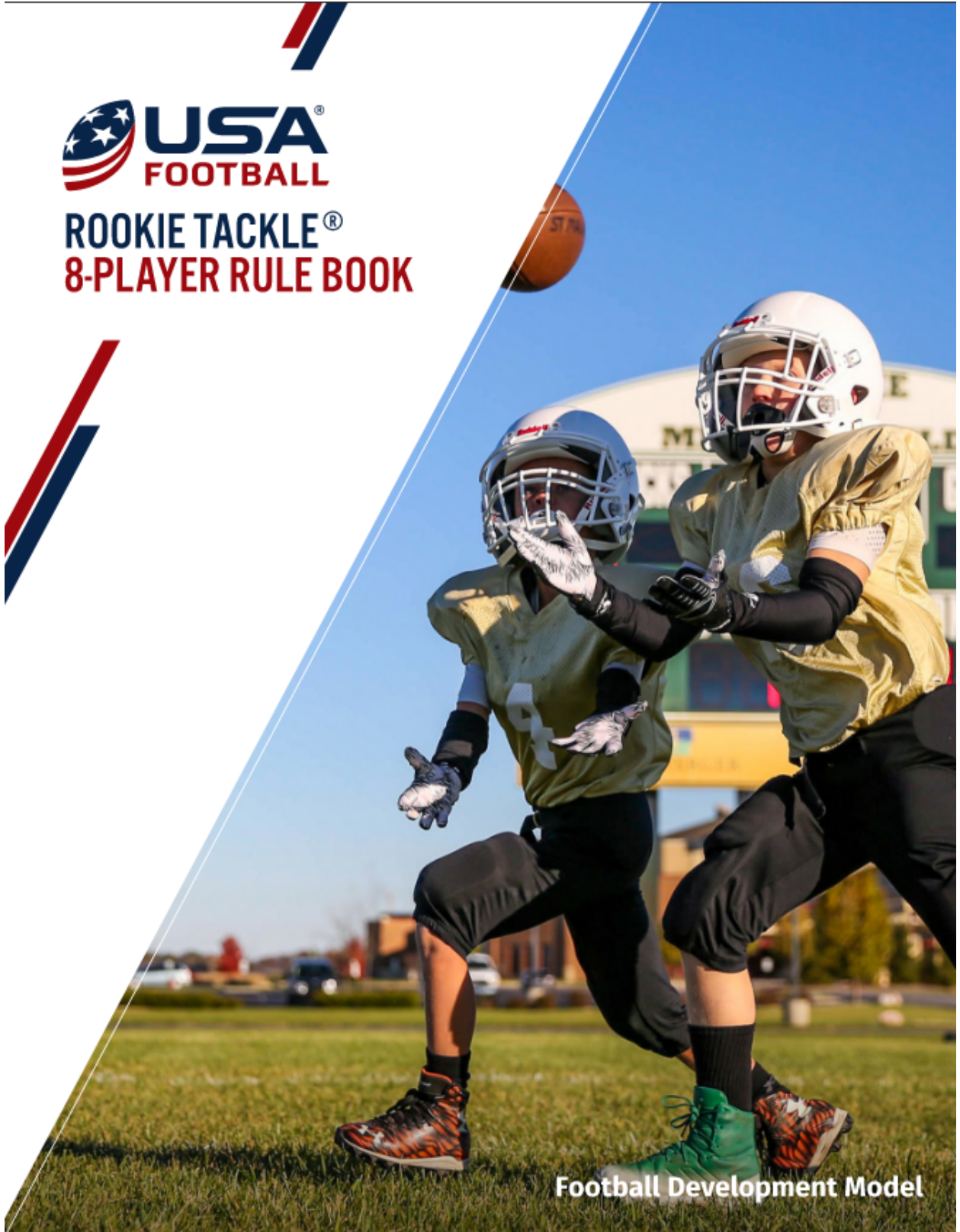




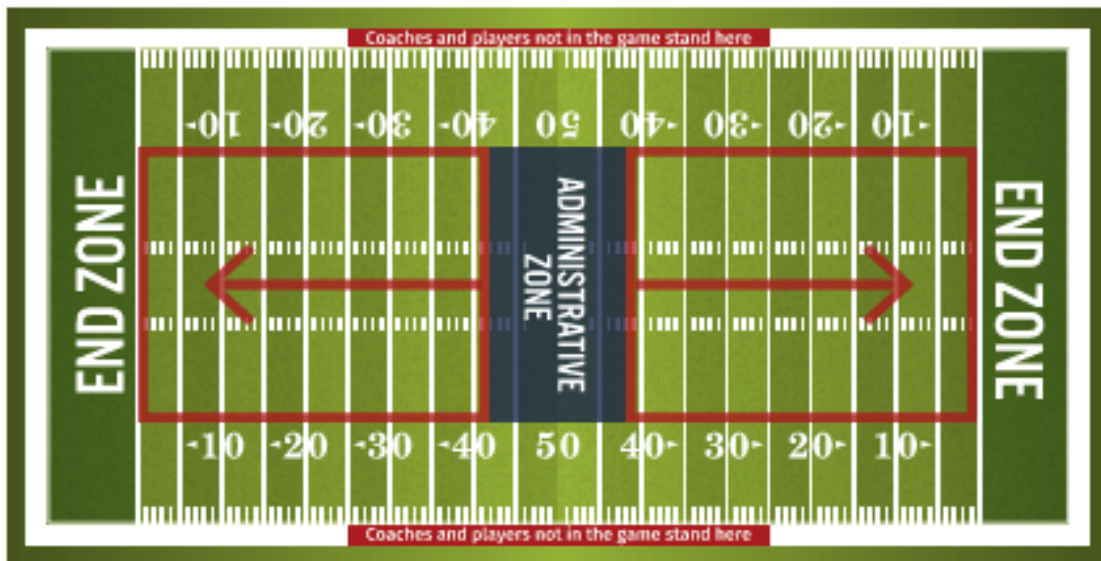
ROOKIE TACKLE®
8-PLAYER RULE BOOK



Football Development Model

Playing Field

1. The playing field is 40 x 35 1/3 yards, allowing for two fields to be created on a traditional 100yrd field at the same time. (9yrd or 27 ft in from side lines)
2. The sidelines extend between the inside of the numbers of a traditional football field and should be marked with cones every 5yds. Use traditional pylons, if available, to mark the goal line and the back line of the end zone.
3. Additional cones can be placed between the five-yard stripes and in line with the inside of the numbers to further outline the playing surface if desired.
4. All possessions start at the 40yrd line going towards the end zone.
 - a. This leaves a 20yrd buffer zone between the two game fields for game administration and safety purposes. Game officials, league personnel, athlete trainers and designated coaches are allowed in this space.
 - b. The offensive huddle may take place in the Administrative Zone.
 - c. Players not in the game stand on traditional sidelines with one or more coaches to supervise.
 - d. The standard players box should be used for sidelines players. With the field split in two, this keeps players between the 25- and 40-yard line on each respective field or side.
5. First down, down markers and the chain gang are administered in accordance with National Federation (NFHS) or local rules- starting from the 40-yard line.



Game Clock / Time / Timeouts

Games will be 4 quarters with a **12-minute running clock**.

1. Clock will **ONLY stops on PENALTIES, TIME OUTS, SCORES, EXTRA POINTS or CHANGE of POSSESSION.**
2. Each Team will be allowed 3-time outs per half.
