

FM Athletics Football Rules and Regulations Fall 2025



GENERAL RULES

These rules/ regulations are adopted by the FM Athletics Youth Football League Board of Directors and based on the North Dakota High School Activities Association and National Federation of State High School Association football rules. The rules/regulations included in these documents are subject to change.

New Rules/Regulations for 2025:

- When a forward fumble goes out of bounds or is ruled out of bounds between the goal lines, the ball shall be returned to the spot of the fumble.
- **Coaches will be on sideline in coaches' box.**
- **Lineup cards must be filled out and exchanged prior to game, violation of this rule results in ejection of the head coach.**
- **If the defense intercepts or recovers a fumble, it can be advanced by anyone.**
- Free substitution between the **10-yard lines.**
 - Penalty: Unsportsmanlike Conduct on the Head coach, fifteen yards.
 - 2nd Unsportsmanlike- Ejection on Head Coach, and fifteen yards.
- Eye shields/visors may be worn on the helmets and must be completely clear without the presence of any tint and constructed of a molded rigid material. Tinted eye wear worn on the face and under the face mask is legal.

Definitions:

A back is any offensive player who has no part of his body breaking the plane of imaginary line parallel to line of scrimmage through the waist of the nearest teammate who is legally on the line. These players are the quarterback, running backs, wing backs. The backfield is defined as the quarterback, running backs, or wing backs, ace backs.

A lineman is any offensive player who is facing the opponent's goal line with shoulder parallel to line scrimmage and body part breaks waist of the snapper when ball is snapped. These players on offense are guards, tackles and center. The defensive players are the guards, tackles, and nose guard-these players are weight restricted.

Significant Rules:

- All Coaches **MUST** wear a visible FM Athletics Coach's lanyard to coach and be in the coach's and player box during the game.
- Each Team is allowed a **maximum of FIVE** coaches for coaching games-no exceptions and no switching of coaches or lanyards during the game!
- Each coach **MUST** complete the required background check and training before coaching the first game.
- Fans, parents, grandparents, or non-players are not allowed in the coaches or player box (30-yard line to 30-yard line) for safety reasons.
- Fans must be in bleachers and grandstands at sites when they are available as mandated by the host schools. Non-compliance will result in removal from the site. At other sites, fans must stay behind the field markings (10 feet off the sidelines) for players' and officials' safety. Thank you for being so cooperative!
- **18-point rule:** A complete backfield change must occur when a team is up by eighteen points or more. The backfield players listed as (QB, RB, wing backs) will be replaced when point differential is reached. Teams do not have to change out the backfield for the extra point after 18-point reached. After backfield change occurs, the starting backfield players may not advance the ball on Offense but may advance a fumble or interception on defense. Also, no passing allowed. **Penalty for violation will be 15 yards.**
- All players must have a mouth guard with an attached strap to the face mask so that officials can identify players with a mouth guard for their safety. If a player is on the field without properly wearing the mouth guard, the player must sit out for a play. AFTER the play, the player may return to the field IF the mouth guard is properly worn in the mouth.
- **Eye shade grease or stickers (Eye black) that is not a solid black color/stroke or includes words, logos or symbols is illegal. Players will be removed from the game until it is removed.**

- **When a snap hits the ground, the ball becomes dead immediately at that dead-ball spot, and the down counts.**
- 35-point Coaches Rule- If a team wins a game by more than thirty-five points, the FM Athletics Board of Directors may subject the coach to a suspension.
- The use of go-pro, drones, video or electronic devices is not allowed by coaches or individuals for videotaping or review. Violation of this rule will result in an ejection from the game.
- **Unsporting Behavior-Any players, coaches, or fans who are ejected or escorted from the field, will not be able to take part in the Team's next game. Any other unsporting behavior will result in longer suspension/expulsion decided by the FMA board.**
- **Jerseys shall not be altered, cut and must be tucked into the pants.**

Injury: If a player is injured and a sports medicine representative does not allow a player to return for the remainder of the game, a player must complete BOTH procedures before returning to play:

1. The player **MUST** have a signed note from a PA, NP, or MD allowing the player to play or practice
2. The injured player must have the FM Athletics "Return to Play Form"

These forms must be turned into the FMA office.

If Sports Med takes a player's helmet away because of concussion-like symptoms, a player must follow BOTH procedures:

1. The player is NOT allowed to play for the rest of the game
2. The player must complete FM Athletics concussion form and have the form signed by primary care provider to return to practices and games.

These forms must be turned into the FMA office.

Pregame meeting:

Coaches and captains must be present for pregame coin flip with the officials.

