



FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT MODEL

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11-PLAYER TACKLE IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

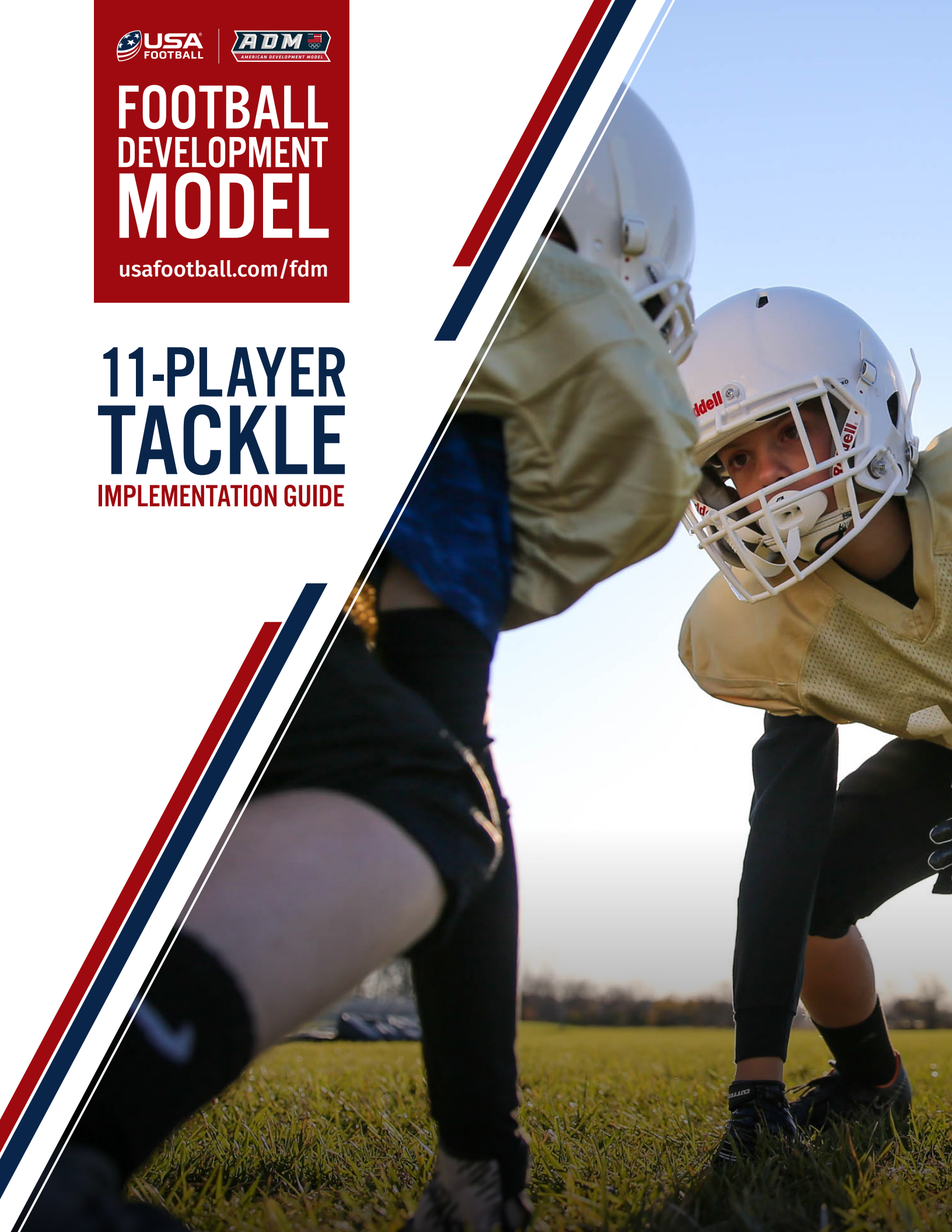


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THANK YOU ESPN

USA Football sincerely appreciates ESPN for their support of the Football Development Model Pilot Program



INTRODUCTION

USA Football's Youth Tackle Football is a full-field youth football game designed to be the final step in a league's youth football pathway before athletes enter high school sports.

Within this development stage, athletes participate in full-field 11-on-11 tackle football. USA Football believes that a high-quality transition from the small-sided game of Rookie Tackle® to full-field tackle is essential to player development and a positive experience driven by high quality coaching.

The goal of this stage of the Football Development Model is to introduce players to more advanced fundamentals from what they learned in Rookie Tackle. The game becomes a bit more competitive with new elements and recommended rules for experienced players.

1 / IMPLEMENTATION AND GAME PHILOSOPHY

Like all other forms of youth football, USA Football envisions leagues and clubs adopting youth tackle football as a game structure following an initial experience in flag football and Rookie Tackle to complete the youth football pathway.