3. A 30sec play clock will apply, but again lets only enforce this if a team is running way over. Teams will be given 3 warnings then result in a penalty.

8-Player Rules

Weight Limit-

1. **MANDATORY!!!** 4th grade (95lbs+) , 5th grade (105lbs+) , 6th Grade (115lbs+) Any player over these weights is considered a blue star, see #3. Any coach/team that does not abide by weight limits can be questioned and player can be asked to be weighed, if player is overweight, they will be disqualified from playing.
2. **Weights including name of player & number must be submitted to league for all players prior to Fall Scrimmage which is scheduled for Aug. 26, 2023. Teams that do not submit information, games will be canceled.**
3. **Players over weight limit (Blue Stars) are limited to play line ONLY on OFFENSE OR DEFFENSE (Center/Guard/End). Must have 4 players defensive players on line, no more/no less.** Quarter backs or Ends can be over weight limit but CANNOT advance the ball. If a quarter back is rushed, the play will be blown dead to eliminate Blue Star from advancing ball. If a Blue Star catches a pass as an End, the play is dead at spot of catch and ball CANNOT be advanced.
4. **Prior to games starting during captains meeting & coin flip, ALL Blue Star players must report to pre-game meeting and acknowledge to other team and refs they are Blue Star Players.** Players must be identified with a blue star sticker on their helmet that will be decided by league prior to scrimmage.
5. **If a community has 2 teams for grade level, players CANNOT play on additional teams unless a player is gone/unable to play. This must be agreed on by both teams prior to the start of game.**

Game-

1. All Games take place on one half of the field with all possessions starting at the 40-yrd line going towards the end zone.

