

# NFL Football FAQ

by NESHQ\_dot\_com

Updated to v1.00 on Apr 16, 2007

**This walkthrough was originally written for NFL Football on the NES, but the walkthrough is still applicable to the SNES version of the game.**

NFL Football Guide 1.00 By Andrew M. Evans aka AndrewM (AndrewM@NESHQ.com)

Version 1.00 Released April 16, 2007

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= Section 01 - Revision History =  
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04/16/2003 v1.00 Original FAQ

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= Section 02 - Disclaimer and Requisite Legal Junk =  
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=====  
= Section 03 - Introduction =  
=====

And a good day to you sir! Welcome to my NFL Football FAQ. Just a little background before we get to this business at hand. In case you've been ignoring me up to this point (maybe not a bad decision on your part!) I'm Andy "AndrewM" Evans and I run NES HQ ([www.neshq.com](http://www.neshq.com)). I'm writing this FAQ both to place on NES HQ and as part of the ongoing NES FAQ Completion Project. If you've got some spare time on your hands you should check it out and possibly even write an FAQ for one of the many games that are FAQ-less.

But anyway, you probably aren't reading this FAQ to hear about me (unless you're a creepy Internet stalker, and if you are I'd have to say that I think there has to be a better way of getting information on them than reading FAQs they've written). I came across this game on the aforementioned NES FAQ Completion Project and decided that I'd check it out. As a huge football fan I figured, before even playing the game, that I'd write an FAQ for it. After all, how bad can a football game be? The answer to that question is actually quite simple: VERY BAD.

NES Football is one of the few NFL-licensed NES football games and so I expected something decent, or at least passable for the times. Boy was I disappointed. NFL Football is one of those games that just seems like the programmers missed the crucial aspects of the game. In my experience a sports game can be very enjoyable even if lacking in sophistication, realism, or both so long as the game is fun to play. NFL Football lacks sophistication as the players are unnamed, there's no season mode, no stats, etc. It lacks realism because the mechanics of aspects of the game are just off. Passing, which will be covered later in this FAQ, is a major problem.

The game had a couple innovative features, but the way in which they were programmed resulted in them not working nearly as well as they could have worked.

=====  
= Section 04 - Game Selection =  
=====

At the main screen you are greeted with several options:

- 1 Player Game - 1 human vs the computer opponent
- 2 Player Game - 1 human vs the computer opponent
- 1 Player With Handicap - 1 human vs the computer opponent
- 2 Player With Handicap - 1 human vs the computer opponent

The Handicap basically means that you get one team upgrade for free. This will be explained in more detail in Section 6.

At the Game Select screen you are again greeted with several options:

- AFC Game - Both teams must be AFC teams
- NFC Game - Both teams must be NFC teams
- Interconference - One team must be from the NFC and one from the AFC
- Super Bowl - Seems to be the same as Interconference.

=====  
= Section 05 - Teams =  
=====

NFL Football is nice because as an officially licensed NFL product you actually

get to select from real NFL teams. So even if the gameplay is crap and the game itself isn't much fun you're at least motivated to play well since it's your team out there. Teams in NFL Football are as follows:

NFC Teams:

- 49ers
- Bears
- Buccaneers
- Cardinals
- Cowboys
- Eagles
- Falcons
- Giants
- Lions
- Packers
- Rams
- Redskins
- Saints
- Vikings

AFC Teams:

- Bengals
- Bills
- Broncos
- Browns
- Chargers
- Chiefs
- Colts
- Dolphins
- Jets
- Oilers
- Patriots
- Raiders
- Seahawks
- Steelers

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= Section 06 - Team Ratings =

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One of the more innovative features of NFL Football is the ability to upgrade and, to some degree, customize your team. Unfortunately this reveals another problem with NFL Football, which is that all teams are given the same starting attributes. You have the option to choose one of six team packages. All of the packages end up equaling out, so choose your team package carefully. I recommend using this to play to your own strengths as much as possible - if you've mastered passing then choose a team with a good QB and WRs. Likewise, if you've totally shunned the passing game you'll want to select a team package with a strong RB. Team packages are as follows:

