



NORTH STAR YOUTH FOOTBALL LEAGUE

RULES AND REGULATIONS

2ND THROUGH 6TH GRADE

This rulebook provides our affiliated communities with a general outline of the North Star Youth Football League playing rules. It is each community's responsibility to become familiar with this information. We welcome all players, coaches, and parents or guardians to the North Star Youth Football Association.

Governed by the North Star Youth Football League Directors

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PART 1 LEAGUE AND DIVISION FORMATION

1. The North Star Youth Football League (NSYFL) serves youth athletes from affiliated communities located in the North Metro Area.
2. Each participating youth football association must have its own governing body with the authority to take corrective action regarding fan, coach, and player behavior.
3. The North Star Youth Football League Directors establish the rules and regulations of the NSYFL.
4. The league has four grade divisions: 2nd–3rd grade (one division), 4th grade, 5th grade, and 6th grade. Each grade division may be split into further divisions based on the number of teams participating.

PART 2 REGISTRATION AND PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

1. Each player must satisfy the participation guidelines of their home association.
2. Athletes must participate at the grade level they will be entering in the upcoming fall school year. Athletes are not permitted to play up or down a grade level.
3. If an athlete is found participating above their eligible grade level, they will be removed from the team and/or the league.
4. Team rosters must be submitted to the NSYFL by the roster submission date. Rosters must identify the name, weight, and jersey number of each player. Official rosters must be completed by each team and approved by the League Representative of each community.
5. Any late additions to a roster after the submission date must be communicated via email to the League Directors and updated on the official roster by the League Representative.
6. Player weights are recorded at the beginning of the season and listed on the NSYFL website. This is the official weight of the player for the duration of the season.

PART 3 WEIGHT RESTRICTIONS

1. Ball carrier weight restrictions are as follows:
 - a. 2nd–3rd grade: 90 pounds
 - b. 4th grade: 105 pounds
 - c. 5th grade: 120 pounds
 - d. 6th grade: 135 pounds

2. These weights must be verified no later than the end of the first week of practice for each player's community and submitted to the league prior to the first week of games. The weight taken on weigh-in day is the player's official weight for the year.
3. Players over the weight limit may not line up in the offensive backfield or at wide receiver. They may line up at tight end, but under no circumstances may they run the ball or receive a pass.
4. A player over the weight limit may run the ball only under the following circumstances:
 - a. Fumble recovery
 - b. Pass interception
5. If a team believes an opponent has allowed an overweight player to carry the ball, the team must have its League Representative contact the League Representative of the opposing team after completion of the game. If the two League Representatives are unable to reach a resolution, the reporting community's League Representative will follow Part 3 of the NSYFL Organizational Details regarding concerns and complaints.

PART 4 TEAM SIZE AND SELECTION

1. Each team shall consist of no more than thirty-four (34) players.
2. When an association has more than one team per grade, it will form teams by a draft or similar means. Each association must form talent-based teams to the best of its ability. Stacking teams, or forming an "A" and "B" team, is not allowed.
3. Any players added after the submission of final rosters must be added in a talent-based manner.
4. The goal for each participating association is to construct teams within each age group that are equal in talent and ability.
5. After rosters are submitted to the NSYFL, the exchange of players between teams is prohibited except in very unusual circumstances and with the advance approval of the NSYFL.
6. Submitted rosters must include all player names, numbers, and weights. The names of all rostered coaches, including their phone and email contact information, must also be included on each team's roster.
7. Players are not allowed to play across teams and must play only on their own team, except:
 - a. In the event of injuries only, if a team is unable to field an active roster of 16 players, the community's League Representative will reach out to the opposing League Representative for approval to pull players from another team within the same grade. If both League Representatives agree on the roster change for that one game, they must communicate the approval to the League Directors and Webmaster via email prior to the start of the game.
 - i. This scenario should be used on the rarest of occasions. The Webmaster will keep track of requests, and the League Directors reserve the right to overrule such requests if needed.

8. Only rostered players and coaches are allowed within the spectator lines during games. Each team must keep a record of its roster on hand for every game. Any un-rostered player or coach will be removed by the referee or the home team's Field Site Manager.

PART 5 GAME ADMINISTRATION

1. The "host team" (the team at whose field the game is being played) is responsible for having the field in playable condition, having the field marked properly, and having the chains out. The host team is also responsible for providing and paying for a minimum of two qualified officials. This responsibility applies to all games played at the host site, regardless of whether the host has teams participating in the scheduled games.
 - a. The NSYFL will schedule "neutral site games" only when necessary or to accommodate playoff brackets.
2. Each team will occupy opposite sidelines. Spectators are to be on the same side as their team unless space prohibits.
3. For games played at school stadiums, all fans must be in the stands. Only rostered coaches and players are allowed onto the field. Referees or the hosting community's site manager will remove anyone not listed on the roster from the field.
4. On fields where there is no restraining fence, the field must be clearly marked with a restraining or spectator line. All spectators must stay behind the restraining line at all times.
5. The team listed as the home team on the schedule is responsible for providing the chain gang. The chain gang shall be on the same side of the field as their team.
6. Each team is responsible for cleaning up its side of the field or stadium after each game.
7. Each community's League Representative is responsible for reporting the final score of games when their teams are scheduled as the home team. Scores must be submitted via email to the League Webmaster within 24 hours of game completion.

