

GERMANTOWN FOOTBALL LEAGUE

OFFICIAL TACKLE FOOTBALL RULES Adopted 2026



Coaching Registration

The Germantown Football League (the “GFL”) will only register a head coach (“Registered Head Coach”) and one assistant coach (“Registered Assistant Coach” or collectively the “Registered Coaches”). While Registered Coaches may enlist additional individuals to assist during practices and games, the GFL will only recognize the Registered Coaches as official coaches and representatives of their teams.

Draft Procedures

The primary goal of the draft is to fairly distribute the players within each division. By ensuring an equitable division of talent, the GFL hopes to promote a healthy level of participation and competition. The draft typically occurs on a Saturday or Sunday following a week in which the players in each division are evaluated and conditioned by the coaches within each division.

Order and Operations

1. The children of the Registered Coaches will receive protected draft status on each team. All other participants will be placed into the draft and are eligible for selection.
2. A Draft Matrix will be utilized to determine the order of selection with a lottery to be held to determine each team's draft position within the Draft Matrix. Trading of draft positions is not permitted.
3. All Registered Coaches' children and other protected players will have a draft round grade for the draft. Each Registered Head Coach will submit a round grade for the other teams protected players. The average of that will be used to determine the round.
4. Teams will alternate picking players -one player per round regardless of age -until all eligible players have been selected. Although there are no restrictions on the order in which players from the older or younger age group may be selected by each team, there will be limits placed upon the total number of older and younger players that may be selected. This will ensure that each team has an equitable number of older and younger players.
5. Siblings who participate in the same division MUST play on the same team. Therefore, if a team selects a player with a sibling, the team must have an available pick in the subsequent round to acquire the sibling unless it occurs during the final round of the draft.
6. If a participant does not go through evaluations, the participant will be allocated to a team via a blind draw. This process is referred to as a hat pick. Hat picks will be distributed according to the order of the draft. Players who join the league after the draft automatically become hat picks and are allocated at the discretion of the Division Directors to ensure equitable numbers amongst all the teams.
7. If there are not enough players -who have gone through the evaluation process -to complete an entire round in the draft, these remaining players will become hat picks.
8. Trades are permitted subject to the approval by that league's Directors to ensure equity.
9. Division Directors will resolve any discrepancies or items not covered above. Amendments to the draft process remain at the discretion of the GFL Board.

Participation and Practice

Mandatory Participation: The Germantown Football League is a recreational program designed for all children to participate. All players are required to play a minimum of 10 snaps, including kick-offs. Every child must also be assigned a starting position and be a “meaningful” participant in the beginning of every game (not just kick-offs). Failure to adhere to the mandatory participation requirements shall subject the Registered Head Coach to penalties ranging from verbal warning, suspension, or removal from the league. The type of discipline assessed is in the sole discretion of the Board. Exclusions would include an injury or illness, parental request, or excessive absence from practice. The withholding of playing time for disciplinary reasons must first be cleared by the Division Director.

Age and Weight Limits: Please see the Eligibility Chart below for applicable division age and weight limits. If a player cannot meet the applicable weight limit, he will be ruled ineligible to either run or catch the ball. Players who are ineligible to run or catch the ball may not line up in an eligible receiving position (i.e. fullback or tight-end). Players eligible to receive the ball only may not line up in a position that is off the line of scrimmage. For example, a player eligible to receive only may line up as a tight or split end but may not line up as a flanker, fullback, quarterback or tailback. Weight limits are set prior to evaluations by the Division Directors and there shall be no subsequent weigh-ins. Notwithstanding the foregoing, in its sole discretion, the Board may hold a subsequent weigh-in of any division or any individual participant.

GFL ELIGIBILITY CHART	<u>MITEY MITES</u>	<u>PEE WEE</u>	<u>JUNIOR</u>
AGES BY AUG. 1	7-8	9-10	11-12
MAXIMUM WEIGHT PER BALL CARRIER	75 lbs.	100 lbs.	125 lbs.
MAXIMUM WEIGHT TO CATCH FORWARD PASS BEYOND LINE OF SCRIMMAGE	85 lbs.	110 lbs.	135 lbs.

There are no exceptions to the weight limits. 0.1 over the limit is over the limit. Weigh ins must be observed by a Director or designated representative of the Board for the scale assigned to that division—The weight observed will be the official weight for the season. A player has the opportunity to remove cleats & other equipment to try lowering their weight. Once a player leaves the check-in/weighing area the weight is final, subject to the Board’s discretion to allow a subsequent weigh-in of any individual participant.

