



VAUGHAN TOUCH FOOTBALL LEAGUE

2025

OFFICIAL RULE BOOK

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EQUIPMENT

1. Ball

- The VTFL or a Team Representative will provide a game-ball to the referee prior to each game.
- The team on offence is responsible for retrieving the football in between plays.
- The referee is NOT responsible for retrieving the football after the initial spot.

2. Uniforms

- All players must wear numbered jerseys provided or approved by the VTFL.
- The wearing of jewellery is strictly prohibited.
- Pants/shorts without pockets are recommended.

3. Shoes

- Athletic shoes including those with rubber cleats are permitted.
- Athletic shoes with metal cleats are strictly prohibited.

4. Protective Equipment

- Mouth guards are highly recommended.

5. Player Equipment

- Any challenge regarding equipment compliance shall be decided by the head referee prior to each game.

DURATION

1. Game Duration

- The duration of each game is approximately one hour composed of two 22-minute halves of running time (NFL DIVISION ONLY).
- At the conclusion of each 22-minute half, there will be five offensive plays excluding any conversions (NFL DIVISION ONLY).
- Extra points are included in the running time.
- The duration of a game may be extended or shortened at the discretion of a referee (depending on the circumstances a rematch may be ordered).

2. Weather

- Games are played “rain or shine” however games will be cancelled if there is an imminent threat of an electrical storm.

3. Half-time

- Teams will change ends at half-time
- The duration of half-time is 2 to 5 minutes at the discretion of the referee.

4. Time-outs

- Each team has one time-out per half which is 60 seconds in duration.
- A referee may call a time-out at any time.

5. Overtime

- During the regular season, all games that are tied at the end of regulation will finish in a tie.

DURATION/TIMEOUTS

- During the playoffs, a coin toss will be used to determine possession at the start of overtime.
- Each team will be given one (1) possession or four (4) downs, beginning at their own ten (10) yard line to determine a winner.
- In the event that a winner is not determined, both teams will be given one (1) down, beginning at the opposing team's ten (10) yard-line to determine a winner. This format will continue until a winner is determined.
- A winner is determined when one team scores, while the opposing team is prevented from scoring.
- The defensive team may score on an interception.
- If the defensive team intercepts the football and does not return it for a touchdown, the intercepting team will begin their next offensive possession at their own ten (10) yard line.

SCORING

1. Scoring

- A touchdown is worth six (6) points.
- A touchdown is defined as: When any part of the football touches or is in-advance of the goal line. The football must “break the plane” of the end zone before the player is ruled touched by the referee.
- After scoring a touchdown, the team must announce whether it is electing a 1 point conversion or a 2 point conversion.
- A 1 point conversion is set at the 5 yard-line.
- A 2 point conversion is set at the 10 yard-line.
- If either conversion is intercepted and returned to the opposing teams end-zone, that team will be awarded the conversion points.
- A safety is worth 2 points.
- A safety occurs when the offensive team kneels in their own end-zone or an offensive player is ruled touched by a referee in their own end-zone.

PLAYERS & SUBSTITUTIONS

1. Players

- No more than six and no less than five players are permitted per team per play.
- Any violation of this rule will result in a minor penalty.
- A team may field no less than five (5) players at any time.
- A forfeit will be declared when a team fails to field at least five players within 10 minutes of the game-start.
- A team may dress a non-roster player during the regular season ONLY provided that they have eight (8) or less active players and the opposing team captain consents.
- The use of non-roster players during the playoffs is strictly prohibited.

2. Substitutions

- Substitutions are allowed following the completion of every play.
- A team can only have a maximum of six (6) players in their huddle.
- Any violation of this rule will result in a minor penalty.

PLAYING REGULATIONS

1. Coin Toss

- At the beginning of each game, the designated team captain from the home team will be asked to call “heads” or “tails” prior to a coin toss. The referee will indicate which side of the coin will represent each call. The coin will be tossed in the air and either caught or allowed to fall to the ground. If the side facing up matches the call by the designated team captain they will be deemed to be the winner.
- The winner will have the option for the first half of: starting on offence, choosing the side of play, or deferring their choice to the second half. If the winner elects to defer to the second half, the loser of the coin toss will have the option of starting on offence or choosing the side of play.

2. Opening Possession

- The receiving team will begin the opening possession at their own ten (10) yard line.

3. The Snap

- Opening possession: The play clock begins when the football is snapped. The snap MUST go through the center’s legs, and all snaps must remain in the eligible pocket (2 yards to the right and left of the football).

