

The Basics

- A coin toss determines first possession.
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has four plays to make a first down (15 yards). When a team makes a first down, we re-set the down at another first and fifteen. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on its 5-yard line.
- If the offensive team fails to make a first down, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its 5-yard line.
- All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line.
- Teams change sides after the first 30 minutes. Possession changes to loser of coin toss and the clock does not stop.
- There are no kickoffs.

Game Timing

- Games are scheduled to start at 1:00 and 2:30. The first twenty minutes will be a brief warm-up and practice (new plays and ball handling skills). At 1:20 and 2:50, we'll begin two 30 minute halves with a five minute half time break. We're shooting for at least four offensive possessions per team per half so please try to keep the boys organized and ready to play.
- Scores will not be kept officially, and we won't play any overtimes. Remember, it's an instructional league and all participants are winners.
- Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 60 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced.
- Each team has one 60-second time out per half.
- Officials can stop the clock at their discretion. (i.e. injuries; interferences from other ongoing games; etc.)

Scoring

- Touchdown: 6 points (no extra point attempts)

Running

- The quarterback can run with the ball one time every four downs.
- Offense may use multiple handoffs.
- “No-running zones” located five yards from each end zone are designed to avoid short-yardage, power-running situations.
- The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
- Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player (no diving).
- The ball is spotted where the ball carrier’s feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.

Receiving

- All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
- As in the NFL, only one player is allowed in motion at a time.
- A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

Passing

- Shovel passes are allowed.
- The quarterback has a seven-second “pass clock.” If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, play is dead, loss of down. However, once the ball is handed off, the seven-second rule no longer is in effect.
- Interceptions change the possession of the ball, and can be returned. Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start on the 5-yard line.

Dead Balls

- The ball must be snapped between the legs to start play (not off to one side).
- Shotgun snaps are permitted.
- Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- Play is ruled “dead” when:
 - ❖ Ball carrier’s flag is pulled
 - ❖ Ball carrier steps out of bounds
 - ❖ Touchdown or safety is scored
 - ❖ Ball carrier’s knee hits the ground
 - ❖ Ball carrier’s flag falls out

Note: *There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground.*

Rushing the Quarterback

- One defender can rush one time every four downs. The pass rusher must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.
- Once the ball is handed off, the seven-yard rule no longer is in effect, and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage. A special marker, or the referee, will designate seven yards from the line of scrimmage.

Penalties

- All penalties will be called by the referee.
- Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.
- All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage.
- Only the team coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players cannot question judgment calls.
- Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.

Penalties (*cont.*)

Defense:

Offsides

Five yards and automatic first down

Interference

10 yards and automatic first down

Illegal contact (*holding, blocking, etc.*)

10 yards and automatic first down

Illegal FLAG pull (*before receiver has ball*)

10 yards and automatic first down

Illegal rushing (*starting rush from inside 7-yard marker*)

10 yards and automatic first down

Offensive:

Illegal motion (*more than one person moving, false start, etc.*)

5 yards and loss of down

Illegal forward pass (*pass thrown beyond line of scrimmage*)

5 yards and loss of down

Offensive pass interference (*illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender*)

10 yards and loss of down

Flag guarding

10 yards (from line of scrimmage) and loss of down

Blocking

- No blocking is allowed in the “younger players” league (1st/2nd grade teams). However, an offensive player can run interference by positioning himself between the ball carrier and the defender.
- In the “older players” league (3rd-5th grade teams), players are allowed to block ABOVE THE WAIST ONLY!

Attire

- Cleats are allowed, except for metal spikes. Inspections must be made. Protective mouthpieces are optional, but strongly recommended for boys with braces.
- Official Jr. Lions’ jerseys must be worn during play.

Game Day Schedules

First Session	
Time	Schedule
1:00pm - 1:20pm	Teams gather; Warm-ups
1:20pm - 1:50pm	Game (first half)
1:50pm - 1:55pm	Halftime
1:55pm - 2:25pm	Game (second half)
2:25pm - 2:30pm	Handshakes and Post-game team meeting

Second Session	
Time	Schedule
2:30pm - 2:50pm	Teams gather; Warm-ups
2:50pm - 3:20pm	Game (first half)
3:20pm - 3:25pm	Halftime
3:25pm - 3:55pm	Game (second half)
3:55pm - 4:00pm	Handshakes and Post-game team meeting

Field Diagrams

- The four fields of play will be configured as follows ...



- The dimension of each field will be as shown below ...

