

Simplified Rules of Electric Football for the Solitaire Coach

The following is a simplified version of the rules for playing electric football for the person who wishes to play the game in a solitaire format. These are intended as a guide only. It is assumed the person using these rules is familiar with the game of football and the rules used to play it.

DEFINITIONS

The following are definitions and descriptions of the game boards, teams and equipment used in playing electric football.

Playing Field: The game board on which the game is played. A miniature scaled version of a football field with all yard line, side line, goal line and end line markings common to a football field. Playing fields should also include goal posts and 10 yard chains scaled to match the markings of the field and a yard line marker to indicate the line of scrimmage.

Players: Players are the combination of a miniature football figure and a base.

Teams: Teams are the combination of 11 or more players to form a roster of players. Rosters may be of 11 players only playing both offense and defense or the roster may include substitutes with as many players as needed to field offensive, defensive and special team squads.

Ball: The ball used in electric football is usually made of felt or foam rubber in an oval shape with a slit in one end. This ball is typically used for kicking, passing and may or may not be placed in the arms or on the base of a player to indicate that player as the ball carrier.

TTQB: The figure used for passing and kicking the ball. TTQB stands for "Triple Threat Quarterback". By placing the ball on the throwing arm of a TTQB, a forward pass, lateral or pitch out may be thrown. By placing the ball on the tee of the TTQB, the ball may be kicked or punted.

The following are definitions and descriptions of the actions that may take place during the playing of electric football.

Tackle: A ball carrier is tackled any time the base of the ball carrier comes into contact with the base of an opposing player.

Fumble: A fumble occurs when the ball carrier loses possession of the ball or when a lateral or pitchout to another player is incomplete.

Completed Pass: A pass is complete when a thrown ball hits the receiver or its base on the fly.

Incomplete Pass: A pass is incomplete when a thrown ball fails to hit the receiver or its base on the fly and instead hits the ground first or is thrown out of bounds.

Intercepted pass: A pass is intercepted when a thrown ball by the offense is complete to a player of the defense.

Kicking and Punting: Kicking the ball is the act of placing the ball on the tee of the TTQB to advance the ball downfield by means of a kickoff, onside kick, safety kick, or field goal attempt. Punting is kicking the ball downfield after the offense has failed to gain a first down during a series of downs.

The following are definitions and descriptions of other terms used to describe the results of a play or actions that may take place during the playing of electric football.

Out of Bounds: Anytime a player's base crosses the sideline of the playing field. Anytime a thrown or kicked ball crosses the sideline or end line of the playing field.

Forward Progress: A ball carrier's forward progress is stopped when he is tackled, runs out of bounds, or reverses direction and begins to run towards his own goal line.

Possession: A team is in possession of the ball when they are on offense. The defense gains possession of the ball and becomes the offense, when they receive a kickoff or punt, intercepts a pass or recovers a fumble in the field of play. Possession of the ball is turned over to the defense when the offense fails to gain a first down in 4 plays or fails to kick a successful field goal. Possession of a fumble or an onside kick attempt occurs when the front portion of a player's base comes into contact with the ball for a full second of time.

Engaged and Unengaged Players: A player is engaged with another player when their bases are touching. Engaged players are ineligible to receive a pass, to be angled, adjusted or pivoted. Unengaged players are eligible to receive a pass, to be angled, adjusted or pivoted.

Angled, Adjusted or Pivoted: An unengaged player may be angled, adjusted or pivoted. Angling a player is the act of turning a player to run at another angle to the line of scrimmage than his original position. Adjusting a player is the act of turning his base or adjusting the prongs of his base to cause the player to move in a direction other than his original direction. Pivoting a player is turning a player on an imaginary central axis to run in another direction from his original direction.

SCORING

The following are the scoring values and description of how a score is made in playing the game of electric football.

Touchdown: A touchdown is scored by the offense when the ball carrier's base crosses the goal line or a pass is completed to an eligible receiver whose base is on or across the goal line or completely inside the end zone of the opposing team. A touchdown is scored when the receivers of a kickoff or punt return the ball into the opponent's end zone. A touchdown is scored by the defense if a fumbled ball is recovered in the opposing team's end zone or an intercepted pass or recovered fumble is advanced into the opposing team's end zone.

Scoring Value = 6 points.

Field Goal: A field goal is scored by the offense when a kicked ball travels over the cross bar and through the uprights of the goal post. A field goal is not scored if the kick is the result of a kickoff or punt.

Scoring Value = 3 points

Safety: A safety is scored by the defense when the ball carrier is tackled, runs out of bounds or its forward progress is stopped inside his own end zone. It is a safety if a fumble is recovered by a player of the offense in his end zone and he is not able to advance the ball back into the field of play. It is a safety if a fumbled ball last possessed by the offense goes out of bounds in the end zone or beyond the end line of the end zone.

