



## CCFA Youth Tackle Football Practice Guidelines

(As recommended by USA Football)

### Preseason Heat Acclimation Prepare Your Players to Exercise in the Heat

About 90 percent of heat stroke cases occur during the first few days of practice, when athletes are unprepared to cope with environmental conditions and physiological demands.



### Preseason heat acclimatization period:

Defined as the first 2 weeks of practice. For CCFA, first 6 practices.

- **During practice days 1 and 2** of the heat-acclimatization period, no more than 90 minutes of practice are allowed, a helmet should be the only protective equipment permitted. No form of player-to-player contact should occur during the first two practices.
- **During practice days 3 and 4**, two hours of total practice time is allowed. Only helmets and shoulder pads should be worn. No full-contact drills should be allowed. USA Football defines full-contact as drills being run at “Thud” and “Live” tempo. Coaches are encouraged to limit player-to-player contact up to “Control” using USA Football’s Levels of Contact.
- **On practice days 5 and 6**, two hours of practice time is allowed which would occur within the second week of a youth organization’s preseason schedule according to these guidelines. Teams have the option to wear full pads and full contact drills can begin and should be utilized within the recommended time allocation discussed below.

### Preseason Heat Acclimatization Recommendations 1 practice per day. 4 practices per week maximum.

Practices interrupted by inclement weather or heat restrictions should only resume once conditions are safe. Modify work-to-rest ratio in extreme environmental conditions or reschedule to cooler parts of the day.

PRACTICE DAYS 1&2	PRACTICE DAYS 3&4	PRACTICE DAYS 5&6
<b>90 min</b>  <b>helmet</b>	<b>2 hr</b>  <b>helmets &amp; shoulder pads</b>	<b>2 hr</b> <b>LIMIT</b>
<b>LIMIT ONLY</b>	<b>LIMIT ONLY</b>	
<b>NO FULL CONTACT DRILLS</b>	<b>NO FULL CONTACT DRILLS</b>	<b>Full</b> <b>PAD</b> (optional) <b>CONTACT DRILLS</b> (optional) <b>30 min PER PRACTICE</b>



## Preseason heat acclimatization period: Continued

- If a practice is interrupted by inclement weather or heat restrictions on any of the practice days, the practice should resume once conditions are deemed safe.
- On days when environmental conditions (heat index or WBGT) are extreme, modifications should be made to the work-to-rest ratio (to allow for cool-down periods and rehydration).



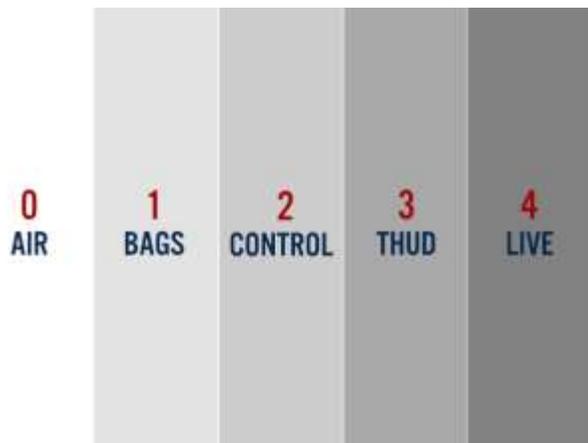
### **Intensity and Hydration**

**Keep players hydrated. Schedule rest periods.**

Spend the first two weeks of practice gradually increasing the length and intensity of practice as well as the amount of equipment worn. Athletes should have access to fluids at all times and have periods of rest throughout a practice.

## Definition of “Full Contact”:

- Full-contact drills should be limited during the preseason and regular season as the number of exposures may increase the chance for injury to youth players.
- For purposes of these guidelines, full-contact consists of both “Thud” and “Live Action” using USA Football’s definitions of Levels of Contact.



**0 AIR**      **1 BAGS**      **2 CONTROL**      **3 THUD**      **4 LIVE**

**Reduce the Risk of Injury – Progressive Contact**

Introduce contact in a progressive manner before advancing to full-contact drills.  
**Air / Bags / Control / Thud / Live Action**

**Levels of Contact**

USA Football’s Levels of Contact define five intensity levels used to introduce players to practice drills that position them to master the fundamentals quicker and increase skill development.

CONTACT	INTENSITY	DESCRIPTION
Air	0	Players run a drill unopposed without contact.
Bags	1	Drill is run against a bag or another soft-contact surface.
Control	2	Drill is run at assigned speed until the moment of contact; one player is pre-determined the 'winner' by the coach. Contact remains above the waist and players stay on their feet.
Thud	3	Drill is run at assigned speed to competitive speed through the moment of contact; no pre-determined "winner." Contact remains above the waist, players stay on their feet and a quick whistle ends the drill.
Live Action	4	Drill is run in game-like conditions and is the only time that players are taken to the ground.



## Practice and “Full Contact” drill limits:

- Preseason - Following the preseason acclimatization period, CCFA youth teams will not conduct more than four practices per week. **Coaches are to limit the amount of full-contact to no more than 30 minutes per day and no more than 120 minutes per week.** No two-a-day practices will be allowed at any point throughout the preseason.
- Regular Season - Once the regular season begins and games commence 3 practices per week max to account for the weekly game. **Coaches are to limit the amount of full-contact to no more than 30 minutes per day and no more than 90 minutes per week.**

### Preseason Practice Limits

No more than 1 per day. No more than 4 per week.

Preseason practices should be limited to no more than 1 practice per day and no more than 4 practices per week.

### FULL-CONTACT DRILLS

**LIMITED**

To reduce exposures to impacts

**30 min**

PER PRACTICE

**120 min**

PER WEEK

### Regular Season Recap

**3**

**PRACTICES PER WEEK**

Reduce exposures to full-contact impacts

Limit Thud and Live Action drills

**30**

**FULL CONTACT DRILLS LIMIT min per practice**

**MINUTES PER WEEK**

**90 min**

### Use A Practice Planner

Manage teams and practice plans

#### Schedule practices and activities.

Keep track of full contact limits. Share practice plans with others.

#### Strategize.

Plan when to teach or compete and when to adjust contact to promote a better experience for players.

#### Assign a level of contact to every drill.

Proper usage of the Levels of Contact system helps players improve their contact skills at a high level while instilling confidence. Employing the Levels of Contact system also helps reduce player fatigue, which can advance player safety.



## CCFA Weather Guidelines:

- In the event you hear thunder, you must stop the (game/practice) for a minimum of 30 minutes. If it thunders anytime during that stoppage, the clock resets and game/practice cannot resume until 30 minutes of no activity (no thunder/lightning) has passed.
- Weather updates: Always check the website for updates, but do not count on only the website. CCFA tries hard to have any cancellations updated by 3 PM. If not you should report to your game or practice field the coaches and officials will have the final say if you play. Remember football plays in rain, sleet and snow **only thunder and lightning will stop games/practice. CCFA, Coaches and Officials will error in favor of all the players safety**