2. A turnover on downs brings the ball back to the 40-yrd line, and the teams switch from offense to defense, defense to offense.
3. Turnovers or interceptions or turnovers on fumbles are blown dead immediately. No returns area allowed to protect players from running toward the 20-yrd Administration Zone between the fields. There are NO defensive touchdowns.
 - a. A fumble is not blown dead, only a turnover. A fumble is live ball until it is recovered by a player, lands out of bounds, or approaches the Administrative Zone and officials determine the play should be blown dead.
 - i. Defense recoveries, as turnovers, ARE blown dead.
 - ii. An offensive player may recover and advance the ball.
4. After each play ran on offense, the ball is spotted in the middle of the field. Hash marks are not used. (If fields with grass need to adjust spot to eliminate damage to field, this is allowed and shall be discussed with visiting team prior).
5. Because of the limited field size, all 15-yrd penalties are enforced as 10-yrd penalties.
6. NO penalty on the offense can take the ball beyond the 40-yrd line to ensure Administration Zone is free.
 - a. **Penalties for an offense that are called and accepted on or behind the 40-yrd line result in a loss of down.**
 - i. Example: A five-yard penalty that is called and accepted on the 38-yrd line would result in a two-yard loss, loss of down and ball spotted on the 40-yrd line.
 - b. A penalty that would normally include a loss of down would not result in a second loss of down on the same play.
7. There are no defensive safeties. Tackles behind the 40-yrd line are re-spotted at the 40-yrd line with the offense still retaining the ball if down remains.
8. **Offensive player carrying ball (running back or quarterback) that crosses the 50yrd line, play is immediately dead. Ball gets placed back to 40 yard line with loss of down.**
9. 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 the "cooling off period". **Two personal fouls by the same player will result in an ejection.**
 - 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.
10. All plays are blown dead, and the ball returned to the 40-yrd line if an offensive ball-carrier or a fumbled ball crosses over midfield (50-yrd line) or, at the official's discretion, if the action of the play penetrates too deeply into the Administration Zone.

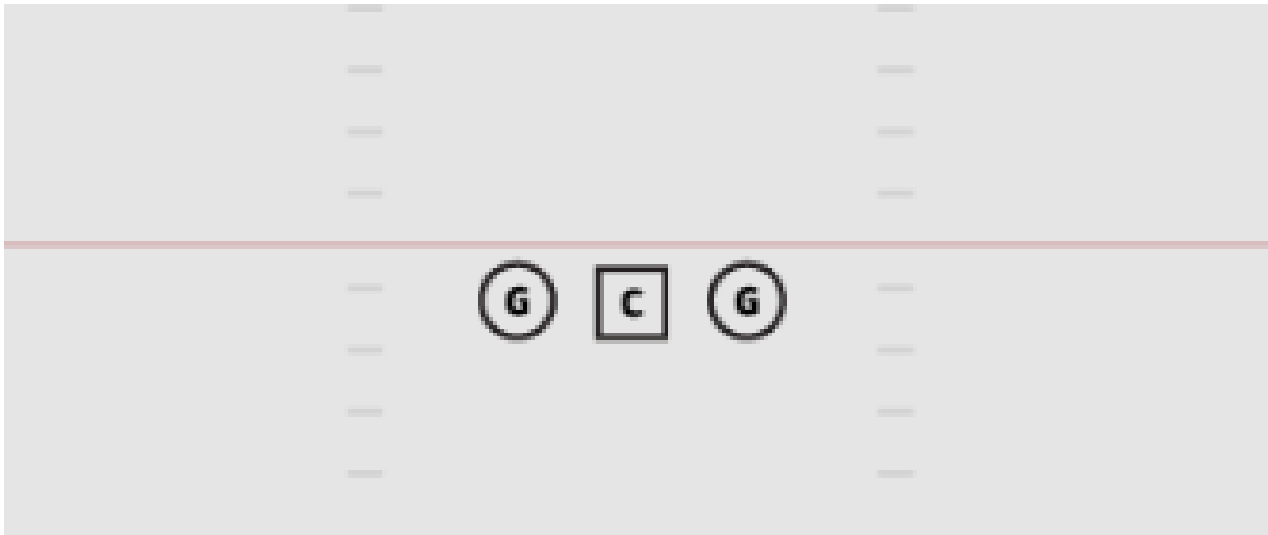
Special Teams-

1. There are NO special teams

- a. There are no kickoffs or punts. Each possession starts with the ball on the 40-yrd line, regardless of whether there is a score, turnover, or turnover on downs.
- b. There are no extra points by a kick.
 - i. All PATs are attempted through a run or pass try. Coaches can choose to go for one point from the 3-yrd line or two points from the 5-yrd line.