Scoring Value = 2 points

Conversion Try by Field Goal: When a field goal is used to score a conversion try. A conversion try by field goal is attempted from the 15 yard line.

Scoring Value = 1 point

Conversion Try by Run or Pass: When a running play or passing play from scrimmage is used to score a conversion try. A conversion try by run or pass is attempted from the 2 yard line.

Scoring Value = 2 points.

Touchback: A touchback occurs when the receivers of a kickoff or punt field the ball inside their own end zone and chooses not to return the ball into the field of play. A touchback also occurs when the defense intercepts a pass or recovers a fumble in their own end zone and chooses not to return the ball into the field of play. A touchback occurs when a kickoff or punt goes out of bounds or past the end line of the receiver's end zone.

A touchback has no scoring value.

GAME PLAY PROCEDURES

Pre-Game Procedures and the Coin Toss.

Prior to the start of a game, teams should be designated as “Home” and “Visitors”. A coin toss may be performed to decide which team will kick off and which team will receive the kickoff. The Visitors may call the toss or to simplify the coin toss, if the result is “heads” the Visitors will receive the kickoff or if it is “Tails” the Home Team will receive the kickoff or to simplify it even more, eliminate the coin toss and just have the Visitors automatically receive the kickoff and the Home Team kick off to begin the game.

Whichever method is chosen, the team that kicked off to begin the game will receive the kickoff to begin the second half.

Choose which goal teams will defend. For simplification, the “Home” team will defend the west goal (goal to the left) and “Visitors” will defend the east goal (goal to the right).

Game Timing

The length of games are 60 minutes divided into 4 periods (quarters) of 15 minutes each. The 1st and 2nd quarters are the first half, the 3rd and 4th quarters are the second half. There are several methods of timing a game and the most simple is to use a “play count method”. To put it simply, designate a certain number of plays to make up a quarter of game time. This can be as many as 20 plays per quarter or as few as 10 plays per quarter. The simplest is to use 15 plays per quarter (one play = 1 minute).

Each team is allowed 3 timeouts per half. Simply add one more play to the play count for each timeout called.

Overtime

If the score of a game is tied after 4 periods of play, an overtime period may be played. The length of an overtime period should be the same as one period of regular play with the following modifications:

- If the first team to have possession (decided by a coin toss) scores a touchdown the game is over.
- If the first team to have possession scores a field goal, the opposing team has the opportunity to score a field goal to tie the game or win the game by scoring a touchdown.
- If during the first team’s possession, the defense scores a safety, or a touchdown as the result of a fumble return or interception return, the game is over.
- If the first team to have possession does not score, the second team may win the game by scoring a field goal or a touchdown.
- If after both teams have had one possession and the score is still tied, the game continues until one team scores to win the game.
- If the score remains tied after one period of overtime play, the game ends in a tie unless it is a playoff game or elimination tournament game, in which case the game continues until there is a winner determined.

Each team is allowed 2 time outs for the first overtime period and 3 time outs per half of overtime play.

Kickoffs, Onside Kicks and Safety Kicks

Kickoffs and Onside Kicks are used to start the game, start the second half, and after a touchdown or field goal has been scored. A Safety Kick is used to put the ball back into play after a safety has been scored by the defense.

Kickoffs

To perform a kickoff, line up the kicking team on their 35 yard line and the receiving team beginning at the 50 yard line. Place a kick returner anywhere on the receiving team’s goal line and return the kick. The kick return is ended when the kick returner scores, is tackled, runs out of bounds or has his forward progress stopped or reversed.

Onside Kicks

To perform an onside kick, teams are lined up the same as for a kickoff except the ball is placed anywhere along the kicking team’s 45 yard line. The first player of either team to gain possession of the ball (ball makes contact with a player’s base) recovers the kickoff. If it is a player of the receiving team, the kick may be returned, if it is a player of the kicking team, the kick may not be advanced and the ball is downed at the point of contact.

Safety Kick

To perform a safety kick, line up the kicking team on their own 20 yard line and the receiving team beginning at the kicking team's 35 yard line. Place a kick returner anywhere along the receiving team's 20 yard line and return the kick. The kick return is ended when the kick returner scores, is tackled, runs out of bounds or has his forward progress stopped or reversed.

Plays from Scrimmage

Plays from scrimmage are plays that begin from a scrimmage line in the field of play. Teams are set up in offensive and defensive formations on either side of this scrimmage line. Plays from scrimmage may be running plays, passing plays or scrimmage kicks.

