

Flag Football Rules

Purpose: This is a game of speed, athleticism, and creativity. Trick or gimmick plays will not be allowed. Trick plays are defined as plays that are designed to cause the opposing team to disregard a player(s) as ineligible. Examples include hidden sideline player, swinging gate/bloody bucket, hidden ball under center, etc.

Teams: Each team in play will consist of no more than 11 players. Everyone, except the five linemen, on offense is eligible to receive a pass or run the ball. There will **always** be 1 center, two guards, two tackles lined up. There must be a clean exchange between the center and the “quarterback”. The exchange can be between the legs or the center can stand beside the ball and toss it from the ground to the quarterback. The other 6 players can be lined up anywhere on the offensive side of the ball. No player shall line up within 3 yards of the sidelines.

Flags/Shirts: Each player shall have 2 flags at least 2 inches in width and 14 inches in length. Shirts must be tucked in so that the flag and belt are not obstructed in any way. If shirt can not be tucked in but obstructs the defenses ability to pull a flag, the shirt will be removed. Half shirts are acceptable as long as they do not extend below the ribcage. Flags must be worn on the sides not front or back. Players who alter flags in any way will be ejected. Flags should not be the same color as the shorts.

Equipment: No equipment such as headgear, pads, etc. shall be used. Footgear shall be tennis shoes or rubber cleats. **NO METAL CLEATS.** The ball shall be of an intermediate size, and be furnished by the home team. The visiting team may use their own ball but it is their responsibility to give it to the referees.

Officials: The home team shall provide the officials. These officials will be adults whenever possible. The home team also provides the down and timekeeper.

Length of game: Four quarters, each 10 minutes long. The clock runs continuously except for time outs, and the last two minutes of each half. After the ball is ready for play, the offense has 30 seconds to put the ball in play. It is the job of the timekeeper to notify the officials, who in turn notify the coaches when there are 2 minutes left in the half. Halftime will be 5 minutes, between quarters is 1 minute. In the last two minutes of each half, the clock stops on an incomplete pass, when the ball is out of bounds, or when there is a score (the extra point is tried without time running).

Timeouts: Teams may call 3 timeouts per half. Timeouts will be 1 minute.

Substitutions: May be made freely at any time, but must not delay the game.

Field: The field shall be 80 yards long divided into 20 yards sections. It shall be 40 yards wide. The endzones shall be 10 yards long.

Blocking: Blocking is not permitted except at the line of scrimmage, and must not include an extension of the hands/arms. Down field blocks must be of the interference type of block. The offense gets in the path of the defense trying to reach the flag. Players must avoid touching each other as much as possible unless they are on the line of scrimmage. The defense must run around the offense to get the flag. If the offense throws a block or the defense runs over the offense to get to the flag, a dead ball penalty shall be called.

Kickoff: There will be no kickoffs for safety purposes. The receiving team (offense) will get the ball on the 25 yard line on an 80 yard field and the 40 yard line on a 100 yard field.

Downs: A team has four downs to advance the ball to the next zone. A team can punt the ball on any down after informing the referee. No quick kicks are allowed.

Advancing the ball: Once a player has possession of the ball, he may run in any direction, however he may not leave his feet unless he is attempting not to step on a player lying on the ground. The ball carrier can spin to avoid the defense but must take a step before spinning again. If the ball carrier makes 2 spins or jumps to avoid a “tackle” the ball is dead at the spot.

Punts: The punting team must announce a punt to the referee and allow both teams to get set (about 30 seconds); the coach is not allowed on the field. The punter must punt the ball from at least five yards behind the line of scrimmage. The kicking team must have at least 7 men on the line of scrimmage. The receiving team must have at least 5 men on the line of scrimmage. There shall be no quick kicks and the defense is not allowed to rush. No one on the punting team is allowed across the line of scrimmage until the ball is punted. The defense is allowed to put up their hands but must stand still, no jumping.

After the punt and the ball is in the air: Three things may happen

- 1) the ball hits the ground first, it may be picked up and advanced by the receiving team.
- 2) The kicking team touches the ball in any way, it is considered dead at the spot touched.
- 3) If the ball touches a receiving player and then touches the ground, it is considered dead.

Downed ball: A ball carrier is considered down when one of his flags is pulled, falls off, or is missing; or his knees or torso touches the ground. A pass caught by a receiver with less than 2 flags is considered complete but down when the ball was caught. The flag puller shall hold up the flag in the air so the referee can see it.

Fumbles: All fumbles are dead balls when the ball touches the ground. The fumbling team retains possession unless it is fourth down and the football was not advanced to the next zone for a first down. The ball is placed where the player fumbled, not where the ball lands.

Extra points: Extra point attempts will be attempted by run or pass from the 3 yard line. Extra points count as 1 point if successful. A team can also attempt a field goal if the posts exist. This would be without a rush by the defense (see punts) and would count 1 point.

PENALTIES: - ALL PENALTIES ARE ENFORCED FROM THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE and REPLAY THE DOWN EXCEPT WHERE NOTED.

Dead ball foul Blocking downfield, Holding (or grabbing) by the offense to block or the defense to hold – ball is dead at that spot when penalty is called.

3-yards: Illegal formation,
encroachment by the defense (offense runs the play and can take the penalty or the play),
encroachment by the offense (ball is dead immediately),
intentional grounding to avoid a sack (and loss of down),
delay of game,
illegal procedure-offense (faking the snap, 2 or more men in motion before the snap,
player running towards the line before the ball is snapped),
player fanning flags (from the spot of the foul),
2 spins by ball carrier (from the spot of the foul),
jumping (unless it is done for safety purposes, spot of the foul),
defense throwing the flag (from the spot of the foul)
holding up the runner. (spot of the foul.)
Blocking by the defense to stop the ball carrier. (spot of the foul)
Defensive charging through a blocker (spot of foul) not running around the interference
Straight arming (spot of the foul)
Intentional pulling of flag that is noticeably not ball carrier's (spot of foul)

10-yards: Clipping or illegal block
Unsportsmanlike conduct (players or coaches)
Pass interference (automatic first down if committed by the defense)
Offensive charging (runner running over defensive player) (spot of the foul)

20-yards: Intentionally blocking/pushing ball carrier out of bounds (spot of foul and first down)
Intentionally tackling ball carrier (spot of foul and first down)
If these penalties happen inside the 20 yard line, ball is placed on the 1 yard line.
2nd offense by a player may result in ejection.