



Wythe County and  
Wytheville Parks and  
Recreation  
Youth Football Rules



**Revised August 2022**

**Wythe County and Wytheville Parks and Recreation Department  
Youth Football**

**Rules and Regulations**

**Department Requirements:**

1. Physicals – A signed statement from an examining physician stating that the player is physically fit and there are no observable conditions which would prevent him/her from participating will be required for each child. Regular school medical examinations are acceptable if they were completed within the current calendar year. Each player will be responsible for obtaining a physical and turning in this form **prior to starting practice**. **NO EQUIPMENT WILL BE ISSUED WITHOUT RECEIPT OF PHYSICAL FORM. Wytheville Parks and Recreation Department will not require yearly physicals.**
2. A signed Parental Consent Form – Standard Department sports participation form/waiver and concussion forms are required to be turned into the department/booster club **prior to starting practice**.
3. Weight Limits & Weigh In: There will be one official weigh-in and it is to be done during equipment hand out, exact times will be announced by each recreation department. An official roster with weights will be submitted between departments prior to the annual Jamboree. Exceptions for each Recreation Department will be communicated between the departments and players who miss the official weigh-in must weigh in at the respective department with staff who will update and share the updated rosters.

**The National Federation for the State of Virginia High School Football League Rules will be adhered to with the following modifications and/or points of emphasis:**

1. Practices and games, combined, are limited to four (4) days per calendar week, **one session** per day, **One (1) hour and thirty (30) minutes per session. Full contact will be limited to 30 minutes per practice. Practice may begin on August 1<sup>st</sup>**
2. Pads may not be used until a player has participated in four (4) full practice sessions for the current season. Helmets only may be used for the first 4 full practices.
3. No block can be thrown below the waist away from the line of scrimmage.
4. A recovered fumble or intercepted pass can only be advanced by those eligible, according to established weight limits, to advance the ball. If the ball is recovered by an ineligible player, the play will be ruled dead at the spot of the recovery or interception and change of possession will occur.
5. Each team will be allowed five (5) timeouts per game. Timeouts will not carry over in case of overtime.

6. JV league will allow one coach on offense and one coach on defense on the field during the game. **The coach may instruct players up to the time the ball is snapped then must move behind the game officials and remain out of the play. Coaches may not change plays (call an audible) after leaving the huddle or as teams are lining up for the play.**
7. To blitz, players must be within three (3) yards of the neutral zone at the time of the snap.
8. Only **five (5) coaches** are allowed on sidelines each game. All coaches must pass the Background Check and complete all applicable forms. Only the coaches that have completed all required paperwork will be allowed to coach during any game. Coaches can only be listed on one roster.
9. A team may begin or continue a game with as few as nine (9) players. If a team drops below nine players, the game will be forfeited and the opposing team will be awarded the win.
10. Players must play on the team where they attend school or district in which the player lives in. No release will be given unless the particular sport is not offered in your area during the same season.
11. If a player is to be added to any roster after rosters have been turned in, it must be approved by the Parks and Recreation Departments and Youth league.
12. **No participant will be allowed to play with a cast or braces w/metal.** (even if it is covered)
13. No head or neck bandannas will be allowed to be worn.
14. Officials and Parks and Recreation Departments Personnel may remove any player, coach or fan from the game, playing area or facility for unsportsmanlike conduct.  
  
Unsportsmanlike conduct: (Taunting, spiking ball, flagrant spearing, cursing, etc)  
  
**\*The head official will follow the NFHS/VHSL rules and guidelines.**
15. Wythe County Schools Policy states: Any child suspended from school will not be allowed on school property until suspension is over.
16. Participants are asked to attend **ALL** practices, for proper conditioning. In order to play the minimum time required, the majority of practices must be attended each week. Missing practices may be an infraction of individual team rules and could result in loss of game play time.
17. All potential ball carriers will be marked with red tape on their helmet. Only players with red tape on their helmets may line up in the offensive backfield. Exception will be of one ineligible player to be as a blocker **ONLY**.
18. **If at any point during a game one team is ahead of the other by **twenty-four (24)** or more points, the clock will run continuously except for timeouts/injuries. If the lead falls below **24** points, regular game rules will go back into effect.**