PLAYING REGULATIONS

- EXCEPTION: The snap does not have to go through the center's legs, but all snaps must remain in the eligible pocket (REC DIVISION ONLY).
- Any violation of this rule will result in a minor penalty.
- The offensive team has a maximum of twenty-five (25) seconds from when the referee puts the ball in play to snap the football.
 - Any violation of this rule will result in a minor penalty.
 - Upon a second consecutive "delay of game" penalty, the offensive team will forfeit a time-out. If the offensive team does not have a time-out remaining, a major penalty will be assessed.
 - The play-clock will resume when the referee puts the ball in play. The offensive team can snap the football at ANY time, provided that the referee has put the ball in play.
- The offensive team has a maximum of twenty-five (25) seconds from when the referee puts the ball in play to snap the football. In this regard, the defensive team must be ready for a hurry up offence.
 - If the defensive team is behind the line of scrimmage (LOS) upon the snap of the football, a minor penalty will be assessed.

PLAYING REGULATIONS

4. Offside

- When an offensive or defensive player crosses the LOS before the football is snapped.
- Any violation of this rule will result in the play being blown dead and a loss of 5 yards. Repeat down.

5. Passing/Quarterback

- The player who receives the snap is deemed to be the quarterback (QB). More than one player may line-up in the eligible pocket to receive the snap. Neither player has to declare themselves as the QB. The quarterback must be at least five (5) yards behind the LOS and within the eligible pocket.
- If facing imminent loss of yardage because of pressure from a pass rusher or blitz, the quarterback cannot throw a pass that does not have a realistic chance of completion.
 - Any violation of this rule will be considered intentional grounding and will result in a major penalty.

6. Sack

- A sack is when a defensive player tags the quarterback behind the LOS.

7. Fourth Down/Punts

- The offensive team will have four downs to score a touchdown (TD).
 - On fourth down, the offensive team has the option to give up a safety without notice.
 - Upon an unsuccessful fourth down, the offensive team will turn the football over to the opposing team. The opposing team will take possession from the previous spot.

PLAYING REGULATIONS

- Offensive teams cannot punt the football.
- Any violation of this rule will result in a major penalty.

8. “Onside” attempt:

- At any point during the course of a game, the losing team can elect to use one “onside attempt”.
- The attempting team will have one (1) play beginning from their own five (5) yard line to get to or pass mid-field.
- If the attempt is successful, the attempting team will begin their attempting possession from mid-field with three (3) downs.
- The attempting team CANNOT score a touchdown on the “onside attempt” but can take the lead on the ensuing possession if the attempt is successful.

9. Pass rusher/Blitzer

- One player, designated as the pass rusher, may rush the quarterback after the fourth “steamboat” is called out by the referee.
 - The pass rusher must be provided an unrestricted path to the QB.
 - Any violation of this rule will result in a minor penalty.

PLAYING REGULATIONS

- Steamboats will be counted by one referee.
 - The “pass rusher” must be within 5 yards of the LOS.
 - Any violation of this rule will result in a minor penalty
- A secondary rusher, referred to as a “blitzer”, may rush the quarterback after four steamboats.
- The “pass rusher” and “blitzer” cannot lineup directly over the “center”.
- Any violation of this rule will result in a minor penalty.
- Roughing the passer occurs when the pass rusher/blitzer makes any unnecessary contact with the QB.
 - Any violation of this rule will result in a major penalty.

10. Fumble

- The play is dead upon any fumble.
- The football will be placed at the spot of the fumble.
- If a snap is not caught by the quarterback, the play will be whistled dead. The football will be placed where it lands resulting in a loss of down.

11. Receiving

- A reception occurs when a player catches and controls the football with at least one-foot in bounds.
- All offensive and defensive players are eligible receivers.

PLAYING REGULATIONS

- If an offensive player intentionally steps out-of-bounds, without being illegally forced out by a defensive player, the offensive player OR receiver is ruled ineligible.
- If an ineligible receiver catches the football, a minor penalty will be assessed.
- If an offensive player is forced out-of-bounds by a defensive player and the offensive player immediately returns to the field-of-play, the receiver is ruled eligible.

12. Pass interference

- Offensive pass interference occurs when an offensive player makes deliberate contact with a defensive player to gain a positional advantage.
 - Any violation of this rule will result in a major penalty.
- Defensive pass interference occurs when a defensive player makes deliberate contact with an offensive player and impedes the receiver's ability to catch the football.
 - Any violation of this rule will result in a major penalty.
The football will be placed at the spot of the foul.
Replay down
- If the foul occurs in the "end-zone", the football will be placed at the defending team's one (1) yard-line.
- Incidental contact is permitted. The referee closest to the football will decide, at his sole discretion, what constitutes pass interference.