Player jersey numbers must reflect the following:

1 - 49	<i>Eligible to carry the ball</i>
50 – 79	<i>Ineligible to run or catch</i>
80 - 89	<i>Eligible to catch a forward pass</i>

Practice Times: Please see Matrix for allowable practice time and pad limitations per week. Teams can practice for 5 days a week for the first two weeks of the season. A Wednesday game does not count against these limits. If a coach conducts a practice at a city field when the fields are closed for any reason, that team will forfeit future practices. It will be the responsibility of each coach to check the Parks and Recreation Hotline to ensure the facilities are either open or closed.

GFL PRACTICE TIMES	<u>MITEY MITES</u>	<u>PEE WEE</u>	<u>JUNIOR</u>
OVERALL	4 HOURS/WEEK	5 HOURS/WEEK	6 HOURS/WEEK
TIME IN PADS	3 HOURS/WEEK	4 HOURS/WEEK	5 HOURS/WEEK

Rules of Play and Conduct

Playing Field:

GFL PLAYING FIELD	<u>MITEY MITES</u>	<u>PEE WEE</u>	<u>JUNIOR</u>
LENGTH	80 YARDS	80 YARDS	100 YARDS
WIDTH	40 YARDS	40 YARDS	53 YARDS

Alternative Field Assignments: The Board reserves the right to shift division games to alternative fields when scheduling conflicts, weather conditions, or venue availability require accommodation. Teams must comply with all temporary or permanent field adjustments mandated by league officials.

Postseason and Bowl Game Venues: Playoff and Bowl Games are primarily scheduled at the main GFL Fields. In the event of scheduling constraints or administrative decisions, postseason games may be relocated to designated secondary sites, such as Germantown High School or Houston High School.

Equipment:

- Every player must wear proper equipment and GFL issued or approved uniforms. Shirt-tails must be completely tucked in or properly hemmed.
- Mitey Mites and Pee Wee will use K-2 footballs while Junior will use TDJ footballs. Footballs can be either composite or leather but they must be properly inflated.
- Mouth pieces must be worn at all times during practice and games.
- Football cleats should be worn. NO METAL cleats are allowed.
- Nothing may be worn that can cause injury to another player.
- Players ineligible to advance the football must wear a jersey number that designates they are ineligible in accordance with the jersey number chart above.

Team: Eleven (11) players will constitute a team. Teams may play with one less player without having to forfeit. GAME TIME IS FORFEIT TIME.

Coaches: Only Registered Coaches can be on the field with their team during a game. One coach may stay on the field for offense and defense at the Mitey Mite and Pee Wee Divisions. The on the field coach may not give any instructions after the offense comes set or after the ball has been snapped. Coaching from the sideline is permitted at any point in time during the game.

Game Time: All games will be four 8-minute quarters, with an 8-minute halftime. Standard clock rules apply. Clock does not stop except for:

- Touchdown
- PAT
- Time-Outs
- Injuries (requires player to leave the field for one play)
- Incomplete passes
- Out of bounds
- Movement of chains
- Change of possession

If a team is more than 21 points behind in the second half the clock will continuously run as it does in TSSAA Games. If the team behind gets the score inside of 14 points in the second half the clock will be run normal.

If at the end of regulation the score is tied; only one overtime period will be played. A coin flip will determine choice of offense, defense or side of field. The ball will be spotted at the 10-yard line and each offense will have four downs to score. Interceptions and fumbles may be returned for scores by the defense. The game will result in a tie if the score is equal at the end of the single overtime period. Play-off games will have multiple overtime periods in order to determine a winner utilizing the same format with the teams swapping who starts on offense/defense at the start of each new overtime period.

A team is allowed 3 one-minute time-outs per half and do not carry into overtime. One timeout will be awarded for each team during each overtime period.

First Downs: First downs are 8 yards in length for Mitey Mite and Pee Wee & 10 yards in length for Juniors and will be designated by chain only. The first down distance may be altered to 10 yards if the game is played on a regulation size field.

Scoring: Points will be scored as follows

- Touchdown counts for 6 points
- Points after touchdown (PATs)
 - a. 1 point from the 2-yard line
 - b. 2 points from the 3-yard line
- Offense must declare to the official PRIOR to huddle. Points may be made by passing or running. Kicking of 1 point extra point is allowed. This is a no rush kick and the ball cannot be advanced except by kick. If the holder has to change position to retrieve the ball, it becomes a dead ball.
- Safety counts for 2 points.