Line of Scrimmage

The line of scrimmage is determined by the spot of the ball at which the previous play ended. The spot of the ball is the point on the playing field directly under the forward most part of the ball carrier's base when he was tackled, or his forward progress was stopped or reversed. If the ball carrier ran out of bounds to end the previous play, the spot of the ball is the point on the sideline where his base first crossed the sideline of the playing field. If the play ended between the hash marks the spot of the ball is in the center of the playing field. If the play ended between the hash marks and the sideline, the spot of the ball is the nearest hash mark on the right or left side of the playing field. If the play ended out of bounds, the spot of the ball is the nearest hash mark on the right or left side of the field. If a pass is incomplete, the line of scrimmage remains the same as it was to begin the play.

Offensive and Defensive Formations

The offense and defense are set up in offensive and defensive formations using the following guidelines:

Offensive Formations

- There must be at least 7 players on the line of scrimmage, 5 of which are ineligible receiver interior offensive linemen and 2 of which are eligible receivers lined up one on each side of the line of scrimmage.
- There may be no more than 4 eligible receiver players lined up behind the line of scrimmage and at least one yard behind the line of scrimmage.
- One player on the line of scrimmage is designated as the center and one player behind the line of scrimmage must be in a path directly behind the center to receive the snap of the ball to begin a play.

Defensive Formations

- The defense may be lined up anywhere on the opposite side of the line of scrimmage in any formation.

Eligible and ineligible receivers

- All players of the defense are eligible receivers and offensive players are designated as eligible and ineligible receivers by their positions and numbers on their jerseys using the following numbering system:

Eligible Receivers

- a) 1 – 19 quarterbacks, punters and place kickers
- b) 20 – 49 running backs and defensive backs
- c) 10 – 19 and 80 – 89 wide receivers
- d) 40 – 49 and 80 – 89 tight ends and H-backs
- e) 50 – 79 and 90 – 99 defensive linemen
- f) 40 – 59 and 90 – 99 linebacker

Ineligible receivers

- g) 50 – 79 centers
- h) 60 – 79 offensive guards and tackles

Running Plays

Running plays are plays that begin with a ball carrier (runner) carrying the ball towards his opponent's goal line in an attempt to score or gain yardage. To execute a running play, the ball is placed in the arms or on the base of the ball carrier and turning the ball on until the ball carrier scores, is tackled, runs out of bounds, or has his forward progress stopped or reversed. The ball carrier must be a backfield player lined up between the tackles and behind the line of scrimmage when the play begins.

Passing Plays

Passing plays are plays that involve passing the ball forward downfield to an eligible receiver. To execute a passing play, the play begins as a running play with a ball carrier, usually the quarterback, rolling out or dropping back until an open eligible receiver is spotted. The board is then stopped and the ball carrier is replaced with the TTQB. The ball is then thrown towards the open receiver. The pass is complete if it hits the receiver or his base on the fly. The pass is incomplete if it hits the ground first before hitting the receiver or is thrown out of bounds. The pass is intercepted by the defense if it first hits a player of the defense.

A passing play may begin with the TTQB already on the field in place of the quarterback or other player who has been designated as the player to receive the snap. The board is simply run until an open eligible receiver is spotted and then stopped to perform the pass.

After a pass has been completed or intercepted, the play then continues as a running play with the ball carrier advancing until he scores, is tackled, runs out of bounds or has his forward progress stopped or reversed.

Scrimmage kicks

A scrimmage kick is a play that involves a kick from scrimmage, either a punt or field goal attempt.

Punt – A punt is performed, usually on fourth down, when the offense decides it cannot make a first down to continue a series of downs. A punt is executed by replacing a player of the offense with the TTQB to perform the punt and lining the offense up in a punting formation. The board is turned on for 2 seconds to allow the defense to rush the punter in an attempt to block the punt. The punt is blocked if a player of the defense comes into base – to – base contact with the TTQB / Punter. If the punt is blocked, possession of the ball goes over to the defense at the point of contact. If the punt is not blocked, the ball is kicked downfield. If the punt lands out of bounds, the ball is dead and the defense takes over possession of the ball at the spot where the ball went out of bounds. If the punt goes out of the end zone or out of bounds in the end zone, it is a touchback and the ball is placed at the receiving team's 20 yard line for the next play. If the punt lands in the field of play it is returnable.

Punt Return – If a punt is returnable the receiving team places a punt returner at the spot of the ball where it landed in the field of play and the play continues with the punt returner as the ball carrier. The board is turned on and run until the ball carrier scores, is tackled, goes out of bounds or has his forward progress stopped or reversed.

Fair Catch – The receiving team may choose to field the punt as a “fair catch” and not return it. If this option is chosen, the ball is dead and spotted to begin the next play where the punt landed.