PLAYING REGULATIONS

13. Illegal use of hands

- Illegal use of hands occurs when a defensive player makes contact with an offensive player before the ball is thrown, and deliberately impedes the route of the receiver.
 - Any violation of this rule will result in a minor penalty.

14. Holding

- No offensive or defensive player can close either of his/her hands on an opposing player or the opposing player's uniform to gain an advantage.
 - Any violation of this rule will result in a minor penalty.

15. Blocking

- No offensive player may impede a defensive player's path to the football.
 - Any violation of this rule will result in a minor penalty.

16. Boundaries

- The lines marking the sidelines and the back end of the end-zones constitute the "boundaries".
- If any of the lines are stepped on the offensive or defensive player will be deemed to be out of bounds and ineligible.

17. Forfeiting

- The score for a game that is forfeited will be recorded as 21-0.
- Any team that forfeits will be subject to a team fine of \$100.

PLAYING REGULATIONS

18. Referees

- Referees should not be affiliated with any team that they're refereeing.

19. The "Will" Rule

- In the event a dispute cannot be resolved by the VTFL rulebook, the final say belongs to the commissioner.

20. Miscellaneous

- Player's on two different roster's in two different division's in any one Season, can only qualify to play on a "second" team if that team is within three divisions or higher of their other respective team or if they change positions. For example: If your team is in REC (division 7), and one of your rostered player's also plays in NCAA (division 2), he is ineligible to play unless he changes position.
- Rostered players must play in a minimum of four (4) games to be eligible to play in the playoffs.
- Players cannot be added to a teams roster after the start of Week four (4).
- Reaches" are permitted.
- All "tipped" balls are live.
- Offensive teams can skip "converts" to save time.

PENALTIES

- All penalties are subject to the non-penalized team choosing to accept or decline the penalty.
- All penalties will be indicated by the referee tossing a flag on the field of play.
- If the penalty occurs before the ball is snapped, the referee will whistle the play
- dead.
- If the penalty occurs after the ball is snapped, the referee will allow the play to
- continue.
- Offsetting penalties occur when both the offensive and defensive team are penalized on the same play resulting in the down being replayed.
- If two penalties occur against one team on the same play, only one penalty will be enforced.

Penalties will be assessed as followed:

- Offensive minor penalties: A 5 yard penalty.
- Defensive minor penalties: A 5 yard penalty. Replay down.
- Offensive major penalties: A 10 yard penalty.
- Offensive pass interference.
 - Offensive pass interference is a major penalty and a loss of down.
- Defensive major penalties: A 10 yard penalty. Replay down.
- Exception: Defensive pass interference.
- Defensive pass interference is a major penalty and is a spot foul. Replay down.

PENALTIES

The following is considered unsportsmanlike conduct:

- Taunting
- Tackling/Pushing
- Fighting
- Abuse of an official
 - A player's first and second unsportsmanlike conduct penalties for abuse of an official in a season will receive a warning.
 - A player's third unsportsmanlike conduct penalty for abuse of an official in a season will receive an automatic one game suspension.
 - A player's fourth unsportsmanlike conduct penalty for abuse of an official in a season will receive an automatic three game suspension.
 - A player's fifth unsportsmanlike conduct penalty for abuse of an official in a season will receive an automatic five game suspension.
 - A player's sixth unsportsmanlike conduct penalty for abuse of an official in a season will be banned indefinitely.
- Unsportsmanlike conduct will result in a 15 yard penalty and may result in an ejection, suspension and/or fine subject to the referee.
- Any player receiving a second unsportsmanlike penalty during the same game will be automatically ejected and may be suspended and/or fined subject to the discretion of the commissioner whose decision is not subject to appeal.
- Suspensions/fines are handed out by the commissioner. The commissioner can use his sole and absolute discretion when handing out suspensions/fines.
- Suspensions/fines cannot be appealed.

PLAYOFF FORMAT

1. Playoff Format

- The playoff format is dependent on the number of teams/divisions in the league.
- The playoff format will be released by Week 4 of each season.

2. Tie-breaking Procedures

- If two teams finish with the same record at the end of the regular season the following tie-breaking procedures will be used:
 - Head-to-head record
 - Best point differential
 - Most points for
 - Coin toss

CONTACT US

FEEL FREE TO REACH OUT!

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, COMMENTS OR CONCERNS
PLEASE DON'T HESITATE TO CONTACT US:



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