HKU ENGG1101

Active Learning Team

ROBOARM Contest 2026/27



Domination of the Nine Squares

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

02/11/2026 Updated

The FAQs

#	Released Date	Summary
1	2026/09/24	- Initial Release
2	2026/11/02	- 2nd release
3	2026/11/05	- 3rd release

Content

Section 1 – Game Field

Section 2 – Game Procedure

Section 3 – Scoring

Section 4 – Attack

Section 5 – Retries

Section 6 – Violations & Disqualifications

Section 7 – Robots & Safety

Section 8 – Others

Section 1 Game Field

Item		Rule	Question	Reply
1	a	3.1.3–3.1.5	Where must the Robot be placed when the Game starts?	The Robot shall be placed entirely within its designated Robot Area during the Preparation Period and at the Start Signal. All parts of the Robot, including the end-effector, attachments, sensors, and cables, shall remain within the Robot Area and its vertical projection.
1	b	3.1.6	How may a team arrange its Blocks before the Game starts?	A team may place its allocated Blocks in any position or orientation within its Block Supply Area, provided every Block remains entirely within that area, no Block is placed on or held by the Robot, and the arrangement does not obstruct the opposing team or competition officials.

Section 2 Game Procedure

Item		Rule	Question	Reply
2	a	3.2.1–3.2.2	When may the Robot begin moving?	The Robot may be powered before the Start Signal, but it shall not perform any game-affecting motion until the Head Referee gives the official Start Signal and the three-minute Game Period begins.
2	b	3.3.1.1–3.3.1.3	May both Robots operate at the same time, and who may control the Robot?	Yes. Both Robots may operate simultaneously throughout the Game Period. Only the registered Operator may control the Robot, and the Operator shall remain within the designated Operator Station unless instructed otherwise by a referee.

Section 3 Scoring

Item		Rule	Question	Reply
3	a	3.5.2 and 3.6	How is a Great Victory achieved?	A Great Victory is achieved when a team has three legally placed and stable Blocks forming one connected horizontal, vertical, or diagonal line on the Tic-Tac-Toe Rack. The three Blocks may be of different sizes, shapes, or point values, but all must belong to the same team and occupy three consecutive positions. Once confirmed by the Head Referee, the Game ends immediately and that team wins, even if its numerical score is lower.
3	b	3.5.1.4–3.5.1.5	What happens to the score if a placed Block moves or falls from the Rack?	If the Block remains legally positioned on the Tic-Tac-Toe Rack, it continues to score. If it falls out or otherwise ceases to satisfy the requirements of a legally placed Block, its previously awarded points are removed, regardless of how it was displaced.
3	c	3.5	What happens if a team places more than one block inside one cell in TTTR? Are both blocks' score, only one with higher/lower block's score counted, or only the score of the block that was placed earlier counted toward the team? Or is it considered as a violation and no score is given?	Only the first placed block is counted. If the first block falls when the team places the second block successfully, then only the second block is counted.
3	d	3.5	What happens if both teams place a block inside the same cell at the same time?	The block that remains on the Tic-Tac-Toe Rack scores.
3	e	3.3.2.4	I would like to ask what is the proportion required for a block to be in the rack for placement to be regarded as successful?	According to Rule 3.5.1.4, a successful placement is met when stays on the corresponding position on the TTTR. For the lowest row, >= 50% of the block should be within the TTTR.

