



**SENIOR LIMITED CONTACT™**  
**RULE BOOK**

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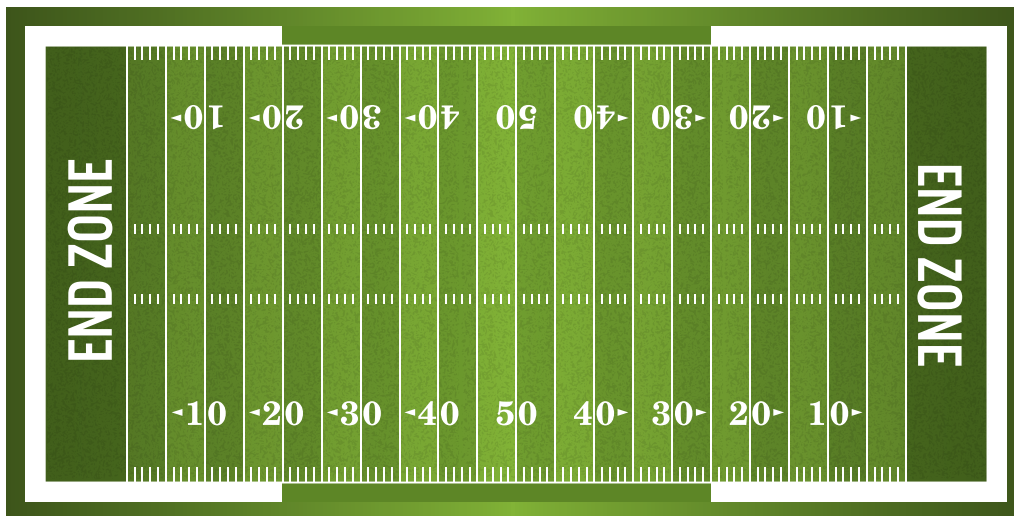
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# SENIOR LIMITED CONTACT™ RULE BOOK

## Playing Field



1. The game is played on a standard [National Federation of State High School Associations](#) (NFHS) football field: 100 yards long by 53-1/3 yards wide with standard markings.
2. First downs, down markers and the chain crew are administered in accordance with NFHS or local rules.

## Rules

Senior Limited Contact can be played with anywhere from 6 to 11 players per side using the [NFHS rule book](#) as a base and employs the following adjustments:

1. Because of the “all players, all positions, all skills” philosophy, there are no restrictions on jersey numbers or player positions.
  - a. Not all players may play every position every game or even through the course of the entire season. All players should have at least one offensive and defensive line position as well as one offensive and one defensive backfield position to play each game.
  - b. In practice, players should learn all skills of each position for developmental purposes in accordance with [Football Development Model principles](#).

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2. All personal foul penalties include an immediate required substitution from the field for a minimum of one play to allow coaches to address misconduct and promote good sportsmanship. We call this a “cooling-off period.”
    - a. If a team does not have any substitutes for the game, coaches and officials should discuss during the pregame meeting how to apply league standards for this situation.

### **Special Teams Adjustments**

1. No kickoffs. In any kickoff situation, the receiving team takes possession of the ball at its own 25-yard line.
2. If punt is elected, there should be no rush and the ball is placed where the punt is caught or where the ball comes to rest if not caught – or – the team can elect to forego the punt play, and it simply becomes the other team’s ball 25 yards from the line of scrimmage.

### **Live Ball / Dead Ball**

1. The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles to signal the ball dead.
2. The official will indicate the neutral zone and line of scrimmage.
  - a. It is an automatic dead ball foul if any player on defense or offense enters the neutral zone.
3. Regarding the neutral zone, the official may give both teams a “courtesy” neutral zone notification to allow their players to move back behind the line of scrimmage.
4. A player who gains possession in the air is considered inbounds as long as one foot comes down in the field of play.
5. The defense may not mimic the offensive team signals in attempt to confuse the offensive players while the quarterback is calling out signals to start the play. This will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.
6. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
7. Any official can whistle the play dead.
8. Play is ruled “dead” when:
  - a. The ball hits the ground
  - b. The ball-carrier’s TackleBar® or flag is pulled
  - c. The ball-carrier steps out of bounds
  - d. A touchdown, PAT or safety is scored

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- e. Any part of the body other than feet or hands touches the ground
  - f. The ball-carrier's TackleBar or flag falls off
  - g. The receiver catches the ball while in possession of one or no flag(s)/TackleBar(s)
  - h. Inadvertent whistle
9. In the case of an inadvertent whistle, the offense has two options:
- a. Take the ball where it was when the whistle blew, and the down is replayed.
  - b. Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.
10. A team is allowed to use a timeout to inquire about an official's rule interpretation. If the official's ruling is correct, the team will be charged a timeout. If the rule is interpreted incorrectly, the timeout will not be charged, and the proper ruling will be enforced. Officials should all agree upon any controversial call in order to give each team the full benefit of each call.