Offensive adjustments-

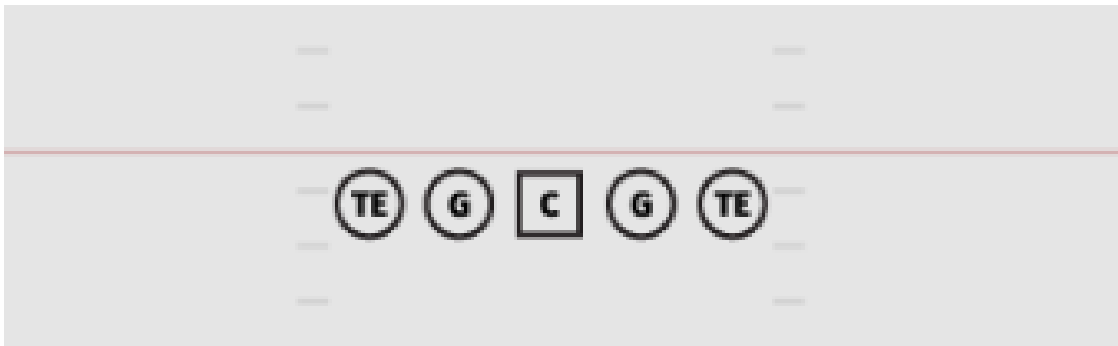
1. Each play must include three offensive lineman- a center and two guards, one on either side of the center. These players are ineligible for first touch as the receiver of a pass.
 - a. Player rotations may result with traditional non-lineman numbers at these positions for the purpose of fundamentals skill development.



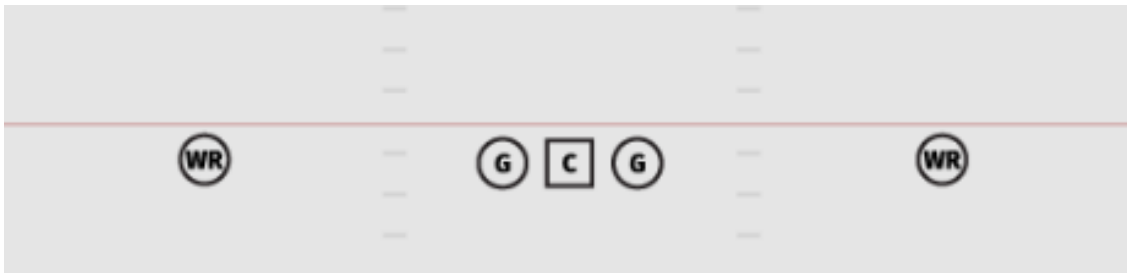
2. **Guards/Ends are required to play from a two-point stance.** There are no three-point or four-point stances, except for 6th graders may play in a two-point or three-point stance.
3. The Center may have both hands down if needed to snap the ball.
4. The distance between a guard and center may not exceed three feet (one yard) but may be closer.
5. Because of all players, all positions, all skills philosophy, players should change positions during the game. Therefore:

- a. The three offensive linemen must identify themselves on each play by raising their hand as they break the huddle and approach the line of scrimmage.
 - b. Once identified as an offensive lineman, players may not shift to another position.
 - c. All three offensive linemen are ineligible for the first touch on a pass.
6. The quarterback-center exchange may be direct, pistol or shotgun.
 7. Quarterback SNEAKS ARE PROHIBITED in all situations because the defense is not allowed to have players aligned over the center or in the center-guard A-gap.
 8. The offense MUST have five players on the line of scrimmage. NO more, NO less. The fourth and fifth players can be tight ends, split ends, or a combination of the two. Only the two end players on the line scrimmage are eligible for the first touching of a pass.
 9. There are NO unbalanced lines / formations allowed. The split ends/tight ends must be on opposite sides of the center.