There will be a coin flip at the beginning of the game. The Team that wins the flip, can take the ball on the 30-yard line (first half) or defer to the second half. **There are no kickoffs at all levels;** the ball will be placed at a 30-yard line.

Equal Playing time for ALL players is a requirement on offense and defense.

ALL Players will be listed on the official lineup card by positions on offense and defense.

1. Coaches will each get a copy of the lineup card from the opponent and supply one for the Referee.
2. Coaches will inform officials of weight-restricted players, skilled players and any players not playing due to disciplinary reasons.

If Teams are not following the game card:

- **1st Offense is 15 yds for Unsporting Penalty on Head Coach**
- **2nd Offense is 15 yds for Unsporting Penalty AND Ejection of Head Coach**

Clock:

There will be (4) 12-minute quarters for all levels. Time will be kept on the field by officials-NO exceptions.

The clock starts on the snap beginning of the game, quarter and runs until stopped for timeouts, injuries, and after a touchdown.

The clock starts on the ready for play after the extra point and will continue to run until a timeout, injury, a touchdown, halftime, or the end of the game.

Half time: 2 minutes

Two (2) Timeouts per game can be used at any time.

Playing Time:

Each player must play two quarters of offense and two quarters of defense. Playing time can be altered for discipline reasons. No player shall play more than six of the eight quarters unless the team is short players, injuries and the coach has talked with the officials. **The backfield players will Not** play more than (2 quarters) offense as quarterback, running back, wing back. **The backfield players can play Tight end or on the line if short handed players. However, cannot exceed the 6-quarter rule.**

The first-time penalty for non-compliance, the coach, will be given a one-game suspension, and the second time this occurs, the coach is done for the season! Please refer to your coach contract.

Kicking:

On fourth down, the Team may either punt or run another play.

If the team is punting, the ball is placed on the opponent's 30-yard line unless the ball is at the 50-yard line or inside opponents' side of the field. Then the ball is placed at the 20-yard line of the opponent.

If punting inside or on own 20-yard line, the ball goes to the 50-yard line.

Extra points:

One point: Ball is placed on a 3-yard line, running, or passing allowed.

4th Grade Division

FM Athletics

Defense: Position Play:

Players who need to play on the line due to weight restrictions, must line up as (guards or tackles) on defense and be in a 3- or 4-point stance. The defensive ends can be standing or in a 3-point stance. If the defensive intercepts or recovers a fumble, it can be advanced by anyone.

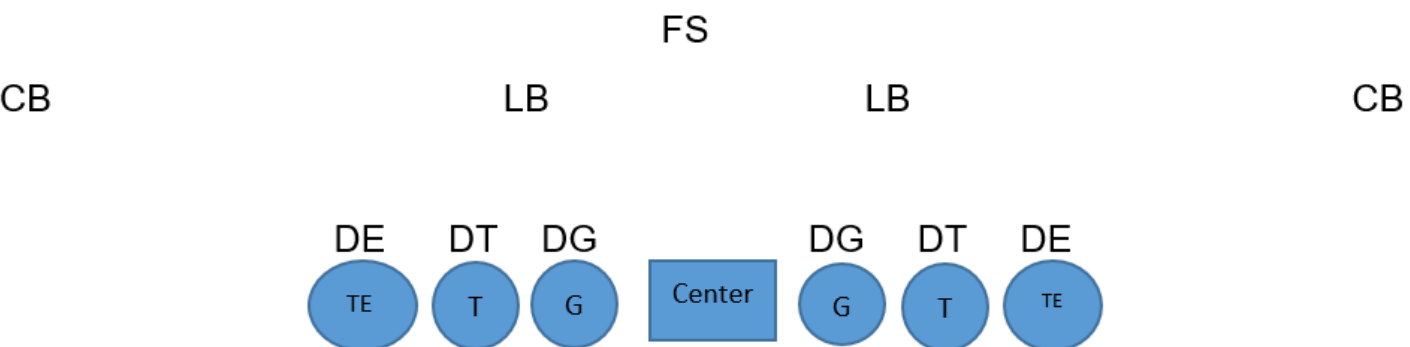
DEFENSE~ you may not line up over the center and cannot start contact with the center until they can stand in a football position and protect themselves. The first step by a defensive lineman must be forward, initiating contact, and no shooting the gaps, stunting or twisting. The defensive lineman must line head up on both offensive guards, tackles, and tight ends. The Center will be left uncovered. **Penalty:**

Shooting the gaps and non-alignment 15 yards.

