

FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

*****ONLY CAPTAINS CAN TALK TO THE REFS IN A CONTROLLED MANNER.**

If the captain becomes out of control during conversation with the ref, the captain will be ejected. We have a ZERO TOLERANCE for out of control players. If our staff finds you rude, disrespectful, or out of control, we have the right to remove you from the game or league.

For less intense situations:

Coordinators may issue warnings to players for team and personal unsportsmanlike conduct or safety concerns. (Yelling to frighten someone making a catch is considered unsportsmanlike and will be penalized without warning). Staff may also ask players to leave the game for a specified amount of time if they feel it is for the betterment of the team and/or game. If a player fails to respect a staff member's decisions or heed their warnings, they may be ejected from the game, season or an indefinite amount of time.

Any individual who by his/her misconduct (profanity, gestures, physical or verbal abuse toward officials, players, etc.) causes himself/herself to be removed from a contest is automatically ineligible to participate for the remainder of that contest.

Equipment

1. Molded cleats or tennis shoes are the only allowable footwear. NO METAL CLEATS ARE ALLOWED. Shoes must be worn at all times. Shirts must be worn and tucked in or kept short.
2. Flags must be evenly distributed, one on each side and one on the back. If flags are not properly distributed, players may be ruled down when touched.
 - Players must use the league's flags.
3. All players on a team should be wearing the same color. There will be paid refs for each game.
4. Game ball provided by league

Game Duration

1. A game will have 2 halves with a duration of 22 minutes.
 - a. The clock will run continuously throughout the game during the first 20 minutes of each half; only stopping for called timeouts and serious injuries. The last 2 minutes of each half will be a normal game clock stopping for incomplete passes, getting out of bounds, etc...
2. Two 1-minute timeout per game. Timeouts will carry over to Overtime.
3. Halftime is 3 minutes.
4. During a change of possession, the offense must allow the defense to get set. The offense cannot begin play until the official has signaled that it is ok. If the defense is taking their sweet time to get set, the ref will tell them to get set and then can allow the offense to hike the ball.
5. After a stopped clock, time will resume at the snap.
6. Coin Toss -The toss will be called by the visiting captain before the coin is flipped. The winner may choose one of three privileges and the loser gets the other:
 - (a) Receive or kick
 - (b) Goal his team will defend
 - (c) Defer their choice to the second half

How the Game is Played

1. We will play 8v8 flag football leagues using the entire football field.
2. All plays must originate with a snap from center. The ball must be snapped to the quarterback from the ground. If the center picks up the ball and replaces it on the ground without snapping, this will be considered a false start penalty.
VERBAL "HIKE" CALL IS NOT MANDATORY.
3. Players may line up in any formation as long as they are behind the line of scrimmage. Motion from the players prior to the snap is allowed as long as no one advances towards the line of scrimmage.
4. Players may not break the neutral zone until the ball is snapped. If a player steps into the neutral zone, but gets back before the ball is snapped, there will not be a penalty.

5. Offensive players are responsible for retrieving the ball after a down has ended.
6. Our staff will spot the ball after each play.

Carrying the Ball

1. During the game, the ball will be spotted at the location where the flag was pulled, NOT where the ball is.
 - Example: If a player is straddling the line of the end zone and their foot is in, but the flag was pulled out, the ball will be marked outside the end zone.
2. The quarterback will NOT be able to run for positive yardage until after the 5-count. He/She CAN run if blitzed and when the 5-count expires (regardless if defense rushes). Anyone he/she pitches the ball to before the 5-count expires, can also run.
3. A ball carrier may not deliberately guard their flags. “Spinning” to avoid being de-flagged is legal. Actions such as slapping with the hand or stiff-arming are examples of flag guarding. Hands or arms down the side of the body while spinning are considered guarding.
4. If a player inadvertently loses their flags, or the opposition pulls a flag before gaining possession of the ball, the play will continue and the player must be downed by a two-hand touch.
5. A player will be ruled “down” when any part of the body other than the hand or foot touches the ground.
6. A fumbled or muffed ball is dead when it strikes the ground.
7. It is illegal to attempt to steal a ball in a player’s possession. The object of the game is to de-flag a ball carrier, not steal the ball.
8. In pulling a flag or making a play on a ball, a player’s feet MAY leave the ground. Diving is legal by the defense, however; the diving player is still responsible for any contact they initiate. A defender cannot dive directly TOWARD an offensive player. It must be from the side or behind and solely an attempt to pull a flag and NOT to hinder the player’s progress. An offensive player must make an effort to avoid contact if a defensive player has obtained “the spot” first and vice-versa.

Blocking & Defense (Rushing, Blitzes)

1. No blocking, tackling, or unnecessary roughness. This includes defensive players avoiding contact with the quarterback's arm (illegal contact).
2. During all plays, players will not be allowed to cross the line of scrimmage until the rush count (5) is completed, unless they blitz or the quarterback pitches the ball.
3. The defense has five blitzes per game. There are no restrictions on how many can be used in a half. At the time of blitzing, you can blitz as many players as you would like. There is no limit to how many can rush after the 5-count also.
NOTE: If a down is replayed, blitzes are returned. All actions on that penalized play are returned/replayed (other than unsportsmanlike conduct).