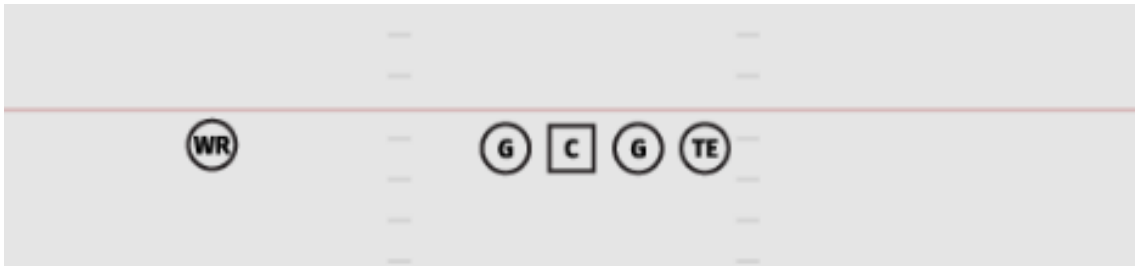
Balanced Offensive Line-



Or



Or

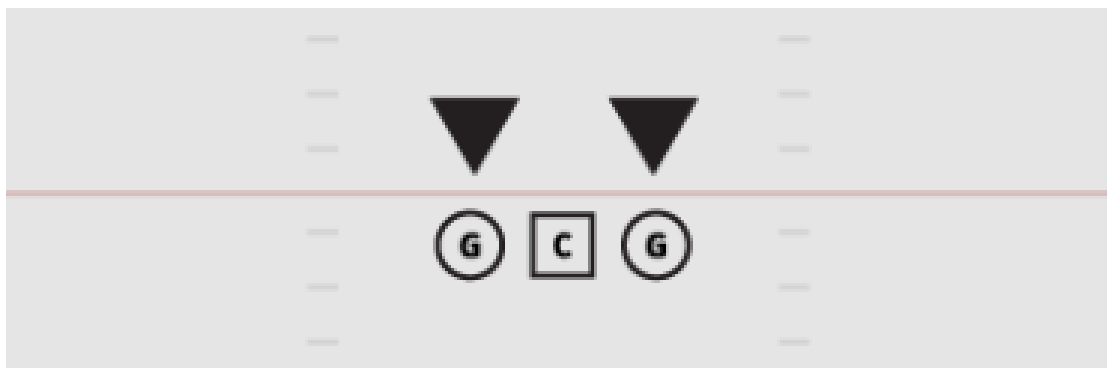


10. The five offensive players who are not playing guard or center may be deployed in positions at the coach's discretion if two are on the line scrimmage and the formation is balanced.
 - a. Multiple running backs, slot receivers, wing backs, etc., are allowed but also must be balanced.
11. NO trips formations are allowed.
 - a. For the purpose of Rookie Tackle, trips are defined as any three players outside the guard-to-guard box on the same side of the ball.
12. Motion is allowed if it does not form trips formation.
13. All blocks below the waist by any player anywhere on the field is illegal.

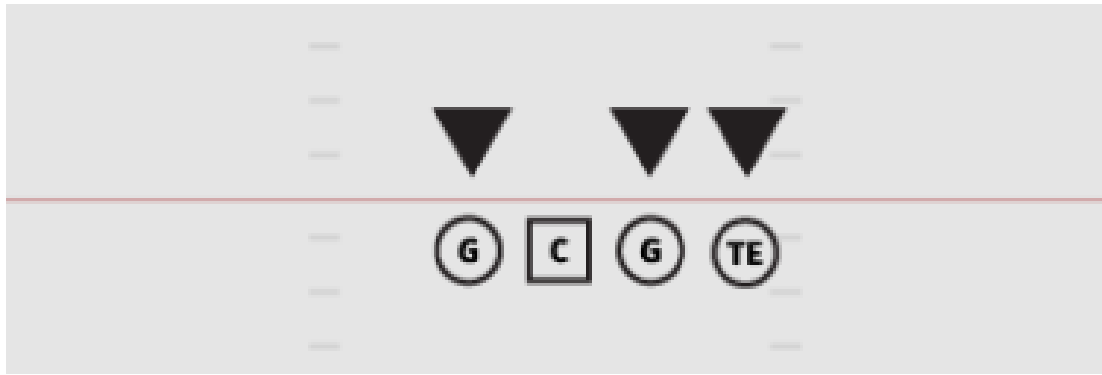
Defensive Adjustments-

1. All players must play heads up with the offensive player on the line. **MUST HAVE 4 defense players on the line of scrimmage always, lined up heads up with offensive player.**
 - a. **Tight ends on the offense line must be lined up heads up with the tight ends on defense. Split out WR or Ends must always be lined up heads up on the line.**