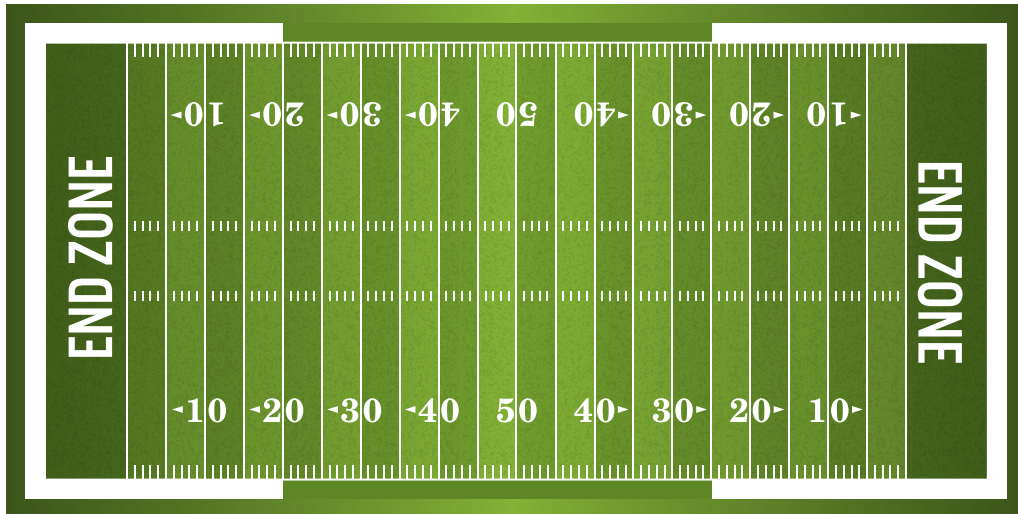
USA Football provides rule books, participation best practices and rule modifications, but we are aware the game will be governed and implemented at the local level.

As such, the age or grade to begin each of the different games is determined by the local league commissioners and may overlap or differ based on community circumstances (e.g., enrollment numbers, access to facilities, number of coaches, etc.).

The goals of youth tackle football are:

1. Maximizing player enjoyment and skill development.
2. Providing all players meaningful playing time and the opportunity for success.
3. Introducing players to new positions and strategies that come with the full-field, 11-player version of tackle football.
4. Introducing the three-point stance to lineman as a natural progression from the two-point stance they learned in Rookie Tackle.
5. Introduction of special teams positions, fundamentals and strategies.
6. Preparing athletes for the demands of scholastic sports by providing increased challenges to skill development and tactical aspects of the game in an age-appropriate manner.
7. Encouraging a fast-paced game with more plays, greater activity and the promotion of fundamental skill development.
8. Limiting roster sizes to provide as much focused, individualized coaching attention as possible during practices and games. Roster limit is up to 22 players per team.

2 / 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 gang are administered in accordance with NFHS or local rules.

3 / YOUTH TACKLE RULES

RULES

Use the NFHS rule book as a base and consider the following adjustments:

General Adjustments:

Games are played in four quarters with either a 12-minute running clock or 8-minute standard timing. The opportunity to adjust the number of time outs or to stop the clock for point after attempt (PAT) tries before resetting the ball back at the 30-yard line is a league-specific decision.

No contact can be initiated with the helmet at any point on the field.

Offensive Adjustments:

1. Played by standard NFHS rules with the following exception:
 - a. No blocking below the waist by any player anywhere on the field.

Defensive Adjustments

1. Played by standard NFHS rules with the following exceptions:
 - a. Teams can send no more than one blitzer per play, and that blitz cannot come through the center-guard A gap. A blitzer is defined as any defensive player not on the line of scrimmage at the snap or any defensive player not in a three- or four-point stance and not on the end of the formation.

Teams can drop defensive linemen into coverage on a zone blitz, but that does not increase the number of blitzers available on that play.

Special Teams:

1. There are no kickoffs. The game begins and restarts after a score with the ball on the 30-yard line.
2. The punt is introduced, but no rush is allowed.
3. The offensive team must declare that it is punting in order to alert the defensive team to not rush and to allow the defensive team to assign returners.
4. The formation for return teams is nine players at the line of scrimmage and two deep safeties.