Passing

1. A forward pass may be thrown from any point behind the line of scrimmage. Once the line of scrimmage is crossed, a player cannot go back and throw.
2. All incomplete backward passes shall be marked down at the point of ground contact.
3. Only one forward pass may be attempted from behind the line of scrimmage on a given play.
4. A forward pass is illegal if:
 - It is thrown from beyond the line of scrimmage. The quarterback's entire body AND ball must cross the line of scrimmage for it to be an Illegal Forward Pass.
 - It is intentional grounding. (An intentional grounding foul is called when the passer throws a forward pass that has no realistic chance of being completed. To be considered a realistic pass, there must be an eligible offensive player in the area where the ball lands. The passer can avoid an intentional grounding penalty if he is able to scramble out of the "pocket" and throw the ball away. To be considered out of the pocket, the passer must be outside the boundaries set by the first player on the left and right of the snapper. The ball must be thrown at least as far as the line of scrimmage, but it may land out of bounds as long as it reaches the proper distance forward.)

5. A player must have complete possession of the ball and land with at least one foot or knee inbounds, to be a legal reception.
6. If an offensive player goes out-of-bounds on his or her own accord and returns inbounds, it is an illegal touching penalty (dead ball, 10 yards, and loss of down) if they catch the first pass. Such a player cannot be the intended primary receiver and can only catch a tipped ball.

Kicking

1. There will be no kickoffs. Possessions beginning a new half will begin at the 10 yard line.
2. Following any touchdown, the ball shall be placed on the 10-yard line, possession being given to the opponent of the scoring team.
3. Following a safety, the ball shall be punted from the 10-yard line with possession belonging to the team who just scored the safety.
4. If a kick is to be made, the kick must be made immediately upon receiving the snap. There will be a 5-second count once snapped. The ball shall be spotted at the place where it hit the ground.
5. Once a team captain declares to punt, he/she may change the decision only through the use of a charged time-out or delay of game penalty.
6. On 4th downs, the offensive team does have the option to punt the football. The offensive team must declare if they intend to punt or go for the first down. If they declare they are punting, the offensive team must allow the defensive team time to set up for the punt return. The snap is required and the football must be kicked immediately. If the ball is kicked out of bounds, it will be spotted where it left the field. Players must wait until the ball is kicked to cross the line of scrimmage.
7. From the time the ball is snapped to the time the ball is kicked a player will have a maximum of 5 seconds to hold the ball.

Penalties

1. Teams can accept or decline all penalties. Referees will have actual flags to throw so teams can see there was a penalty on a play. For simplicity, all penalties are live until the ref blows the whistle dead.

Offensive Penalties (All 10 yards from the line of scrimmage & loss of down):

- Offsides
- Blocking/Picking
- Illegal Contact
- Illegal Forward Pass
- False Start
- Delay of Game
- Fielding Too Many Players
- Flag Guarding – From the spot of foul
- Pass Interference – From the original spot
- Illegal Touching – From the original spot
- Unsportsmanlike Conduct – Can be in addition to another penalty. Player must sit one play.
- Intentional Grounding – If foul occurs inside 10 yard line, penalty is half the distance to the goal. If QB is in his/her own end zone, a safety is awarded.

Defensive Penalties (10 PACES from line of scrimmage & replay the down):

- Offsides
- Illegal Contact
- Holding
- Fielding Too Many Players
- Pass Interference – Spot of the foul, automatic first down
- Unsportsmanlike Conduct – automatic 1st down. Can be in addition to another penalty. Player must sit one play.

Scoring

1. Point values will be as follows:
 - Touchdown: 6 points.
 - PAT: 1 point will be from 5 yard line.
 - PAT: 2 points will be from the 10-yard line.
 - Safety: 2 pts
2. Once a team captain declares the his/her choice of going for a 1 or 2 point conversion after scoring a touchdown, he/she may change the decision only if a charged time out is granted to either team, or be issued a delay of game penalty.
3. If a ball is intercepted on a 1 point or 2 point conversion and the now-defensive team commits a penalty, the intercepting team will automatically be awarded the 1 or 2 points.

Tie Breaker

Each team will get four downs starting at the 25 yard line to attempt to score. Any time outs and blitzes left from the regular game will carry over.

AFTER 2 OVERTIMES, TEAMS MUST GO FOR A 2 PT CONVERSION AFTER A TOUCHDOWN.

First Downs, Field Setup & Substitutions

1. First down is awarded for getting 25 yards.
2. A team shall have four downs to complete the task of a first down.
3. Play will start from the 5 yard line at the start of the game and after each score.
4. There are no kick-offs.
5. You may sub players out during change of possession or by calling a timeout.