## **Running**

1. The ball is spotted where the runner's feet are when the TackleBar or flag is pulled, not where the ball carrier has the ball. Forward progress will be measured by the player's front foot.
2. Any player who receives a handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
3. Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. Diving, leaping or jumping to avoid a TackleBar or flag pull is considered TackleBar/flag guarding.
4. Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a TackleBar or flag pull. Players spinning out of control will be called for TackleBar/flag guarding.
5. Runners may leave their feet if there is a clear indication that he/she has done so to avoid contact with another player without a flag or TackleBar guarding penalty being enforced.
6. TackleBar or flag obstruction – All jerseys MUST be tucked in before play begins. The TackleBar or flag must be on the player's hips and free from obstruction. Deliberately obstructed TackleBar or flag will be considered TackleBar/flag guarding.

## **Rushing the Passer**

1. Players rushing the quarterback may attempt to block a pass.
2. A sack occurs if the quarterback's TackleBar or flags are pulled behind the line of scrimmage. The ball is to be placed where the quarterback's feet were when TackleBar or flag was pulled.
3. A safety is awarded if the sack takes place in the offensive team's end zone.

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### **Padded Flag Specific**

1. A flag pull takes place when the ball-carrier is in full possession of the ball.
2. Defenders can dive to pull flag, but cannot tackle, hold or run through the ball-carrier when pulling flags.
3. It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball-carrier's possession at any time.
4. If a player's flag inadvertently falls off during the play, the player is down immediately upon possession of the ball and the play ends. The ball is placed where the flag lands.
5. A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flag off of a player who is not in possession of the ball.
6. Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball-carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff-arming, dropping the head, hand, arm or shoulder or intentionally covering the flags with the football jersey.

### **TackleBar® Specific**

1. Downing the ball-carrier:
  - a. No tackling or throwing players to the ground.
  - b. No helmet-initiated contact.
  - c. Players may never leave their feet to launch or dive into another player.
2. Track, Prep, Connect and Rip technique is recommended. Defender tracks ball-carrier, preps for connection, connects with and wraps ball-carrier, and rips the TackleBar - this simulates the latest recommended shoulder tackling technique.
3. It is not a penalty if the ball carrier inadvertently goes to the ground during this action. However, contact that deliberately takes the ball-carrier to the ground with force may be penalized.
4. A ball-carrier is down when one TackleBar is removed. Defensive player should hold bar in air until the whistle blows.
5. If a ball-carrier goes to the ground for any reason they are considered down at the spot.



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## Formations

See the [NFHS rule book](#) for more information.

## Scoring

1. **Touchdown:** 6 points
2. **PAT:** 1 point from 3-yard line using a run or pass play; 2 points from 3-yard line using a kick
3. After one team is winning by 28 points or more, score is no longer kept. Once a 28 or more-point advantage is gained, no PAT will be attempted. The game will continue in scrimmage mode for remainder of the game, with a running clock.
4. **Forfeits are scored 28-0 for the winning team.**

## Penalties

**Senior Limited Contact uses the [NFHS](#) penalties as a base and employs the following adjustments for:**

### 1. Offensive Spot Fouls

- a. Charging -10 yards
- b. Flag or TackleBar guarding -10 yards

### 2. Defensive Penalties

- a. Illegal TackleBar or flag pull (before the receiver has the ball) +5 yards from line of scrimmage
- b. Excessive contact (tackling or throwing players to the ground) +15 yards from the spot of the foul
  - i. Note: It is NOT a penalty if the ball-carrier inadvertently falls to the ground during the TackleBar or flag pull; however, contact that DELIBERATELY takes the ball-carrier to the ground WITH FORCE should be penalized.

\*\* THIS MANUAL REPRESENTS PRACTICE AND IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES BASED ON OUR CURRENT LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE. RECOMMENDATIONS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AS MORE RESEARCH AND INFORMATION BECOMES AVAILABLE. \*\*