


michigan high school athletic association
FOOTBALL PRACTICE POLICIES

Adopted March 21, 2014. Effective August 2014

1. During the first week of practice of the season, only helmets are allowed the first two days, only shoulder pads may be added on the third and fourth days, and full pads may not be worn until the fifth day of team practice.
2. Before the first regular-season game, schools may not schedule more than one “collision” practice in a day.
 - A “collision” practice is one in which there is **live, game-speed, player-vs.-player** contact in pads (not walk-throughs) involving any number of players. This includes practices with scrimmages, drills and simulations where action is live, game-speed, player-vs.-player.
 - If any part of a drill or scrimmage involves live game-speed player-vs.-player contact in pads, it is a collision practice even if players do not execute full tackles at a competitive pace that takes players to the ground.
 - During any additional practice sessions that day, players may wear helmets and other pads (neither is mandatory). Blocking and tackling technique may be taught and practiced. However, full-speed contact is limited to players vs. pads, shields, sleds or dummies.
3. After the first regular-season game, teams may conduct no more than two collision practice days in any week, Monday through Sunday. During other days of practice, players may wear helmets and other protective pads (neither is mandatory). Blocking and tackling technique may be taught and practiced. However, full-speed contact is limited to players vs. pads, shields, sleds or dummies.
4. No single practice may exceed three hours, and the total practice time for days with multiple practice sessions may not exceed five hours.
 - Warm-up, stretching, speed and agility drills and cool down are all considered part of practice. Neither strength/weight training activities nor video/classroom sessions are considered practice for the purposes of the three- or five-hour limits.



FOOTBALL PRACTICE Q & As

1. **Q Would the proposals apply at both the high school and junior high/middle school levels?**

A Yes.

2. **Q Is the purpose of the proposals to improve student-athlete acclimatization or reduce head trauma?**

A Both.

3. **Q What is the Task Force position on “girdle pads” during the first week of practice?**

A Girdle pads may be worn under or in place of shorts during the first four days of acclimatization practice that precede the first day in full pads.

4. **Q Does the three-hour limit on single practices and the five-hour limit for multiple practices on the same day apply only to football?**

A Yes. The Task Force recommends that the limits be added as soon as possible to the MHSAA “Model Policy for Managing Heat & Humidity” and apply to all sports.

5. **Q How much time is required between sessions on days with multiple practices?**

A Because practice venues differ greatly and some may raise questions regarding supervision and the possibility of injury risks as great off the field as on, the Task Force declined to set a maximum and minimum length of rest periods. However, one hour between practices when there is no physical activity is the minimum recommendation. Classroom sessions would be allowed during the period of physical rest.

To be clear, break time is **not** included in the five-hour limit.

6. **Q Can a team have different collision days for different players?**

A If varsity and subvarsity squads practice separately, their collision days may be different days. However, if the squads practice together, then their collision days must be the same.