19. **Each player must play four (4) live ball downs per quarter (special team plays do not count). A coach from each team will record their players live ball downs on a roster that must be signed by the head coach and turned into the field supervisor after each game.** A coach who does not play each player the required number of downs per quarter will be suspended the next game. A second occurrence will result in the forfeiture of the game and the coach being suspended for the remainder of the season and all playoff games. **Each coach is responsible for reporting to the opposing coach and the Department any player who will not meet the required playing time and the reason for the reduced time. (I.E., illness, injury, missed practices, violation of team/youth league rules, child chooses not to play)**
20. **Any tackle made by the helmet will be considered a face mask penalty.**
21. All players will wear a mouthpiece that connects to the face mask by a strap. Mouthpieces must be of a distinguishable color and may not be white or clear. Mouthpieces must be of full size and may not be tampered with. **Examples: Cut, chewed.**
22. All players must wear all equipment in its proper location to include seven-piece pad set.
23. No full speed head on blocking or tackling drills in which the players are more than 3 yards apart will be allowed. **Examples: Oklahoma, Bull in the Ring, Boards.**
25. **Concussions** - 24 hour rest rule will take place. \*\*\* See Attachments\*\*\*
  - All coaches must have concussion training, which can be completed online. After completion please e-mail or bring in a copy of the completed course to the rec department.

<http://hfhslearn.com>

## **Kickoffs**

### **Varsity**

The kicking team will line up in formation or a knee and kickoff from the 40-yard line. Kick off team will not advance after kick. The receiving team will line up in formation and take possession of the ball wherever it is caught or at the spot the ball rolls dead. If the ball bounces back toward the kicking team, the ball will be placed at the spot of the bounce. The receiving team will start from that spot. Kickoffs must be made within 1 minute of previous score, a delay of game penalty will result if not done in a minute. Kicking team has the option to have ball placed on the opponents 30 yard line.

## **Punts**

### **Varsity**

Punts will be a scrimmage kick with no rush. All linemen must be in a down position and remain down until the ball is kicked. Receiving team may only send 3 players back to field a punt; other 8 players must be on a knee. No player may leave his feet and attempt to block the kick. The ball must be snapped straight back, at least five (5) yards from where the ball was officially placed and kicked from that spot. The receiving team will take possession of the ball wherever it is caught or at the spot the ball rolls dead. If the ball bounces back toward the kicking team, the ball will be placed at the spot of the bounce. Punter will have five (5) seconds to get the punt off. If not punted within the allotted time of the snap, ball will go over in downs to the opposing team. The clock will continue to run during the punts.

If kicking team chooses not to punt:

1. Ball will be placed 25 yards from the line of scrimmage
2. Play the down, must notify head official of intent

### **Junior Varsity**

Options on fourth down on or outside the defense's 30 yard line:

1. Play the down
2. Punt
3. Have the ball placed 20 yards from the line of scrimmage

Options on fourth down inside the defense's 30 yard line:

1. Play the down
2. Punt
3. Have the ball placed  $\frac{1}{2}$  the distance between the spot of the ball and goal line.

## **Field Goals**

Both JV and Varsity will have an option to kick a field goal for 3 points.

- Dead ball play, opposing team will line up but not advance
- If choosing to kick a field goal it will be a good live snap, set and kick.
- A kick block may be used
- Ball will be placed on field according to VHSL Rules
  - i.e., ball being placed on left or right hash mark or center of field.

## **Extra Points**

After scoring a touchdown a team may elect for either one (1) extra point or two (2) extra points.

- One extra point will be scored by either carrying or completing a pass into the end zone from the two-yard line.
- Two extra points will be scored by either carrying or completing a pass into the end zone from the 3-yard line
- Two extra points may be scored by kicking the ball through the goal posts from the 3-yard line
  - If choosing to kick a field goal it will be a good live snap, set and kick
  - Opposing team will line up but will not advance if team is kicking. (dead ball)

## **Defensive Alignments**

### **INSIDE OF THE 15 YARD LINE:**

- Defense must be played in a minimum 3 man front to a maximum 6 man front.
- All defensive linemen inside the ends must be in a down position (3 or 4 point stance)
- All linebackers must be a minimum of 2 yards off the line of scrimmage. (3 yards if outside the 15 yard line)
- First violation of this rule will be a warning. Subsequent violations will result in 5 yard penalties for each occurrence.

## **Overtime**

Ten (10) yard overtime procedure will be used. If a game ends in a tie, then a coin toss will determine who get the option of offense, defense or which goal to defend. Each team will get an offensive series of downs. The series ends by scoring, losing the ball by fumble, interception or by completing four (4) downs without a score.

If there is still a tie then a second series of offensive downs will be played.

A team scoring a touchdown will also be given a try for an extra point

After 2 overtimes if the game is still tied, teams will then play just for 2 point conversions.

Each team will be given one (1) timeout during each overtime session

**(Playoff overtimes will continue until a winner is determined)**

## **Playoffs**

Seeds for tournament that result in a regular season tie, will be head-to-head winner or loser from the game played against each other in the season. Any split in wins or a three or more-way tie will refer to the number draw at the head coach's meeting prior to the beginning of the season.

