This guide will allow you to play the preseason with 90 players and evaluate players like an actual NFL team would. Note that you can only do this with the FF mod or with a roster containing a practice squad team.

# **First Season**

The following step-by-step formula is for season 1.

1. Skip training camp.
2. Open the franchise in NZA's Editor version 1.3. DON'T USE ANY VERSION OTHER THAN 1.3.
3. Move 35 players from your main team to the practice squad team.
4. Open the franchise in Madden, and sign players until your roster is full. The 55 on the main team and 35 on the practice squad team is your 90 total players.
5. Transfer all 35 players on the practice squad team back to the main team using NZA 1.3.
6. Make a depth chart containing all 90 players and write it down somewhere. Make a backup if you need to.
7. Move the bottom of your depth chart to the practice squad team using NZA 1.3. I suggest having the following players active for each preseason game, although it depends on who's on your roster. You may want one fewer MLB and one more DT if you have a 4-3 defense instead of a 3-4, for instance.
   * 3 QBs
   * 3 HBs
   * 2 FBs
   * 6 WRs
   * 3 TEs
   * 4 OTs
   * 4 Gs
   * 2 Cs
   * 4 Des
   * 3 DTs
   * 4 OLBs
   * 4 MLBs
   * 6 CBs
   * 2 SSs
   * 2 FSs
   * 1 K
   * 1 P
   * 1 LS

For a total of 55 players. These numbers can be changed to your liking, but you can use no more than 55 at a time. If you have an injury, put the players on the practice squad team and replace them with a backup. If you put anybody on the IR, put them on the practice squad team and keep them there until the end of the year.

1. After putting 55 players on your team and putting the other 35 on the practice squad team, auto-reorder the depth chart. Then use your depth chart you wrote down earlier to manually reorder the depth chart.
2. Play game 1. If you have any injuries, replace the injured player with a player on the practice squad team.
3. Now decide if you want to take out your starters. If not, play game 2. If you do, replace your starters with the next man up on the depth chart. Move the starters to the practice squad team and replace them.
4. Repeat step 6.
5. After game 2, take all the players on the practice squad team and add them to the main team. Replace the players on the practice squad team with the starters. You should now have only backups on your main team.
6. Repeat step 6.
7. For the final two games, you should have almost entirely backups playing. I do not recommend playing starters, but of course, you can if you choose to.
8. After the final game, move all of the players from the practice squad team to the main team, then cut or deactivate players until you have 53.  
     
   NFL rules allow for three players who are placed on the IR to be activated once they are healthy. If you plan to do this, instead of placing a player on IR, just move them to the practice squad team for the duration of their injury. Then, if you choose to activate them, move them back to the main team, releasing a player to make room if activating the IR player puts you over 53. The players you intend to activate from the IR must miss at least eight weeks to be eligible for activation. Also, keep in mind that, in order to bring a player back from IR, they must first be on the active 53-man roster for one day. So players who get hurt in the preseason, if you intend to bring them back from IR later in the year, must first make the 53-man roster. Anyone placed on IR during the preseason is ineligible for the remainder of the season.
9. Advance to the regular season. Simulate every game except your own, and check to see how many of your cut players are still available in free agency. Pick 12 (14 after 2022) of them who are practice squad eligible to be your practice squad. Leave them in free agency instead of placing them on the practice squad team, though, as I find it increases the realism of them being able to be signed by any team. Just write them down so you don't forget they are your practice squad. You can sign them at any time much like a normal free agent. If you want to be able to have the right of first refusal, like in the real NFL, save your franchise before you simulate the computer's games. If anyone signs a player from your practice squad, you can go back to the old save and sign him if you want to keep him.  
     