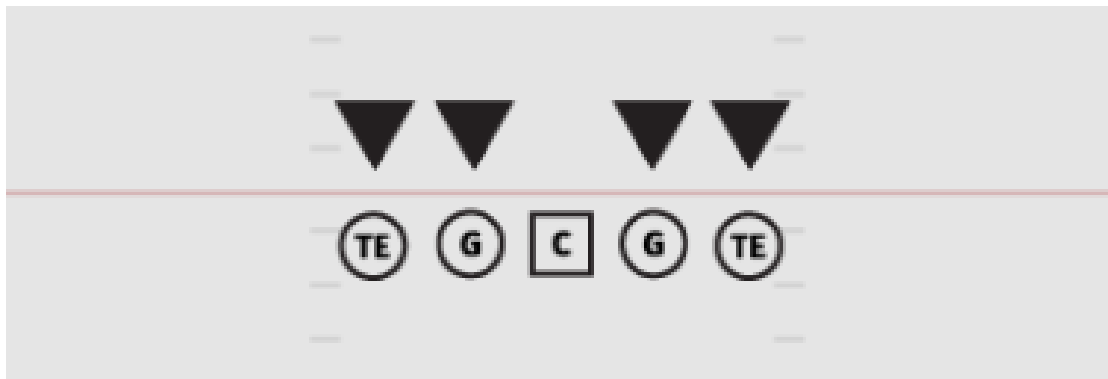
Base



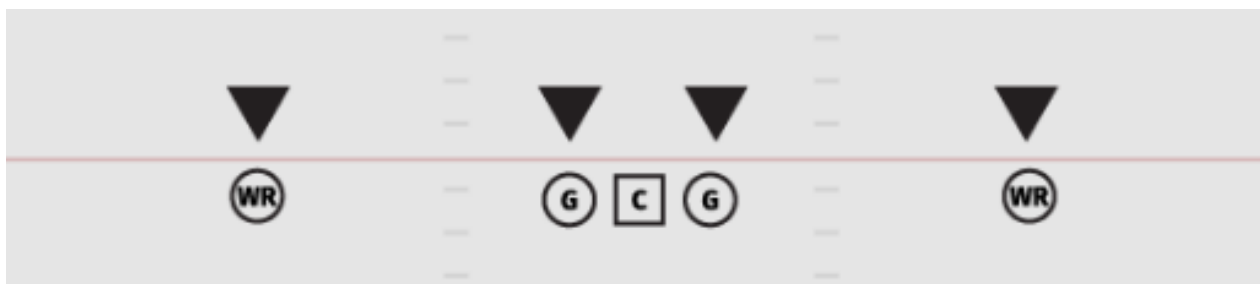
One Tight End



Two Tight Ends



2. If the offense aligns with no tight ends, the defense must still align with four players on the line of scrimmage head up over the receivers they are covering.

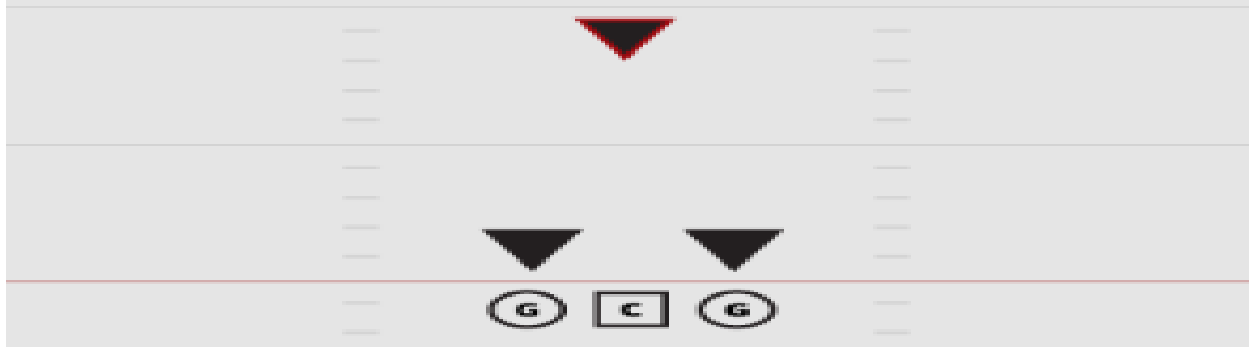


3. Defense line of scrimmage players may NOT penetrate the A-Gap or slant to gaps on the snap of the ball. Contact with the hands must be made with the offensive line player before defeating to block into the GAP. **(4 defensive lineman may rush the quarter back after making head up contact). Shooting GAP/SLANTING by defense will be enforced and any defensive player that shoots the gap or slants will result in a penalty.**