## Points of Interest

- Each youth league will be given the opportunity to host an equal amount of Saturday game days if the high school in the respective area makes enough dates available. **Set-up, clean-up, chain gang, announcer and concessions are the responsibility of the youth league.** Youth leagues retain all proceeds received from concessions on their assigned date. Youth leagues should be at the game site prior to the first scheduled game to begin game day preparations
- Games will be played in accordance with the published schedule
- Make up games will be played based on availability of fields

## Pre-Season Camps

Pre-Season camps are limited to one sponsored camp per youth league and not to exceed more than four days. Days do not have to be consecutive. Camps should be open to all who are interested

Camps do not count as regular season practices.

## Junior Varsity

- Ball carriers may not weigh in over **ninety (90) pounds** to advance the ball
- The defense may not touch the center until after the ball has snapped and the player has raised up
- If a team elects to punt on the fourth down, it will be a dead ball
- Quarters will be 8 minutes long
- Halftime is 10 minutes
- Pee-wee sized ball will be used in all Junior Varsity games
- JV will be made up of 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders
  - JV players may not turn eleven (11) years of age as of September 30<sup>th</sup> of the calendar year

## Varsity

- Ball carriers may not weigh over **one-hundred twenty (120) pounds** to advance the ball
- The defense may not touch the center until after the ball has snapped and the player has raised up
- Quarters will be 8 minutes long
- Half time is 10 minutes long
- Junior sized ball will be used in all Varsity games.
- Varsity will be made up of 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders
  - Varsity Players may not turn thirteen (13) as of September 30<sup>th</sup> of the calendar year

**All county/town issued equipment should be returned at the end of your team's final game or within a week.**

**No issued equipment will be used in any events not sanctioned by the county/town.**

**At all games, parents/spectators are to remain in the stands or designated area. NO ONE other than players, cheerleaders, coaches, officials, rescue squad members and Parks and Recreation staff are permitted on the field.**

If a youth league has more participants and needs to split into two or more teams, a draft must be completed with an equal number of players from each grade group. (or as close as possible).

A team must have at least 13 players to be able to begin a season in the league.

Drafts are to be monitored by parks and recreation staff and are approved upon agreement of the head coaches and Parks and recreation staff.

### **CANCELLATIONS**

If games are canceled due to inclement weather, WCPR will notify each Youth League President/Athletic director and then it will be up to them to notify the coaches. WCPR does have a cancellation line (276-223-4520). Updates to schedule changes will be recorded if able. WCPR will attempt to post on social media as well. The Town of Wytheville Parks and Recreation Department will notify all coaches, and attempt as best as possible to update their cancellation line at (276-223-3599)

**NO WEAPONS, PETS, TOBACCO PRODUCTS OR ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES WILL BE ALLOWED ON PUBLIC SCHOOL GROUNDS.**

### **Wythe County Parks and Recreation**

#### **Influenza/COVID Policy**

If Wythe County Public Schools are closed or dismissed early due to influenza, COVID, or other pandemic/similar issues, then all WCPR games will be postponed to a later date. No practices will be held until children return to school

Due to pandemic concerns, coaches will not allow players, cheerleaders, or other participants (i.e. assistant coaches) to play, practice or participate until the allotted time has passed to return to school and practice.



## Concussion Awareness

Athletes who experience any of the signs and symptoms below after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body may have a concussion

### Signs Observed by Coaching Staff

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
  - Forgets an instruction or play
  - Is unsure of score or opponent
    - Moves clumsily
    - Answers questions slowly
  - Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes
  - Can't recall events prior to hit or fall
  - Can't recall events after hit or fall

### Symptoms Reported By Athlete

- Headache or pressure in head
  - Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
  - Double or blurry vision
    - Sensitivity to light
    - Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
  - Confusion
- Does not "feel right" or is "feeling down"

### Action Plan

**If you suspect that an athlete has a concussion you should take the following steps.**

1. Remove the athlete from play. **WHEN IN DOUBT, SIT THEM OUT!**
2. Inform the athlete's parent/guardian about the possible concussion and give them the facts and symptoms observed
3. Ensure that the athlete is evaluated by a health care professional experienced in evaluating for concussions. Do not judge the severity of the injury yourself.
4. Keep the athlete out of play the day of the injury and until they show no symptoms and an appropriate health care professional says they are OK to return to play.

The Wythe County and Wytheville Parks and Recreation Department staff and certified EMTs at local youth league games have the right to sit any player out of action they believe has a possible concussion. Then the 24 hour of rest goes into effect and the player must be cleared by an appropriate health care professional. A written clearance must be provided before the player can return to practices or games.