** **Note** * - To simplify the game and conserve time, the punting process may be eliminated and the ball turned over to the defense 45 yards downfield. This also eliminates the punt return. However, the line of scrimmage must be the defensive 46 yard line or more to choose this option. If the line of scrimmage is the defensive 45 yard line or less, the offense must “go for it” on fourth down or choose to attempt a field goal.*

Field Goal Attempt – A field goal may be attempted by the offense anytime the line of scrimmage is the defensive 48 yard line. (65 yard field goal attempt). The offense is lined up in a field goal kicking formation with the TTQB / Kicker replacing a player of the offensive team. The TTQB / Kicker is set 7 yards from the line of scrimmage with another player of the offense set beside it as the “holder”. The kicker and the holder should be on stationary bases. To execute the field goal attempt, the board is turned on and run for 2 seconds to allow the defense the opportunity to block the kick. The kick is blocked if a player of the defense makes base – to – base contact with the kicker or holder or if the forward surge of the defense pushes a player of the offense back into base – to – base contact with the holder or kicker. If the kick is blocked, possession of the ball goes over to the defense at the point of contact. If the kick is not blocked, the kick is performed using the TTQB / Kicker. The kick is good and the field goal scored if the ball goes through the uprights and over the crossbar of the goal posts. The kick is no good and the field goal attempt unsuccessful if the ball does not go through the uprights and over the cross bar of the goal post. A missed field goal results in possession of the ball going over to the defense at the spot of the kick.

**** Note *** - To simplify the game and conserve time, lining up the offensive and defensive teams for the field goal attempt and opportunity to block the kick may be eliminated. If this option is chosen, simply set the TTQB / Kicker up 7 yards from the line of scrimmage and attempt the field goal.*

Lateral, Pitchout and Fumble.

A lateral and a pitchout is a running play that involves a backwards pass (a pass towards the offensive goal line) and may be performed anytime during the execution of a running play. A fumble occurs anytime a ball carrier loses possession of the ball or a backwards pass is incomplete.

Lateral – A lateral is a pass thrown by the ball carrier to another player who is parallel to or behind the position of the ball carrier and within a base length's distance of the ball carrier's base. To execute a lateral, simply give the ball to the player the lateral is intended for and continue the play with that player as the ball carrier. There may not be a player of either team in between the passer of the lateral and the intended receiver of the lateral. If there is a player of either team between the passer and the intended receiver, the lateral is not allowed and the passer must continue the play as the ball carrier.

Pitchout – A pitchout is a pass thrown by the ball carrier to another player who is parallel to or behind the position of the ball carrier and more than a base length's distance of the ball carrier's base. To execute a pitchout replace the ball carrier with the TTQB and throw the pass to the intended receiver. It is a completed pitchout if the ball hits the receiver or its base on the fly or after hitting the ground. If a pitchout is incomplete, it is a fumble.

Fumble – A fumble occurs when a ball carrier loses possession of the ball or a backwards pass is incomplete. A fumble is eligible to be recovered by a player of either team if the ball lands and remains in the field of play. A fumble that goes out of bounds is not eligible to be recovered and possession is retained by the team that last had possession of the ball before it went out of bounds. A player gains possession of the ball when the ball comes into contact and remains in contact with the front portion of the player's base for a count of one second. If after three attempts to recover a fumble is unsuccessful, the ball is dead and possession retained by the team that last had possession of the ball at the spot on the field where the ball is declared dead.

Penalties

Since this is solitaire play and a coach may make corrections to illegal formations and offside occurrences during the course of setting up a play, the following are the only penalties that may occur during the course of game play:

- **"Illegal receiver of a forward pass"** - This occurs when a forward pass first hits an unengaged ineligible offensive lineman on the fly. If the ineligible offensive lineman is engaged with another player it is just an incomplete pass and no penalty occurs.
PENALTY – Loss of five yards from the previous spot.
- **"Illegal touching of a kicked ball"** - This occurs when a player of the kicking team touches an onside kick before it has traveled 10 yards. Since an onside kick is placed on the 10 yard restraining line of the receiving team, the ball must bounce back across to the kicking team's side of this restraining line during the running of the game board and be touched by a player of the kicking team before it is touched by a player of the receiving team. If the ball is touched first by a player of the receiving team and knocked back across to the kicking team's side of the restraining line without the receiving team gaining possession of the onside kick, it is not a penalty.
PENALTY - Loss of 5 yards from the previous spot and re-kick or the receiving team may take possession of the ball at the spot of the illegal touching.
- **"Illegal kick out of bounds"** – This occurs if during the course of an onside kick attempt, the ball bounces out of bounds without first being touched by a player of either team. If either team has legally touched the ball without gaining possession of the ball before it goes out of bounds it is not a penalty and possession of the ball goes to the team that last touched the ball before it went out of bounds.
PENALTY – Loss of 5 yards from the previous spot and re-kick or the receiving team may take possession of the ball at the out of bounds spot.

Since movement of the players is beyond the control of the coach of the game, there can be no penalties of player misconduct such as "unsportsman like conduct", "pass interference", "running into the passer or kicker" or any other such acts that occur in real football.