	Q	R	W	T	O	D	L	D	S	
Team Package	B	B	R	E	L	L	B	B	T	K
Package #1	A	B	A	B	C	C	C	C	C	B
Package #2	C	B	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
Package #3	B	A	C	C	B	A	C	B	C	B
Package #4	B	B	C	C	C	A	A	C	B	B

-----  
Package #5 | B | C | B | A | C | B | B | C | C | A |  
-----

Package #6 | A | C | C | B | C | C | B | B | A | C |

The choice for which package to use seems obvious, at least to me. Package A looks to be the best package since the big three (QB, RB, WR) all have either an A or B. This is the only package where the QB, RB, WR, and TE ratings all have either an A or a B rating and only one of two packages that doesn't have at least two Cs in the offense.

A couple other important notes on this... I have found the ratings to mostly affect speed, and the C rating of the offensive line in package 1 doesn't seem to have any real affect on their ability to block, so I highly recommend not basing any package selections or upgrade choices on the offensive line. Additionally I've found most defense on the game to very difficult, whether you're playing pass coverage or trying to sack the QB. As a result of this I strongly recommend pouring all points into the offense, specifically the QB, RB, and WR.

After selecting a team and selecting a package you will be given the option of upgrading your team. This is a double-edged sword, however, as upgrading your team increases your team's chances of fumbling or incurring a penalty. Using a non-upgraded team you won't fumble at all and can possibly incur two penalties. Each upgrade raises these limits by 3 penalties and 2 fumbles so that a team with one upgrade can incur a max of 5 penalties and 2 fumbles. A fully upgraded team (2 upgrades) can incur a max of 8 penalties and 4 fumbles.

So with that in mind is upgrading worth it? I would always say yes, as that extra speed boost on offense will pay back in spades.

With those technicalities out of the way upgrading is very simple. You may:  
Upgrade two C players to B players or  
Upgrade one B player to an A player.

Do note that upgrading from a B to an A player counts as two upgrades and does incur the two upgrade penalty.

=====  
= Section 07 - Basic Controls =  
=====

The controls for NFL Football are much harder than they should be, one of the reasons this game is so poor in my eyes. Oh, and the manual doesn't really explain what does what very well either. Good thing I'm here to help you out or you might not play this game and actually go do something productive.

Play Selection - Play selection is one of the trickier aspects of the game. In order to select a play you have to use the D pad + B and then use the D pad + A. This gives you a total possibility of 16 plays on offense and 16 on defense. On offense this is tricky enough (since the manual doesn't tell what button combinations do what), but on defense this is even tougher since you have to get your play in before the offense calls theirs. Note that not calling a play on defense (or not getting yours punched in on time) results in you going to a 3-4. Offensive and defensive formations and plays will be described in their respective sections.

Offense - Another horribly programmed aspect of this game is the offensive controls. After selecting a play press A to hike the ball. From here you can either run the ball with your QB or press B to bring up the passing options.

When you do press B the passing options come up and the game goes into slow motion while you select a target and pass. Each target shows a direction over his head. To pass press that direction on the D pad and the A button at the same time. To get out of the slow motion screen you can press B again and the game will return to normal speed.

Defense - Defensive controls are pretty simple - use A to dive and when defending a pass in the close-up screen use B to jump.

