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RULE 11. RULES AND REGULATIONS MODIFICATION.

- 1. The BOD reserves the right to waive, modify or alter any rule, regulation or policy contained herein, at any time, as deemed in the best interest of FTYF.