

Bulldog Nation!

You may have questions about teams, coaches, equipment, among other things. Here is a rundown of our playing time policy and answers to some frequently asked questions to help you prepare for the season.

Playing Time Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide an understanding of the playing time guidelines for MAYAA Football.

Key Points:

- 1) First and foremost, the safety of the players at all times is the highest responsibility of our coaches and the number-one factor in their decisions. This includes who plays, where they play, and when. Player safety considerations include size, skill level, and the ability to both physically perform and mentally comprehend given responsibilities. Also considered is the players ability to protect themselves from getting hurt. No player will be put into a position that a coach doesn't feel they will be able to **safely** perform in.
- 2) Our program operates within the Mountain Valley Youth Football League (MVYFL). The MVYFL does **not** have a league-wide policy on playing time at **any** age level. Each program has the freedom to determine those standards within themselves, should they choose to do so. That being said, MAYAA has instituted a playing guideline to provide a great experience alongside football development.

Level Specific Guidelines

Flag and Flag Clinic- Flag level players get the initial introduction to a game of "organized" football. This is typically our 4, 5, and 6-year-old players. Games are run as "organized scrimmages" where coaches are permitted on the field to assist in instruction and teaching. At this age, coaches will look to play players as equally as possible considering their skills, knowledge, and abilities. This level has an emphasis on the fundamentals to safely play the sport, introduction to the rules and flow of the game, as well as competing in a fun and competitive atmosphere.

Mini-Pony (D1 and D2 levels)- Mini-Pony level players are getting their first introduction to tackle football. This is typically our 7 and 8 year-old players. Practice time is most essential for this level due to the introduction of safe and physical blocking and tackling. Similar to the flag level, Mini-Pony scrimmages and games consist of coaches being permitted on the field during play to assist in instruction and teaching.

At the **Mini Pony D2** level, coaches will look to play players as equally as possible, considering their skills, knowledge, abilities, attendance, and behavior permitted by the flow of the game/scrimmage. This age level has an emphasis for the introduction to contact football with pads.

The **Mini-Pony D1** level provides a slight move from the scrimmage-style game to an actual game, given that there is a game clock on a full-field, and the score is kept. Players will continue to be instructed with the most up to date and safest football techniques. Players at this level are generally our 8 year old players. With the move to a traditional game experience, the playing time minimum target at the Mini Pony D1 level is 8 plays per game.

Pony D2- The Pony D2 level is a player's first introduction to a full, competitive football game with their coaches on the sidelines and a full staff of referees. This level also consists of playoffs at the end of the season for qualifying teams, and an eventual championship. This is typically our 9-year old players, and occasionally some 10-year old players that may be playing the sport for the first time. We utilize this level as an opportunity to mix together competitiveness with development on gameday. This is the age where coaches begin to make playing time decisions based on competing in the games and attempting to win. All players on the team will see the field with an **8 play minimum target**. **Special Teams Units (kickoffs, kick returns) are counted towards playing time**

Pony D1- This level of football is generally played by 10 year olds that are able to safely play the game of football with an increased understanding of the game in a competitive atmosphere. At this level players will continue to learn the most up to date and safe techniques to develop their football skills while at the same time, work towards a postseason and Super Bowl. All players on the team will see the field with a **4 play minimum target**. **Special Teams Units (kickoffs, kick returns) are counted towards playing time**

JVD2, JVD1, and Varsity- These age groups typically range from our 6^h graders all the way up through our 8th graders. By the time players reach these age groups they typically have slowly progressed through the game with and without pads, and with and without their coaches on the field with them. These games go faster, the skill levels are more developed, the hits are harder, and there is more of an emphasis on winning the game. Typically, players and coaches spend extra time specifically preparing a game plan. We trust our coaches to exercise the tradition of Bulldogs Football and developing players. While conditions of the game may dictate the use of substitutes, **playing time is not** guaranteed.

Speaking to the Coach in season - If you have a concern about playing time that falls **outside** of this policy, please be sure to wait **24-hours** after the game before contacting your child's coach.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Who is my coach?

Your coach will reach out closer to the season and relay important team-specific details. Depending on the level, there may be a D1 and D2 team. The teams are set up to put players in the best possible position to be successful.

What do I need to buy?

Flag/Flag Clinic: The flag levels suggest players wear cleats. You may also want to purchase your own mouthpiece, to get a more personalized fit.

Tackle: You need to provide football cleats, hip pads, a tailbone pad, and thigh pads. Commonly the pads are purchased in a pad integrated girdle. Click [HERE](#) to see an example. Prices generally range from \$25 and up, and can be purchased at most sporting goods stores.

What is optional to purchase?

You may want to purchase your own mouthpiece, to get a more personalized fit.

What do I bring to camp and practices?

Flag/Flag Clinic: Water, weather appropriate athletic gear, a mouth piece (MAYAA can provide), and cleats are all that is needed for practices.

Tackle: Water, weather appropriate athletic gear and cleats are all that is needed for camp. During regular practices, please wear full pads (tackle levels) unless otherwise notified.

Flag Clinic and Flag Coaches Needed!!!

- If you are interested in coaching Flag Clinic or Flag football, please contact us at mountairyfootball@gmail.com
- All flag level coaches will be provided with trainings and support from the Bulldog program (including up to date football techniques, practice plans, plays, and anything else you need to be a coach).

Finally, we are actively looking to grow our Bulldog family. **Please reach out to family and friends and encourage them to sign up. If they have any questions and would like to know more about the program, please pass along our contact information.** We love talking about football and the Bulldog program!

We look forward to an amazing season with you and your family!

Go Bulldogs!

#WeAreBulldogNation

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