=====  
= Section 08 - Offensive Formations =  
=====

NFL football has five offensive formations, which actually aren't bad considering the time at which this game was created. Below are the five formations and a rough diagram of what they look like:

I:

```
      x x x x x x      x
x                x

          x
          x
```

T:

```
      x x x x x x x
          x      x

          x
          x
```

Shotgun:

```
x      x x x x x      x
                x

          x  x  x
```

2 TE:

```
      x x x x x x x
x                x      x

          x
```

Pro Set:

```
x      x x x x x x
          x      x

          x  x
```

=====  
= Section 09 - Offensive Plays =  
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I wanted to list the formations before the plays section. What follows below is a list of the offensive plays that can be run, the formation that they're run in, and the key combination used to call that play. Note that the key combinations have U, D, L and R which are directional pad up, down, left and right. I tried to name the plays as best I could, but the combination of this game's age and poor programming make naming actual plays difficult. So something that is possibly supposed to be a screen ends up getting called 'short pass' instead.

Key Combination	Formation	Play
BU+AU	I Form.	Pitch Left
BU+AR	I Form.	Short Pass
BU+AD	I Form.	FB Lead Sweep Right
BU+AL	I Form.	Pitch Left
BR+AU	T Form.	Sweep Right
BR+AR	Shotgun	Deep Pass
BR+AD	Shotgun	Shotgun Run
BR+AL	Shotgun	Short Pass
BD+AU	2 TE	Short Pass
BD+AR	Pro Set	Short Pass
BD+AD	2 TE	Run Left
BD+AL	2 TE	Medium Pass
BL+AU	Pro Set	Medium Pass (?)
BL+AR	T Form.	Draw
BL+AD	Pro Set	Pitch Right
BL+AL	Pro Set	Run Left

=====  
= Section 10 - Offensive Strategy =  
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"Thou shall not punt!" In the absence of a real, true offensive strategy for this game you should always keep this creed in mind. Real men don't punt in football games, and I expect no less from you. Even if you wanted to I'm not quite sure how to punt anyway.

But seriously, there isn't a real great strategy to winning this game - it's not Madden 07 so you don't have to switch up plays to keep the defense honest or try to trick the defense by calling an audible. The best recommendation I can give in regards to offense is to find a couple plays that work well for you and stick to them. I'm not sure if it's just me or if it's the game (although I'm leaning towards the game), but I've found that the plays are more or less an even split between being effective and being complete junk. That being said, it's entirely possible that the plays I run well other people can't run so well. So yeah, the whole point of this convoluted paragraph is to say that you should find the few plays that work well for you and stick to them. Don't run a crappy play in order to keep the defense honest.

I'll start you out by giving a few plays that I've personally found to be the best. The [BU+AU] Pitch Left to be the best outside running play. The Deep Shotgun Pass is, in my opinion, the best passing play in the game. I've also found the Draw to be the one play that always gains yardage.

One other note in here about passing: passing is horribly implemented in this game. The game goes to slow motion when you go to pass, which isn't such a bad

idea. However, the game stays in slow motion DURING the pass, and as a result of the way this is programmed, the defense always closes more yardage than it should while the ball is in flight. Because of this you should always try to limit passes to receivers who are VERY open and always avoid throwing across the field.

=====  
= Section 11 - Defensive Formations =  
=====

As with the offensive formations, NFL Football surprised me by offering a variety of defensive formations. Even more surprising was that they offered a number of different plays within those formations. There are seven defensive formations, three of which are special teams formations. These formations are listed below:

3-4:

```
      x x   x   x x
     x     x   x
x                                     x
                                     x
```

3-4 Off-center:

```
      x x   x   x x
     x     x   x
x                                     x
                                     x
```

4-3:

```
      x x x   x x x
             x
x                                     x
     x                       x
```

4-2:

```
           x x   x x
x   x x   x     x
                                     x
           x                       x
```

Punt Block:

```
  x x x x x x x x x x
                                     x
```

Punt Return:

```
  x x x x x x x x
                                     x x
```

## Kick Block:

```

  x   x x x x x
  x       x x x

```

```

=====
= Section 12 - Defensive Plays                                     =
=====

```

Below are a list of the 16 defensive plays that can be called. Like the offensive plays, U, D, L, and R represent up, down, left, and right (respectively) on the D pad, so that BU+AR would represent pressing B and Up and then pressing A and Right.

