

Southeastern Michigan Youth Football Association (SMYFA)
2025 Freshmen/JV Football Rules (cheat sheet / cliff notes version)

If referees have any questions, please stop the game and ask for directors from both teams to verify

Rules

- 1 Freshmen & JV have a developmental game and regular game
 Developmental game: two 4 minute quarters (start of each half)
 Regular game: four 10 minute quarters (split into 2 halves)
 Football will be placed at the forty (40) yard line to start each half for developmental game
- 2 Clock
 The clock will stop for out of bounds, time out, incomplete pass, change of possession, first down moving of the chains, and penalties.
 Following a clock stoppage as defined in this Rule, the clock will re-start on the snap of the ball, except following a first down or penalty, where the clock will re-start on the official's signal.
 Clock stops when a TD is scored and starts again when the ball is kicked off (extra point is un-timed down)
- 3 Time outs
 Developmental game: one timeout for entire 8 minute "game"
 Regular game: three timeouts per half
- 4 Coaches on field
 Developmental game: freshmen only, two coaches permitted (but no coaching after snap)
 Regular game: none
- 5 Onside kicks
 Onside kicks are permitted in Q4
 Note: for Q1, Q2, Q3 the football must travel 20 yards for it to be recoverable by the kicking team
 Note: however, if the returner gains possession (regardless of distance), makes a football move and then fumbles, the football is live and can be recovered by the kicking team (Q1, Q2, Q3)
- 6 Overtime
 Overtime will be played as outlined in NFHS rules
- 7 No cut blocking is permitted on any play
- 8 Striped (restricted player)
 The restricted player can only play offensive center, guard and or tackle.
 A restricted player may not advance the ball on offense.
 On defense, the restricted player may only line up as Defensive Tackle (DT) over Offensive Guard or Tackle
 DT cannot be heads up over the Center or Tight End
 DT's initial engagement should be with the opposing Offensive Guard or Tackle
 However, if DT is initially engaged by others [ie. Guard pulls and Center/Tackle fills the gap], then DT is ok to engage others



Penalties

Penalty

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| 9 Targeting, illegal contact to head/neck:
Act of taking aim and initiating contact to an opponent above the shoulders with the helmet, forearm, hand, fist, elbow or shoulders.
Intent to injure can result in ejection (ie. player leaves his feet and makes illegal contact) | 15-yards &/or ejection |
| 10 Horse-collar
Grabbing the name plate area of the jersey of the runner, directly below the back collar, and pulling the runner to the ground is now an illegal | 15-yards |
| 11 Blind side block
Contact by a blocker against an opponent who, because of physical positioning and focus of concentration, is vulnerable to injury. Unless initiated with open hands, it is a foul for excessive and unnecessary contact when the block is forceful and outside of the free-blocking zone. Is a penalty if:
(1) block occurs outside free-blocking zone (2) blocker does not initiate with open hands & (3) block is forceful
(note: all three must happen for it to be a penalty) | 15-yards |
| 12 Offensive Line
A legal scrimmage formation now requires at least five offensive players on their line of scrimmage with no more than four backs | 5-yards |