

# 2025 Ontario Fall Football League – Playing Rules Updated August 2025



## Exceptions to Canadian Amateur Football Rule Book for Tackle Football

- A. Half time intermission will be 10 minutes
- B. Official game ball(s) noted in Appendix 1. Wilson K2 for U10 and U12 and TDY for U14. It is suggested to use the leather or composite models of these balls. The home team will provide game balls per Section 2c. If mutually agreed upon visiting teams can provide their own football.
- C. Scoring after touchdown as noted in Appendix 1
- D. Game timing as noted in Appendix 1. Should a regular season game end in a tie, teams will play Overtime. For playoff games, Rule 1, Section 3, Article 6 of the Canadian Amateur Rule Book for Tackle Football shall apply.
- E. Time outs, each team is permitted four (4) timeouts, two (2) per half. For playoff games, timeouts are not permitted in the Overtime Procedure and timeouts from regulation play are not able to carry over to the Overtime Procedure.
- F. Numbering, no teams are required to follow Rule 4, Section 3, Article 1 (Legal Numbering) of the Canadian Amateur Rule Book for Tackle Football
- G. Only one (1) coach is permitted on the field during timeouts.
- H. Determination of ball possession or field position shall be made by coin toss at the beginning of each game. The visiting team shall make the call of the toss. For Champ Day, the higher seeded team shall be the Home Team.

Mercy Rule: If at any time during the game the point spread is greater than 28 points, the Head Coach of the team behind on the score has the option to run the clock. Once the decision has been made to run the clock it cannot be reversed regardless of the score. The Coach behind on the score must advise the Game Referee and timekeeper of their request to run the clock. In this event, the clock will stop for injuries, scores, timeouts and as deemed necessary by the Game Referee.

**35 Point Differential – Once a team is up by 35, the score will not be added to the scoreboard only the gamesheet.**

## Special Rules for U10 Divisions (where applicable)

- A. Official Game Day roster for U10

You must have the minimum ten (10) players dressed and ready to play for the game to proceed.

Players arriving late (after the Game Day Roster has been submitted) may play if the late player reports to the Game Day Convenor, the Game Day Roster has been amended and the late player is made known to the opposing Head Coach. Until these steps are completed, the player in question is not allowed on the playing field.

## B. Coaches on the Field (applies to U10)

During the first three (3) regular season games at U10, one coach from each team may be on the field during gameplay.

Additionally, one (1) coach from each team may be present on the field at any time positioned in such a manner so as to not interfere with the game i.e. realigning a player prior to the snap of the ball.

Offensive Coach – after your huddle breaks you are to be no less than fifteen (15) yards from the line of scrimmage. You are NOT to communicate in any manner to your players on the field or coaches on the sideline. You are NOT to read the defence and change your plays.

Defensive Coach – after the offensive huddle breaks you are to be no less than fifteen (15) yards from the line of scrimmage. You are NOT to communicate in any manner to your players on the field or coaches on the sideline. You NOT to read the offence and your formations, blitzes etc.

There rules apply to Coaches on the field, not those on the sidelines.

## C. Kickoff Rule

### U10 – There will be no kickoffs

**After each scoring play where a kickoff would normally take place, the team that was scored upon will now take possession on their thirty-five (35) yard line and start first (1st) down from that point**

**U12 - Kickoffs: Will take place at the beginning of the game and to start the second (2nd) half, normal rules. After each scoring play where a kickoff would normally take place, the team that was scored upon will now have a choice; receive a kickoff or take possession on their thirty-five (35) yard line and start first (1st) down from that point.**

## D. Punt Rule (applies to U10/U12)

On 4<sup>th</sup> down, when a team is on their own side of midfield (55 yard line), they have the option to advance the ball twenty-five (25) yards and turn the ball over to the other team on downs. The Coach must clearly signal the Game Referee in a timely manner should their team choose this option

If the offensive team is on the opposing side of mid field (55 yard line), they must run a play, which can be an actual kick if the opt to do so. All regular kicking rules apply.

## E. Timing (applies to U10)

Games will play twelve (12) minutes straight run time per quarter with stopped time in the last six (6) minutes of the second (2<sup>nd</sup>) and fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) quarters. Time will NOT stop for penalties, injuries, change of possession or called time outs. The last six (6) minutes of the second (2<sup>nd</sup>) and fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) quarters will be regular timing rules. The Game Referee may use their discretion to stop the clock for injuries at any time.

F. Additional information (applies to U10)

Legal Scrimmage – Each team will have up to six (6) players on the field for each play. The offensive team must have at least three (3) players on the line of scrimmage (wingline). The outside players on each end of the wingline and all back fielders are eligible receivers.

Blocking – Shoulder or body blocks may be used. Players may not throw cross body blocks or rolling blocks by leaving their feet. The Unnecessary Roughness penalty as outlined in the Canadian Amateur Rule Book for Tackle Football applies.

G. Playing Field (applies to U10)

U10 field configuration is to run lengthwise on the field extending in length to utilize the entire length of the regulation field, from the spectator's sideline to the far hash mark if there are no numbers on the field. Cones will mark the furthest sideline every five (5) yards.

