

FIRST LEGO League FAQ for Conroe ISD

How big are FLL teams?

FIRST LEGO League teams are made up of three to ten students ranging from ages nine to fourteen. Most teams have one or two coaches, with at least one being a teacher, with five or six students.

What does an FLL team do?

The challenge consists of two major components, the robot missions and the presentation. They build a robot using a LEGO Mindstorms EV3 kit and write programs to solve missions on the game field. The second part is to present their solution to a problem related to the current year's theme. The team is also scored on robot design/programming and a core value such as teamwork.

How much does it cost to start an FLL team?

Your first year will cost between \$300 and \$400. This pays for your team registration with FIRST (\$225) and a Field Set-Up Kit (\$75). Registration is free for the Conroe ISD FLL Qualifier. Registration for other tournaments ranges from \$75 to \$100.

Do we need to purchase a robot kit?

Conroe ISD Robotics can provide a LEGO Mindstorms EV3 Core Set (\$350) and Expansion Set (\$100) for your first season. If you decide to continue participating in FLL, you will probably need to purchase kits for each team. Loaner kits are available but they go to new teams first.

Does the team need a computer?

Each team should have their own laptop. Conroe ISD Robotics has laptops to loan, first to new teams then those in special need.

How should we select students for a team?

Some coaches **hand pick a small group of students they want to work with, others have students apply and choose from** the applications. Both can be used to create successful teams.

Will we need to build a practice field?

Only if you want more than one. Conroe ISD Robotics will provide either a one-piece (4 foot by 8 foot) or two-piece (each 4 foot by 4 foot) mounted on casters to make it easier to move around. The field stays on your campus as long as you are participating in FLL.

How often should the team meet?

If the team wants to be competitive, it will need to meet at least four hours per week. It would really help to meet one or two Saturdays during the season. The students can still have an excellent experience meeting only two hours per week.

What if no one knows anything about robotics?

The Conroe ISD Robotics Instructional Coach works with new teams to help them get started, usually meeting with them every other week. The programming necessary to accomplish some of the missions is very basic (pun intended) and can be learned during a single meeting. There are also several excellent guides for building basic robots for FLL, including the instructions in the Core Set.

What does a typical FLL season look like?

Teams register and order Field Set-Up Kits from May to September, the earlier the better. Teams select students in the fall as soon as school starts. The challenge is released to teams at the end of August. Qualifiers in the Houston Area start in November. The Houston Area Championship will be in late December or January. The Conroe ISD Spring FLLing, an off-season event just for fun, is in May.