Defensive backs (cornerbacks, safeties) and linebackers must not be in a forward motion until the ball is snapped. **The use of blitzing is not allowed by LB, CB, safeties.** All non-line scrimmage players must be five yards off the ball at the snap. Players cannot be moving forward at the snap. **The object is to allow the play to get off—Linebackers CANNOT cross-line scrimmage from tight end to tight end.** **Penalty is 15 yards.**

Defensive backs (cornerbacks and safeties) and Linebackers: five yards offline of scrimmage, no matter where the ball is. The penalty is 15 yards.

THE ONLY DEFENSE Alignment 6-2 SET UP (lined head up).



DEFENSE: Linebackers and defensive backs must keep a minimum of a 5-yard setup from the line of scrimmage.

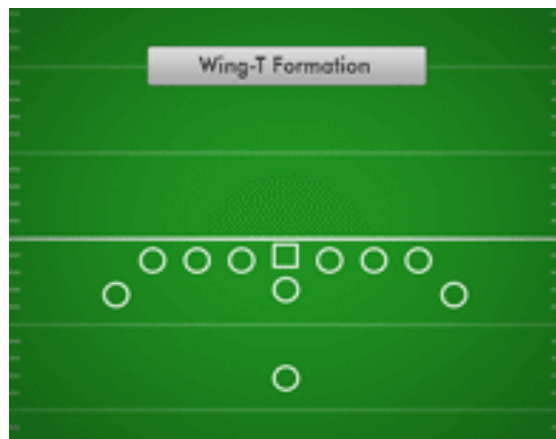
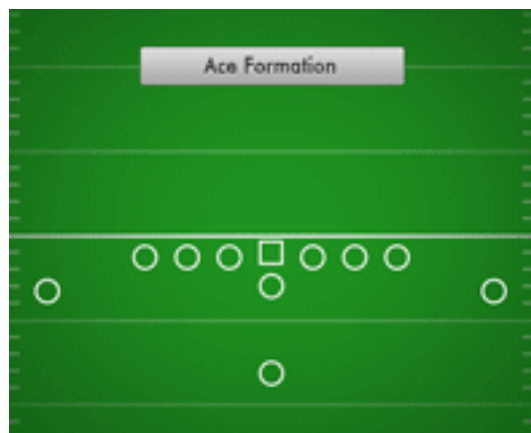
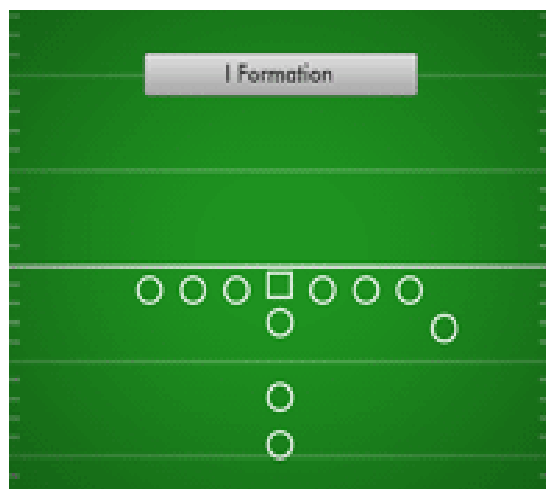
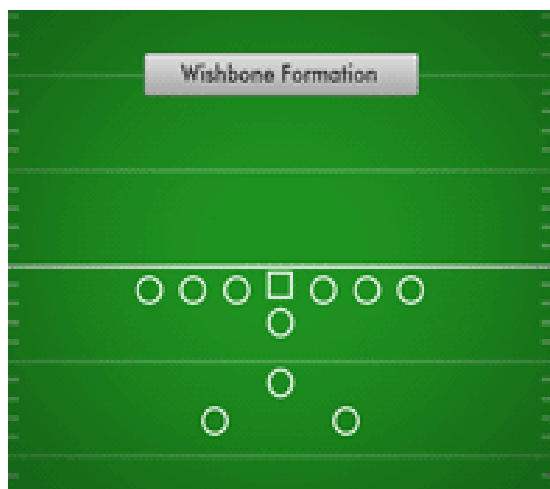
- The first step by a defensive lineman must be forward while initiating contact.
- No shooting the gaps or stunting, twisting, or blitzing.
- Defensive backs (corners, backs, safeties) and linebackers must not be moving forward at the snap.
- The defensive lineman must line head up on both offensive guards, tackles, and ends.
- The center will be left uncovered.
- The DL cannot initiate contact until the Center stands in a football position and protects themselves.
- The object is to allow the play to get off—Linebackers **CANNOT** cross-line scrimmage from end to end. **Penalty for all non-compliance is 15 yards.**
- **Once the interior lineman are lined up, they can not be flipped or moved from one side to another for safety reasons.**