   Players can only be on the practice squad for three years. A player can only be placed on the practice squad if they have no accrued seasons of free agency, except for four players, who can be placed on the practice squad with 2 or less accrued seasons of free agency. To have an accrued season, a player must have played in more than five games. Players who are practice squad eligible and put on IR before playing in more than 5 games in a year do not gain an accrued year of service. As stated earlier, players can be on a practice squad for 3 seasons. Use however many seasons he has been on a practice squad to count how many years he has left, and do not use his years pro number. If a player has 5 years pro, he may still be eligible for the practice squad if he was put on IR one or two years without being on the practice squad, or was only on the active roster, but played in less than 6 games. A player also does not lose a year of practice squad eligibility unless he is on the practice squad for more than 5 games.
10. After you have all IR players on the practice squad team, you can now start playing regular season games. Make sure you auto-reorder your depth chart, and then set it to your liking. Each week, you are allowed to call up two players from your practice squad to the active roster for the game, and they return to the practice squad after the game. This can be done no more than twice per practice squad player. Continue to put IR players on the practice squad team and replace them with either practice squad players or free agents whenever needed throughout the year.

Remember to always auto-reorder and then manually reorder your depth chart after making a transaction of any kind.

I have recommended injury sliders for this guide, but you can use whatever injury sliders you wish. I recommend having the injury sliders set at 150% for preseason games and 113% for the regular season. It's all your choice though. Those recommendations are only for user games. Simulated games should be around 102-105%. Again, your choice.

I suggest you play the starters in the 1st quarter, the 2nd stringers (for positions with 3rd stringers) in the second quarter, and the remaining 2nd and 3rd stringers in the 2nd half.

All that was for season 1 only. The next formula is for seasons 2-30.

# **Seasons 2-30**

1. After you finish season 1, don't advance to the offseason just yet.
2. Before advancing, add every player on your practice squad team to your regular team, and sign all practice squad players you wish to keep. You should have your active 53, practice squad, and IR players all on the team. After this, open the franchise in NZA 1.3 and run the "Advanced AWR Boost" function. This will allow the younger players to progress a little further, especially the ones who were on the practice squad all year. I feel it adds realism, because players who are on the practice squad or the bench are supposed to be learning and progressing. In addition, use NZA 1.3 to check the count of how many free agents are in the roster. If the number of free agents is over 450, it is recommended to delete some until you get below that number. Also, if you were controlling any teams other than your own, go into Madden Amp and remove control of those teams.
3. Advance to the offseason. When you reach the retirement stage, open the franchise in NZA 1.3 and use the feature that resets rookie career stats. Also, while in the retirement stage, go to the draft class tab and select "Do not save skin tone." Then, load the draft class from the franchise. Go to the "Misc" tab and click "Auto rookie ratings adjustments." After that, go to the "body" tab, and click "Auto Body". Leave the draft class tab and save the franchise.
4. When you reach the player re-signing stage, use NZA 1.3 to use the feature that reverts awareness changes. That will prevent your entire team from going up to 99 awareness in the offseason. That glitch happens quite often, so I always use the revert awareness change feature. After that, re-sign any players you plan to re-sign, and release all the players you don't want back or will let test free agency. After that, every player on your team should have a contract.
5. Next, Use NZA 1.3 to move 35 players from your main team to the practice squad team. That will give you 35 players on the practice squad team, and those 35 open spots will allow you to reach 90 players without moving anyone else to the practice squad team.
6. When you get to the draft stage, if you want to do the draft in Madden Amp:  
     
   Use Madden Amp to give yourself control of all teams, and then load the franchise. Go into "Coach Options" and make sure all coaches have "draft players" set to User. Then go through the draft and manually draft for every team. When you reach the rookie signing stage, save, remove control from the other teams so you only control your own team, and do the draft in Madden Amp. When you're done, save the traded draft picks file, and load the franchise in NZA 1.3. Use the feature that recalculates player overall ratings. Save, and sign your rookies in-game.  
     
   When you get to training camp, save and load your traded picks file into the franchise using Madden Amp. Then proceed to preseason.  
     
   If you are not using Madden Amp for the draft, do the draft as you normally would and continue to the preseason.
7. When you see the preseason schedule, save your franchise and open it in NZA 1.3.
8. Repeat steps 6-17 of the first season instructions Also, if you want, you can use Madden Amp's training camp feature before step 5 of the first season instructions. Additionally, I would recommend applying cmp66's coach settings in NZA 1.3.

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