Contact Information

Sara Holladay
Fantasy Football Librarian
www.fflibrarian.com
fflibrarian@gmail.com

Paul Waelchli
Research Quest
researchquest.blogspot.com
researchquest@gmail.com

Fantasy Football 101

A fantasy sport is any game in which participants build teams composed of real life players and compete against one another using a scoring system based on the actual statistical performance of players.

Fantasy football leagues typically consist of eight to fourteen participants who act as both the general manager/owner and head coach of their team.

Participants build their teams through a draft at the start of the season and can supplement their rosters using trades and free agency, just as in the actual NFL.

Each week individual football players receive a point total based on their actual performance from that week's NFL game and the scoring system that was established in the fantasy football league.

At the end of each week's games, all of the point totals for individual players on a fantasy footballer's team are summed.

Fantasy football teams compete head-to-head each week with a different member of the league vying for the higher point total, which would result in a win for the week.

At the end of the season, those teams with the best records and scoring output compete against each other in the fantasy playoffs, resulting in a final fantasy football champion.

Therefore the goal of fantasy football is to create a roster each week in pursuit of the greatest statistical production so that when you compete head-to-head against another participant, your team will win.

League Setup

Suggested online sites to host fantasy leagues:

1. NFL.com (www.nfl.com/fantasy)
2. CBS Sportsline (www.sportsline.com/fantasy)
3. Yahoo! Sports (football.fantasysports.yahoo.com)
4. Fanball (www.fanball.com/football/arena.cfm)
5. EA Sports Fantasy Football (fantasy.easports.com)
6. Fox Sports Fantasy Football (msn.foxsports.com/fantasy/football)

These websites provide detailed explanations for how to play fantasy football.

FFToolbox.com's How to Play Fantasy Football
www.fftoolbox.com/how_to_play.cfm

KFFL's How to Play Fantasy Football
www.kffl.com/article.php/12449/294

Fantasy Football Xtreme's How to Play
www.fantasyfootballxtreme.com/fantasy-football-resources/how-to-play-fantasy-football

Suggested Resources

Print sources

Due to the constantly changing nature of player information, injuries and statistics, fantasy football relies heavily on up-to-date information, which inherently leads to a far stronger presence in online sources than print sources. However, there are a small number of print sources that can be recommended, particularly during the summer as participants perform pre-draft research.

1. _Pro Football Prospectus_ – Compiled by Aaron Schatz and other experts at FootballOutsiders.com, the _PFP_ looks at football from an advanced statistics perspective to make recommendations on players and teams for the upcoming season. _PFP_ is written with a great sense of humor and knows its primary audience of fantasy footballers well.

2. _NFL Record & Fact Book_ - This book doesn't mess around – no intro text here on how or why to use the _Record & Fact Book_; it's just not needed. Turn the first page and you've immediately stepped into a tome of football stats that is rightly considered the essential pro football reference book. The _Record & Fact Book_ won't provide any great fantasy insights or suggestions on which players should be drafted; it won't prognosticate on the next running back to succumb to injury – it's just straight up numbers.

Online sources

The world of online sources for fantasy football information is growing daily and the list below includes just a small number of the high quality sites that are available.

1. Rotoworld.com (rotoworld.com/content/Home_NFL.aspx) – Rotoworld.com is one of the top-notch fantasy football content sites on the Web. They provide a bevy of player news, position assessments and player projections. Check out Pancake Blocks, their fantasy football blog written by Gregg Rosenthal, the Fantasy Sports Writers Association's Fantasy Football Writer of the Year for 2007, for additional daily fantasy content.

2. NFL.com (www.nfl.com/fantasy) – Not surprisingly, NFL.com is home to a lot of football content, including the fantasy football perspective. NFL.com can be used for basic information like weekly schedules, team match-ups and injury news as well as more in-depth fantasy analysis. NFL.com is one of a handful of hosts of fantasy leagues.

3. CBS Sportsline (www.sportsline.com/fantasy/football) – CBS Sportsline is one of the major players in the fantasy world. They offer fantasy content for many sports but also host online fantasy leagues, providing all of the behind-the-scenes set-up and stats feeds for games. From a fantasy content perspective, they excel at weekly start and sit suggestions.

4. Fantasy Football Xtreme (www.fantasyfootballxtreme.com) – A site that is dedicated to "providing users with 'too much' fantasy football information," librarians and patrons alike will find this site easy to navigate. FF Xtreme offers helpful tools like a breaking news feed, a trade calculator and draft simulator.

5. Fantasy Football Librarian (www.fflibrarian.com) – Created by one of the authors of this toolkit, the FF Librarian is a blog that's updated daily during the football season with links to start/sit suggestions, waiver wire advice, injury updates and individual defensive player (IDP) information. The blog includes links to articles from big-name sites like NFL.com or Sports Illustrated, as well as smaller sites and blogs that churn out equally valuable information.

Images via Flickr by neutralSurface, webq33k, Cavalier92, 5150fantast, Wranger1390, rmcarrier1, Frigginawesomeimon