PART 6 POSTPONEMENT OF GAMES

1. Games may be postponed before the teams have arrived at the field only by the League Representative of the host team, and only for inclement weather or unplayable field conditions.
2. If a game is postponed before the participating teams have arrived at the field, the host League Representative must notify the participating League Representatives and coaches of all teams affected by the postponement.
 - a. The same rules apply when games are pushed back or fall behind schedule.
3. Once a game has started, the decision to postpone or delay a game may only be made by the game officials.

4. League Representatives of teams whose games have been postponed must contact the League Directors to reschedule the game.
5. There is no guarantee that games can be rescheduled.
6. The NSYFL encourages all communities to make arrangements to fit in all scheduled games when possible.

PART 7 CODES OF CONDUCT

1. Each community association is responsible for the behavior of its coaches, players, and spectators.
2. Tobacco and alcohol consumption is strictly prohibited at all North Star Youth Football Association games.
3. Unsportsmanlike behavior will not be tolerated.
4. The NSYFL reserves the right to suspend or permanently ban players, coaches, spectators, and entire teams who exhibit unsportsmanlike or abusive behavior, in accordance with Part 3 of the NSYFL Organizational Details.
5. Game officials and community site managers have the authority to order any ejected player, coach, or spectator who exhibits unsportsmanlike or abusive behavior from the game premises.
6. Failure to abide by such an order from a game official or site manager will result in immediate forfeit of the game by the offending team.
7. Concerns and complaints about gameplay, officials, and poor behavior must follow Part 3 of the NSYFL Organizational Details, including waiting the mandatory 24-hour cooling-off period.

PART 8 GAME RECORDING AND PHOTOGRAPHY

1. Drones are not permitted at any North Star Youth Football Association games.
2. All video recording and photography must take place behind the spectator lines. When games are played on high school fields that include fences, this means behind the field fences. No filming from the sidelines.

PART 9 SAFETY

Each participating community is responsible for ensuring the safety of our athletes through, but not limited to, the following:

1. All coaches must complete Trusted Coaches, USA Football training, or a similar training education program.

2. A background check system must be established by each community for their coaches.
3. Concussion education must be completed by all rostered and participating coaches prior to the start of the season.
4. League Representatives and their associations are required to keep records of all coach training and be able to provide this data when needed or requested by the NSYFL.

PART 10 MODIFICATION OF GAME RULES

Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) rules will be followed except as noted below.

1. 2nd–3rd grade playing fields will be only 80 yards long. All major penalties on the 80-yard field will be 10 yards instead of 15 yards, with the exception of unsportsmanlike conduct, which will remain 15 yards.
2. Declared punts are used for all grades participating in the NSYFL.
 - a. When the 4th down punt is declared, the officials will declare the punt to both teams and their respective coaches.
 - b. If an actual punt is declared, no player on either team may move until the punter has kicked the ball. If the punter fumbles the snap, the punter is allowed to pick up the ball and kick it. Other players may not move until the ball is kicked.
 - c. Teams that elect to punt must have 7 players on the line of scrimmage during the punt.
 - d. The penalty for early movement in a declared punt situation is a warning for the first infraction by a team, and a penalty of 5 yards for each subsequent infraction by the same team.
 - e. In all grades, teams also have the option of not punting and instead turning the ball over to the opponent by declaring this to the officials before the snap. This declaration results in a 20-yard walk-off in lieu of the punt for 2nd/3rd and 4th grade, and a 25-yard walk-off for 5th and 6th grade.
3. At all grade levels, the center cannot be touched until the snap has been completed and the center has had the opportunity to lift their hands and head to protect themselves.
4. Coach on the field: Each 2nd/3rd grade team may have 1 coach on the field or in the huddle. For 4th grade, each team may have 1 coach on the field or in the huddle for only the first 2 scheduled games. Coaches are not allowed on the field or in huddles for 5th and 6th grade.
5. Extra points: All extra points will be played from the 3-yard line. Teams receive 1 point for a running score and 2 points for a kick or a passing score.