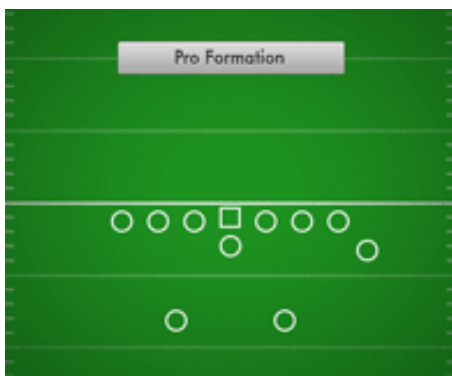
Offense:

Formation: The quarterback must be under the Center. **NO SHOTGUN OFFENSE –Automatic Unsportsmanlike penalty on Head Coach for 15 Yards**

The offensive formation must be balanced (RB, Wing Back, etc.) have at least one running back, excluding the quarterback. All offensive formations will include a guard, tackle, end on each side of the center. SOME examples of legal formations are:

- Wishbone
- I Formation
- Double Wing T
- Wing I formation (Single)
- Pro





Not Legal Formations:

Beast Formations

6 Beast Formations

Beast Tight – “Beast” or “BUC” 	Beast Wide – “Worm”
Beast Double Wide – “Jumbo” “Spread” 	Beast Middle – “Monkey”
Beast Box – “Box Cake” / “FAT” 	Beast Mid “2x1” or “1x2” “Buc Box”

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Beast Formations by Coach Parker @ CoachParker.org

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The formation of Trips, twins, and quad formations are not allowed.

Also, cannot overload sides with the wing back, WR or running backs.

- **No quarterback sneaks allowed - No direct snaps/or run by the quarterback where the ball was snapped (quarterback can not run up the center in the hole).** The quarterback can run between the guard and center which is two steps laterally (right or left) from where the ball was snapped.
- **MOTION ON OFFENSIVE PLAYS**-Player in motion cannot pass the Center before the ball is snapped; it must be a balanced formation at the snap. **Penalty at the snap-illegal formation.**
- **NO PULLING OF LINEMAN (Tackle, Guards, Center, Tight end). NO BLOCKING BELOW THE WAIST/CUT BLOCK by any player. An automatic 15-yard penalty!**
- **Heads up, blocking, not cross blocking or double teaming! An automatic 15-yard penalty!**
- On the Scrimmage line, offensive teams will employ a balanced offensive line (guard, tackle, end on each side of the Center).
- Due to weight restrictions, players required to play on the line must line up between the tackles on both offense and defense. A weight restricted player can play tight end if needed but can not touch the football in this scenario. Tight end, tackles, guards, and Center will be in a 3-point stance.

8/3/25

5th-6th Grade Division

FM Athletics

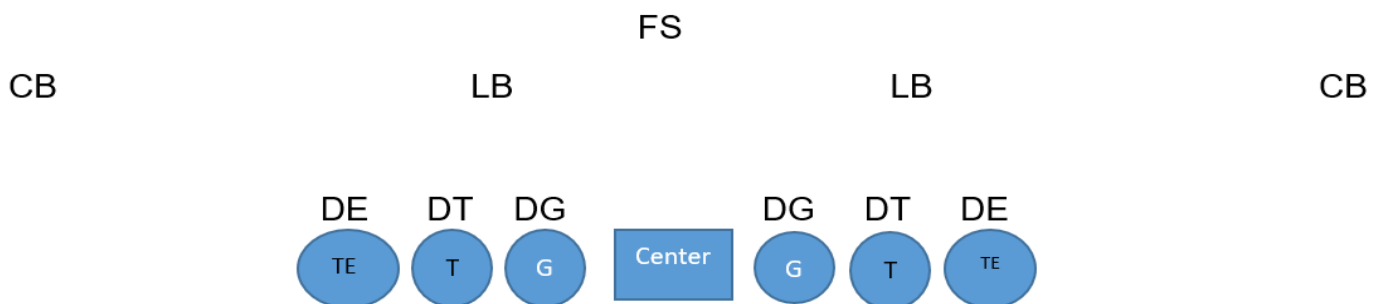
Defense: Position Play:

Players required to play on the line due to weight restrictions must line up as (guards or tackles) on defense and be in a 3- or 4-point stance. The defensive ends can be standing or in a 3-point stance. If the defensive intercepts or recovers a fumble it can be advanced by anyone.