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5. There are no fake punts. A team that has declared to punt may alert an official and the defense that it has changed its mind. A team that declares its intention to punt then runs a play will be penalized for illegal formation.
 6. A team that fails to declare and punts the ball is also penalized for illegal formation.
 7. The punted ball may not be returned for yardage by the receiving team. The play is blown dead and the ball spotted where the receiving team either fields the punt, the ball rolls to a stop or the ball goes out of bounds.
 8. The kicking team shall not cover the punt nor send players downfield as the punt team is voluntarily giving up the ball.
 9. With no punt coverage, there are no muffed or fumbled punts. Receiving team players are encouraged to develop the skill of catching a punt as fielding the kick may keep it from rolling further downfield.
 10. Following a touchdown, teams can go for a 1-point kick from the 3-yard line or a 2-point try from the 5-yard line.
 11. Point after touchdown (PATs) are snapped from the 3-yard line with the holder and kicker placed at the kicking team's discretion.
 12. There is no defensive rush allowed on a kicked PAT. Defensive players must remain behind the line of scrimmage but may jump and wave their arms to distract the kicker or block the ball.
 13. There is no return of a miss PAT or field goal regardless of whether it crosses the line of scrimmage or not. A missed field goal that reaches the end zone is spotted at the 20-yard line for the new possession. A ball that does not reach the end zone is spotted at the 30-yard line or the previous line of scrimmage, whichever benefits the new team in possession.
 14. As with the PAT, field goals also have the no rush and the no return rule is in place. A defensive player who crosses the neutral zone once an offensive team has declared its intention is flagged for encroachment.
 15. All special teams plays must have a long snapper. It is at the coach's discretion for how long that snap is to the punter or holder. The punter and holder can set up as far back as the kicking team chooses. However, the punter must initiate the kick from the spot where he or she secures it. (i.e., a snap sails over the punter's head, and the punter secures the ball 10 yards behind where he or she first set up. The punter must make a standard two- or three-step punt from that spot). In turn, a holder must recover an errant snap and return it to the block where it was originally set.
 16. Once the ready for play whistle has been blown, a kicking team has the regular 25-second play clock to either punt or place kick. The play clock continues to run in the instance of a punter, kicker or holder chasing down an errant long snap.

6 / TIMING AND OVERTIME

1. Each game is made up of four quarters:
 - a. 12 minutes with a running clock or
 - b. 8 minutes with a standard clock
2. Leagues can decide the following based on their needs:
 - a. Number of time outs per game or half.
 - b. Whether to stop the clock on PAT attempts and/or turnovers.
3. Overtime is played only in playoff games (if the league hosts playoffs) and runs in accordance with NFHS rules.

7 / SCORING

1. All touchdowns are worth 6 points.
2. PATs are the coach's choice
 - a. A one-point kick from the 3-yard line or a two-point try from the 5-yard line.
3. Field goals are worth 3 points.
4. A defensive safety results in 2 points.
 - a. The scoring team receives the ball on its 30-yard line constant with the no kickoff rules.

8 / PARTICIPATION BEST PRACTICES

USA Football recommends that rosters be limited to a maximum of 22 players to ensure the opportunity for all athletes to be assigned a primary position and can rotate onto the field at every change of possession. This will ensure all players have ample opportunity to participate.

Each player shall play the entire game either on offense or defense. Some players may be required to go both ways depending on roster size. The purpose is to allow every participant to play and learn as a member of the team in the introduction to full-field 11-on-11 football. Each player should learn two positions on both offense and defense - a primary and a secondary position - to continue to promote general skill development and athleticism. Players may learn grouped positions such as center and guard or cornerback and safety. The Rookie Tackle rule of playing both line and backfield play does not apply at this level.

9 / COACHES

The number of coaches per team is determined by the league. However, USA Football recommends leagues work in earnest to balance the number of coaches per team at a 1:6 (recommended) to 1:10 (maximum) ratio, approximately two or three per team. While the desire for coaches to work with their own children may be a driving influence, leagues should look for creative ways to create numerical balance. This is done for the sake of the players. An equal opportunity to be coached and learn should be afforded to all players involved in the league.

10 / RECOMMENDED SEASON LENGTH AND GAMES PER SEASON

Youth Tackle Football is designed to be fall-only seasons with a maximum of 10 games per season. A game is defined as a preseason scrimmage, regular season game or playoff competition. Thus, if a league incorporates a playoff into the season, the number of preseason scrimmages plus regular season and playoff games are limited to 10 total. Leagues that host playoffs should consider hosting consolation rounds so that all members of all teams receive the same number of games and opportunity for development. There should be a minimum of five days between games.

11 / WEEKLY PRACTICES AND CONTACT LIMITS

Youth Tackle Football participants should be exposed to no more than four practices per week during the preseason. There are no two-a-days. After an acclimatization period is conducted, full contact (defined as Thud and Live by USA Football's Levels of Contact) is limited to 10 minutes per practice for a total of 40 minutes per week. No individual practice should last more than 105 minutes.

During the regular season, practice is reduced to maximum of three per week to accommodate the game with each practice having a full contact limit of 10 minutes and not exceeding 30 minutes per week.

****THE PRECEDING REPRESENTS PRACTICE AND IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES BASED ON OUR CURRENT LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE. RECOMMENDATIONS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE 2019 FDM PILOT PROGRAM TO ACCOMMODATE KEY ACADEMIC LEARNING FROM THE RIGOROUS SCIENTIFIC STUDY PLANNED AROUND THESE GAME MODIFICATIONS. ****