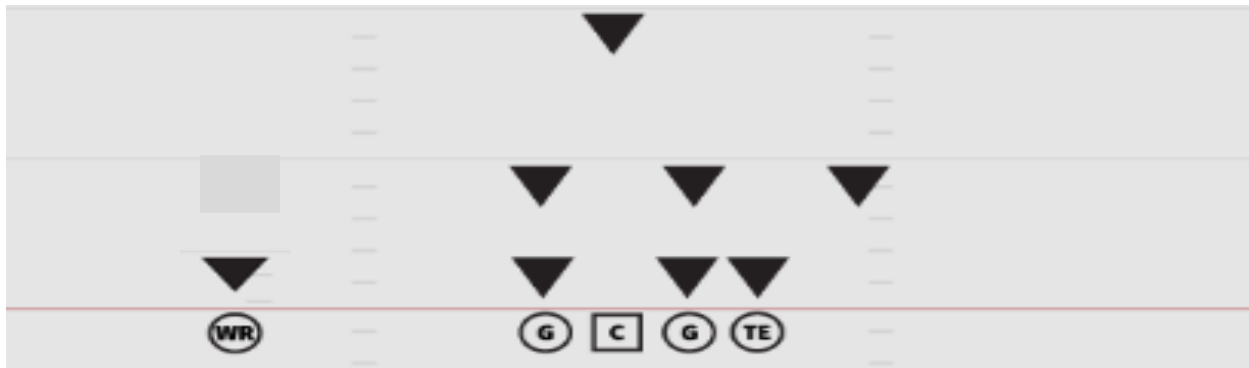
- a. Deliberate stunting into A-Gap or Gaps is to be treated as an illegal procedure foul and enforced as a five-yard live ball penalty replay down.

4. The defense cannot line anyone heads up over the Center on offense.

5. The defense must have one player at least 10-yards from the ball regardless of formation.



6. Defense must always be a 4/3/1 formation. 4 on line, 3 line backers 6yds back from ball and 1 safety 10yds back from ball.



7. NO Blitzes. Players within the box of snaps can penetrate upon the snap. Linebackers, safeties, and cornerbacks (both on the line and at depth) can flow to the ball naturally **after handoff is made but predetermining penetration to a specific gap is illegal. This means that no safety or linebacker can move up to line until ball is clearly handed off, faked, fumble or QB runs outside of pocket.**
- The box includes players who line up within two yards of the ball and on the line of scrimmage along with defensive players lined up directly over them.
 - The restriction on blitzing is intended to encourage skill development within the passing game and allow young players to execute a successful handoff with limited penetration.
 - Illegal blitzes by a linebacker or defensive back shall be enforced as an illegal procedure foul and a five-yard live ball penalty. If continued blitzing is determined to be a product of coach encouragement, a 10-yard unsportsmanlike conduct penalty can occur.

- b. On pass plays, anyone outside the box on the snap cannot rush the quarterback and must remain behind the line of scrimmage in pass coverage.
 - c. Coaches are encouraged to be creative with their formations but not use "the box" to delay defensive penetration.
8. If the ball is INSIDE the four-yard line, the four non-linemen, non-deep players may align on the goal line. Same goes for extra point played from the 3-yrd line, defensive players may move up.

Scoring-

1. Game clock will stop for extra points / Dead ball play.
2. Offensive touchdowns are worth six points.
3. PATs are the coach's choice to attempt one-point try from the three-yard line or two-point try from the five yard line.
4. With no special teams, there are no field goal attempts.
5. There are no defensive touchdowns as all turnovers are blown dead immediately. No returns are allowed to limit playback in the direction of the Administrative Zone.
6. There are no two-point defensive safeties. All tackles behind the 40-yrd line result in a loss of down, but the offense retains the ball, and the ball is spotted at the 40-yrd line to preserve the Administrative Zone.