DEFENSE~ you may not line up over the center and cannot start contact with the center until they can stand in a football position and protect themselves. The first step by a defensive lineman must be forward, initiating contact, and no shooting the gaps, stunting or twisting. The defensive lineman must line head up on both offensive guards, tackles, and tight ends. The Center will be left uncovered. **Penalty: Shooting the gaps and non-alignment 15 yards.** Defensive backs (cornerbacks, safeties) and linebackers must not be in a forward motion until the ball is snapped. **The use of blitzing is not allowed by LB, CB, safeties.** All non-line scrimmage players must be five yards off the ball at the snap. Players cannot be moving forward at the snap. **The object is to allow the play to get off— Linebackers CANNOT cross-line scrimmage from end to end. Penalty: 15 yards.**

Defensive backs (cornerbacks and safeties) and Linebackers: five yards offline of scrimmage. No matter where the ball is.

THE ONLY DEFENSE IS the 6-2 SET UP example (reminder, defensive lineman must be head up on tackles, guards, tight ends).



DEFENSE: Linebackers and defensive backs must keep a minimum of a 5-yard setup from the line of scrimmage.

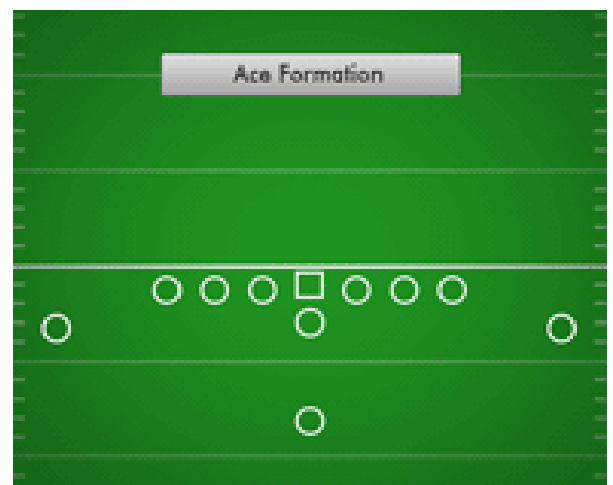
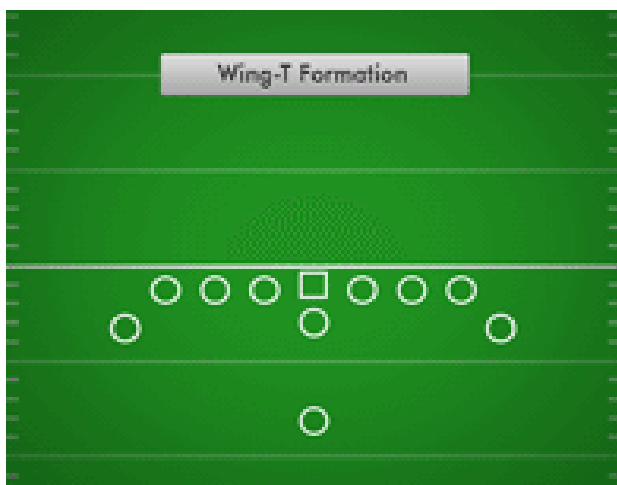
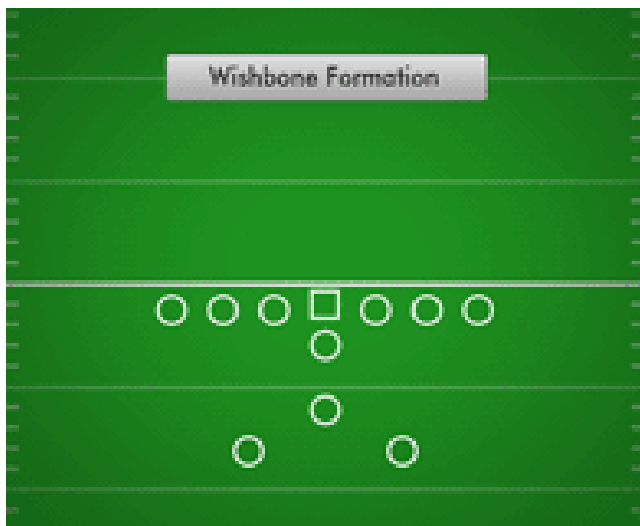
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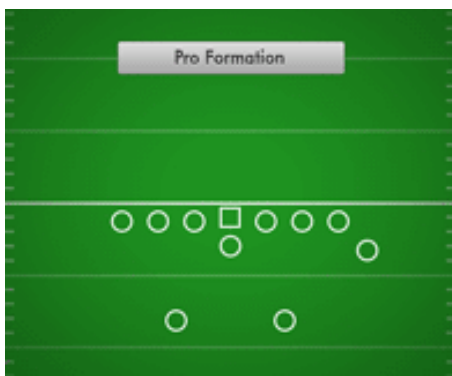
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Updated: 8/18/25