Key Combination	Formation	Play
BU+AU	3-4	Attack Right
BU+AR	4-3	Blitz
BU+AD	3-4R	Standard*
BU+AL	4-2	LB Attack Left
BR+AU	3-4	Standard*
BR+AR	PB	Punt Block
BR+AD	PR	Punt Return
BR+AL	PR	Punt Return
BD+AU	KB	Kick Block
BD+AR	4-2	Blitz
BD+AD	3-4	Man Coverage
BD+AL	3-4R	Zone
BL+AU	4-3	Zone
BL+AR	3-4	Blitz
BL+AD	KB	Kick Block
BL+AL	4-2	Run Stop

\* I used the term standard for this. In these two plays two of the LBs attack the backfield and two drop back into coverage.

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=====
= Section 13 - Defensive Strategy                                 =
=====

```

I consider defensive strategy to be fairly easy to cover for NFL Football since it's such a simple game to begin with. With that in mind there are two main components of defensive strategy in NFL Football: formation/playcalling and player usage.

Formation/Playcalling should be pretty straightforward. You obviously want to call plays and formations that seem like a good defense to what the offense is going to run (duh). In 2nd and long you don't want to call the kick block. Likewise, on third and 1 you don't want to call the 4-2. My rule of thumb is to call a 4-2 on any down where the offense has over five yards to go. The reason being is that the extra defensive back helps with pass coverage. Other good plays to run for pass coverage are the 3-4 standard (6 people covering the pass), the 3-4R Zone, the 4-3 Zone and possible even the 3-4 Man Coverage. Run stoppage should be done by using anything but the 4-2 formation or anything with a zone.

Player usage should be dictated by who you're most effective with. I, for instance, have found it nearly impossible to sack the QB while playing defense,



so I favor dropping into short pass/run coverage with a linebacker. On the whole I recommend using a formation based on the criteria above and then using one of the blitzing linebackers for short coverage and run defense.

One last note on defense that may seem obvious but bears repeating regardless is that if you've upgraded your defense use the formation that puts the best players on the field. If you've got A linebackers and C DBs and DLs then use the 3-4 for pretty much everything. This may seem minor, but each of the formations has plays for run defense, pass defense, and standard defense. Be sure that you use the formation that maximizes your good players and it will give you that much more of a competitive edge. However, it should also be said that if you're really that busy looking for a competitive edge in NFL Football it's time for you to seek some new hobbies.

=====  
= Section 14 - Special Teams =  
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Special teams in NFL Football are really nothing special. HAH, what a great pun! Ok, maybe not so much... Really though, special teams are pretty basic.

Kicking Off - Your kicker will run to the ball, whereupon you have to decide to go for a long kick (A) or an onside kick (B). You can also use up or down on the directional pad to give your kick a little more accuracy.

Receiving Kicks - There's no great strategy for this like there are on other football games. Be sure you start running to the ball immediately since the game won't automatically catch the ball for you.

Extra Points - Kick the ball early to avoid getting your kick blocked. Seriously, it's much easier than it should be to get a kick blocked.

=====  
= Section 15 - High Scores =  
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I always try to include a high score section in my FAQs. If anyone has a high score e-mail it in to me and I'll update the FAQ accordingly.

=====  
= Section 16 - Closing Notes =  
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Wow, this FAQ topped out at over 500 lines. Scary. Well, apparently I have too much free time on my hands, despite my own claims to the contrary. This section is really for the usual stuff, so:

Please don't steal my work. I wasted more of my life on this FAQ than I'd have cared to, so if you'd like to post this FAQ anywhere or use any part of it feel free to do so, but shoot me an e-mail and leave the FAQ 100% INTACT AND ORIGINAL. Those are my only stipulations.

Last but not least - don't hesitate to visit NES HQ at <http://www.neshq.com>, which has a wealth of NES-related information on it.