- 6.** Modifications to timing rules: Games will consist of four 10-minute quarters. Quarters will use MSHSL book-rule stop time, with the following modifications:
 - a.** After a change of possession, the clock will start after the chains have been moved and set and the ball has been spotted ready for play.
 - b.** If one team is 28 or more points ahead at halftime, the clock shall run continuously in all circumstances except team time outs and injuries.
 - c.** If a team is 17 or more points ahead at any time in the 4th quarter, the clock shall run continuously in all circumstances except team time outs and injuries.
 - d.** Modifications listed under 6b and 6c shall continue until the team behind cuts the deficit to less than 17 points.
 - e.** Halftime shall be 5 minutes.
 - f.** In instances of extremely warm weather, regardless of the actual heat index, the officials have the discretion to lengthen play stoppages for time outs and quarter breaks to allow players extra time for a hydration break. Coaches are encouraged to discuss the issue with officials before the game starts on extremely warm days.
 - g.** Officials will use reason and common sense on delay of game penalties for snaps at all levels, and especially 2nd/3rd and 4th grade. Coaches should expect that the delay of game penalty will be more strictly enforced at the end of close games.
 - h.** Time outs are 3 per half.
- 7.** Size of footballs: The 2nd/3rd and 4th grade divisions will use the equivalent of a “Pee Wee” size football appropriate for ages 6–9. The 5th and 6th grade divisions will use the equivalent of a “Junior” size football appropriate for ages 10–12.
- 8.** Playing time: Teams participating in the NSYFL are strongly encouraged to devise an equitable playing time system in accordance with their community.
- 9.** Overtime: In the event of a tie game at the end of regulation time, only one overtime period shall be played. An overtime period is defined as each team getting one possession from the 10-yard line. If the game remains tied after one overtime period, it shall be recorded as a tie game.

- 10.** Restrictions on defense: The following restrictions apply to defenses. Defenses that do not comply with these restrictions will receive one warning. Subsequent infractions will result in a delayed dead-ball 5-yard penalty, with the offense having the option of taking the play or the penalty.
- a.** Blitzing is not allowed at any grade level.
 - b.** In the 2nd–3rd, 4th, and 5th grade divisions, the defense must line up in a 4-3 alignment in accordance with the diagram in this document.
 - c.** In the 6th grade division, a team may line up in either a 5-2 or 4-3 alignment per the diagram in this document. In a 5-2 alignment, the nose guard must be head up on the center and the defensive tackles must be head up on the offensive tackles. All alignment must be in a legitimate 3-point or 4-point stance. No shading is allowed, although they may slant at the snap.
 - d.** In the 4-3 alignment, the defensive tackles must be head up on the offensive guards in a legitimate 3-point or 4-point stance and may slant at the snap.
 - e.** In both defensive alignments, defensive ends must line up as prescribed in the attached diagrams and may slant at the snap.
 - f.** All linebackers must align a minimum of 3 yards off the line of scrimmage. Defenses may adjust the alignment of their linebackers and defensive backs to defend trips and quads formations.
 - g.** The defense is permitted to line up in any alignment inside their own 5-yard line (goal line defense). Any players off the line of scrimmage in the goal line defense are still prohibited from blitzing.
- 11.** Restrictions on offense: All offensive formations are required to have 7 players on the line of scrimmage, with 3 players on the line of scrimmage on each side of the center and at least 2 players lining up adjacent to each side of the center. There are no “unbalanced” lines. There may be no more than a 3-foot split between the center and guards, and between the guards and tackles.
- 12.** Kickoffs: There are no kickoffs at any level. On an 80-yard field, the ball will start on the 30-yard line after a score. On 100-yard fields, the ball will start on the 35-yard line after a score. After a safety, the ball will start at midfield regardless of field size.

- 13.** Because there are no kickoffs, any team that is tied or behind may exercise the option of running one (1) offensive play from their opponent's fifteen (15) yard line after the extra point try is completed. This play shall be timed from the snap until the conclusion of the play. If the team gets into the end zone on the single play, whether by actual gain, by penalty or series of penalties, or by a combination of penalty and actual gain, the team shall retain the ball at midfield, first and ten. If the team is unsuccessful, the opponent shall retain the ball at midfield, first and ten.
- a. Example:** A team scores and is still down by four points after the extra point try, with one minute left in the game. The team elects the onside option. Before the first snap, the defense jumps offside. The five-yard penalty is assessed, and now the team exercising the option has only ten yards to go to "score" to retain the ball. On the subsequent snap, the team throws an incomplete pass, but there is a pass interference penalty, half the distance to the goal. The team then snaps the ball again, now from the five-yard line, and scores. The score does not count, but the team retains the ball first and ten at midfield. Any defensive penalty results in an additional snap after assessment of the penalty. Any offensive penalty, whether live ball or dead ball, negates the try in its entirety, with the defensive team getting the ball first and ten at midfield.
- 14.** Safety: It is imperative that all coaches complete concussion education prior to the start of the season. Areas that have not had their coaches complete a program will not be allowed to participate. An online education video is available on the NFHS website, and MYAS offers an educational module. In addition, coaches should review the MSHSL heat index competition guidelines, also available on the MSHSL website. All communities should have their coaches complete Trusted Coaches / USA Football training or a similar training education program.