Section 4 Attack

Item		Rule	Question	Reply
4	a	3.3.3–3.3.4	When may a team perform an Attack Attempt, and when is the Attack Token consumed?	Each Successful Placement earns one Attack Token, up to three per Game. To attack, the Operator shall call “Attack” while the Robot is completely outside the Tic-Tac-Toe Zone and wait for referee authorization. The Token is consumed when the Attack Attempt begins, even if the attempt is unsuccessful.
4	b	3.3.4.7–3.3.4.12	What may the Robot do during one Attack Attempt?	One Attack Token permits one entry into the Tic-Tac-Toe Zone for one Attack Attempt against one eligible Opponent Block. The Robot shall leave the Zone completely before requesting another Attack. Entry for a legal Placement is separate and does not count as an Attack, provided the Robot does not intentionally contact an Opponent Block.
4	c	3.3.4, 3.3.2.3	What happens if a team's robot is en-route to place a block on a cell, which was empty when the move initiated but is possessed by opposing team's block when the arm arrives, and knock the opposing team's block? Is that counted as a successful placement, or is this a violation? Is attack token automatically used if the team had any in this case? If this is counted as a successful placement, will they receive an attack token?	It is a violation, attack tokens will only be consumed when a attack is declared by the team.

Section 5 Retries

Item		Rule	Question	Reply
5	a	3.4.2–3.4.5	Does the Game timer stop during a Robot Retry?	No. There is no limit on the number of Robot Retries, but the Game timer continues to run. The Operator shall call “Retry” and wait for referee approval before anyone enters the Game Field or touches the Robot.
5	b	3.4.6–3.4.9	What may a team do during an authorized Robot Retry?	Authorized team members may reposition or restart the Robot, reconnect its controller or communication wire, return a Block held by the Robot to the Block Supply Area, and rearrange Blocks in that area. They shall not move Blocks already on the Rack, recalibrate using the Rack, or interfere with the opponent. The Robot may resume only after the Operator calls “Start” and receives referee approval.

Section 6 Violations & Disqualifications

Item		Rule	Question	Reply
6	a	Section 4	What happens when a team receives a Violation?	A Violation results in a mandatory Robot Retry under Section 3.4. The Head Referee may impose additional penalties where the Rulebook allows, particularly when an action creates a significant advantage, presents a safety risk, or is repeated.
6	b	Section 4	At the beginning of section 4 it is stated that a team receiving violation will be subject to a mandatory Robot Retry under section 3.4. However, under 3.4.5, it is stated, "Game time shall continue during a team-requested retry," which leaves me question if a forced retry stops time. Additionally, as in general a team would not have a reason to attempt any of the actions in section 3.4.6 during a forced retry, the operator will call "start" immediately after calling "retry." In this case, the duration of the penalty is entirely up to the referee, who can decide when to approve continuing. Is there a fixed amount of time a referee will take to approve continuing, or is it truly up to referee's mind to decide how long a team won't have control over the robot?	Under a forced retry, game time will not stop and the team that received a violation should move the robot arm to its starting position. After that the operator can call for a start. If the team continues to violate the rules when start is called, another violation would be given.

Section 7 Robots & Safety

Item		Rule	Question	Reply
7	a	6.2–6.3	Which Robot modifications are permitted?	Teams may develop approved software, control algorithms, motion planning, calibration, computer vision, artificial intelligence, sensor fusion, interfaces, detection systems, and additional mechanisms based on the provided robotic arm design. Modified grippers, end-effectors, sensors, and attachments shall be securely mounted and pass Robot Inspection. Standardized components listed in Section 6.3 shall not be changed without express approval.
7	b	6.4	What starting and safety requirements apply to the Robot?	At the beginning of the Game, the Robot and all attachments shall fit entirely within the Robot Area and its vertical projection. The team shall use an approved power source and operate the Robot safely.

Section 8 Others

Item		Rule	Question	Reply
8	a	7.1.1	What happens if a situation is not covered by the Rulebook or supporting materials conflict with it?	For matters not covered by the Rulebook, teams shall follow the decisions of the organizers and referees. If a demonstration video, briefing, or other supporting material conflicts with the Rulebook, the Rulebook and the Head Referee's instructions take precedence.
8	b	Section 3.6	Is this winner-deciding procedure valid even when both teams score zero? That is, since criteria 1,2, and 3 is skipped, will the winner be decided based on criteria 4 through 8? Or will this be counted as a loss for both teams?	If both team scores zero, the winner will be decided according to the order of criteria listed in section 3.6