## Appendix 1

	U10	U12	U14
Eligible Ages	Players born: 2016 and 2017	Players born: 2014 and 2015	Players born: 2012 and 2013
Game Format	6 vs 6 – 3 players required on line	9 vs 9 – 5 players required on line	12 vs 12 – 7 players required on line
Roster Minimum	10 dressed	15 dressed	22 dressed* *LTAD requires 24 – please make every effort to meet this minimum
Field Size	Reduced – near sideline to <u>far hash</u>	Reduced – near sideline to <u>far numbers</u>	Full Field
Timing	12 minute quarters, run time except last 6 minutes of each half, Per Rule 1, Section 5	12 minute quarters – Per Rule 1, Section 5	12 minute quarters – Per Rule 1, Section 5
Game Ball	Wilson K2	Wilson TDJ	Wilson TDY
Conversion	Run 1, Pass 2, Kick 2 (kick is uncontested)	Run 1, Pass 2, Kick 2 (kick is uncontested)	Run 2, Pass 2, Kick 1
Minimum Refs	3 referees on field, plus one timekeeper (can't be a parent)	4 referees on field, plus one timekeeper (can't be a parent)	4 referees on field, plus one timekeeper (can't be a parent)
Coach on Field	Yes – See Special Rules U10 - B	No	No
21 Point Rule	No	No	No
Fair Play Rule	No	No	No
Punt Rule	Yes – Special Rules U10/U12 - D	Yes – Special Rules U10/U12 - D	No
Kickoff Rule	Yes – Special Rules U10/U12 - C	Yes – Special Rules U10/U12 - C	No
Overtime	Yes	Yes	Yes

## **Miscellaneous – Technology/Rescheduled Games/Postponed Games/Forfeits**

- A. Filming: Video or camera equipment will be permitted, but courtesy dictates the teams being filmed should be informed. The use of direct communications with electronic devices from the sideline, bleachers or spotter box to any player on the field is permitted at U14 only. Any Team found doing this will be fined \$ 1000 and they will forfeit the game.

Keeping in line with the approval of the use of helmet communication devices approved by Football Canada and Football Ontario the following are the regulations for use in the Ontario Summer Football League.

1. Helmet communication devices will be permitted in both the AAA and AA divisions.
2. Helmet communication devices will be permitted at U14
3. Helmet communication devices are allowed to be used by one Offensive player – Quarterback and one Defensive player.
4. Communication is to be one way only. Coach to player. Player will have no ability to talk, just listen.
5. Each team is responsible for providing their own communication device.
6. The helmets with the communication device need to be indicated with a NEON green sticker.
7. If technical issues arise, the opposing team does not need to take their device down.
8. There is no shut off for the device.
9. There is no responsibility added to the Officials in managing the of the devices use or rules.
10. Coaches are only to communicate using the device up to the snap of the ball.
11. Helmet devices cannot be any larger than 1' x 1.2' – in line with the Atech or GSC styles, no alterations to the helmet are permitted.

- B. On field officials are to strictly enforce the rules as stated in the Canadian Amateur Rule Book for Tackle Football and the OFFL Playing Rules. Any game may be terminated at the Game Referee's discretion. Any further disciplinary action may be taken at the discretion of the OFFL Executive.
- C. If a game is halted due to inclement weather of any type, the teams will wait a maximum of thirty (30) minutes to determine a course of action. If there is unanimous among three parties, comprised of the Game Referee and Game Day Convenor of each team, to wait additional time, this time period can be extended. If a game is not restarted within the above noted time period, then the following will apply:
- **A game will be considered complete when two (2) quarters have been completed and then is a three (3) converted touchdown (maximum conversion in each division) differential.**
  - If the differential is less than the above differential, the game shall be completed at an agreed upon time and date under OFFL guidelines for rescheduling games. If the game is to be completed at a later date, it will resume at the point that the game was interrupted at when it was suspended.
  - **If two (2) quarters of play have not been completed, then the game will be re-played in its entirety, at an agreed upon date and time under OFFL guidelines for rescheduling games. Any team that is not in the lead at the time the game is suspended, may opt not to replay or complete the game and award the game to the opposing team. In such case, a default shall not be attributed to the conceding team. The final game score will be recorded at the point where the game was suspended/interrupted.**
  - **In the event of a forfeit the team forfeited against will receive a win in the standings with points awarded as 21-0.**
- D. It is URGENTLY required that all member of OFFL have qualified, certified and/or accredited medical personnel at all games and it is suggested for practices.

## **Overtime – Tie Games**

- A. At the completion of regulation time the referee will toss a coin to determine which team will possess the ball first in overtime
- B. Visiting team captain will call the toss
- C. The winner chooses either offense or defense or which side of the field – this cannot be deferred
- D. The team that loses the coin toss must exercise the remaining option
- E. In each overtime period, teams are granted one possession beginning at the opponents 35 yard line, unless a penalty occurs and they are moved back
- F. The offense can place the ball anywhere on or between the hash marks
- G. Each team retains the ball until it fails to score, fails to make a first down or turns the ball over
- H. Beginning with the third overtime period, teams must attempt a two- point conversion after scoring a touchdown, pass play at all three levels.
- I. The first team that fails to match their opponents score is deemed to have lost
- J. The winner in overtime will be granted 2 points and the losing team will be granted 1 point