Blocking and Defensive Alignment: TSSAA blocking rules apply, including:

- No chop blocks outside of the neutral zone
- No pick plays
- No crack back blocks

Mitey Mite Only - A Gap Rule (Offense & Defense)

- **Offense** – A-Gap Rushing is off limits from QB's under center (QB sneak). A-Gap Rushing is permitted from a shotgun position or via a handoff to RB. Ball carrier must be lined up 3+ yards behind line of scrimmage.
- **Defense** – Lining up or rushing the A Gap is not permitted from a D-line position. A Gap may only be rushed from a defensive linebacker position 5+ yards back from the line of scrimmage. A player along the defensive line may not line up between the offensive guards. They can line up over the guards.

Special Teams: Please see matrix below for applicable rules:

GFL SPECIAL TEAMS	<u>MITEY MITES</u>	<u>PEE WEE</u>	<u>JUNIOR</u>
<i>PUNT FROM SCRIMMAGE</i>	WALK OFF 30 YARDS & NO CLOSER THAN THE 10 YARD LINE	WALK OFF 30 YARDS & NO CLOSER THAN THE 10 YARD LINE	WALK OFF 30 YARDS & NO CLOSER THAN THE 10 YARD LINE
<i>KICK OFF</i>	NONE. BALL PLACED ON 20 YARD LINE	NONE. BALL PLACED ON 20 YARD LINE.	LIVE - 5 MAN FRONT. BALL PLACED (KICKED) FROM 35 YARD LINE.
<i>FIELD GOALS</i>	NOT ALLOWED	NOT ALLOWED	NOT ALLOWED
<i>EXTRA POINT</i>	YES - SEE POINTS SECTION	YES - SEE POINTS SECTION	YES - SEE POINTS SECTION

Punting Option: 4th down is like any other down. Teams are given 30 seconds to run a play or elect to punt. If the coach wishes to run the 30 second play clock down to zero before electing to punt, he may do so. However, failing to get a play off or electing to punt within 30 seconds will result in a delay of game. If a delay of game penalty is enforced, the referees will not start the clock again until the snap of the ball on the next play. Once the coach elects to punt, the official will stop the clock and mark the ball accordingly.

Penalties: All TSSAA penalties apply. Listed below are a categorization of the most common penalties and their corresponding yardage.

Four-Yard Penalties (Three Yards for Mitey Mite)

- Illegal motion
- Encroachment (offsides)
- Delay of game - a team has 30 seconds from official's signal to put the ball in play
- Illegal substitution
- Unintentional facemask

Eight-Yard Penalties (Six Yards for Mitey Mite)

- Holding
- Block in the back

Twelve-Yard Penalties (Nine Yards for Mitey Mite)

- Clipping
- Illegal participation
- Offensive pass interference (loss of down)
- Defensive pass interference *
- Intentional facemask *
- Personal foul *
- Unsportsmanlike conduct (second incidence is mandatory ejection from the game and suspension from next game)
- Roughing the passer*

*** Automatic first down applies.**

Fighting or kicking even without contact is grounds for ejection from the game.

General Rules:

- The REGISTERED HEAD COACH is responsible for actions of players and spectators. Teams can be penalized for their actions.
- OFFICIAL'S CALLS ARE FINAL. NO PROTEST.
- Coaches and parents should address any problems to your director(s).
- Fumbles are live balls and can be advanced by any eligible player (under applicable weight limit).
- Interceptions can be advanced by the defense if by a weight eligible player.
- Taunting by players, coaches or fans WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.
- Consistent belligerent behavior by any player will lead to disqualification from game and possibly season.
- The home team for the first game of the day is responsible for setting up the markers and working the first down marker and chains.
- Visiting team of last game of the day puts away all equipment.
- Visiting team will call all coin flips.
- Home team is always on the side closest to the concession stand.
- The last two teams to play are responsible for picking up all the trash along their sidelines as well as on or around their bleachers. Failure to do so will result in a penalty for the Registered Head Coach.
- All coaches are responsible for submitting background checks by the assigned deadline. Failure to comply will be unable to attend practice or coach in a game.

Compliance Failure Penalties: Any coach, player or parent who fails to comply with these rules will be subject to the following sanctions:

1. First infraction will result in a verbal warning.
2. Second infraction will result in a mandatory 1 game suspension.
3. Third infraction will result in expulsion from the league.

All rules originate from TSSAA rules. Exceptions and clarifications are noted. Where not specifically addressed, TSSAA rules apply.