



# Flag Football Rules

## Field dimensions

- Fields will be 80 yards in length (end-zone to end-zone).
- There will be field stripes at 20-yard lines and at midfield (40-yard line).
- End zones will be ten yards long.

## Game Attire Requirements

- Each player is to wear shorts with no pockets.
- Each player must wear current team uniform shirts to ensure recognition of team sponsor.
- No modification to team jersey. Do not cut off sleeves. Each player MUST wear the approved team jersey in order to play.
- Each player must tuck in his/her shirt.
- Non-metal cleats or tennis shoes are required.
- No jewelry or hats allowed.
- Each player must wear flags during game play.
- Flags are not to be tied, but clipped using the accompanying plastic piece.
- Mouthpieces are required.

## Game Timing

- Games are played to 40 minutes of running time.
- There will be 4 ten-minute quarters.
- There will be a 5-minute half time break (minimum).
- Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced.
- Each team is allowed one 30-second time out and one 60-second timeout per half. The clock keeper will sound the whistle at the 30-second and 60-second mark signaling return of play. The offensive team will then have 15 seconds to snap the ball before receiving a delay of game penalty.

- The clock will stop on incompletions, out of bounds, and first downs in the last minute of each half and begin again on the snap. (Exception- The clock will begin on the officials spot of the ball following a first down in the last minute)
- A play is dead after the following:
  - Incomplete pass
  - Spot where ball lands following a lateral, missed snap, or fumble
  - Out of bounds
  - Player's knee hits the ground
  - Ball carrier's flag is pulled

## **Player Substitution**

- Teams can play up to 8 on the field at a time.
- Teams may consist of up to 16 players (max) and 14 players (min).
- Each team will create two evenly skilled squads for each game comprised of 8 players.
- Example: "Squad A" will play the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters; "Squad B" will play the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters.
- If during a game, you do not have enough players to make 2 squads, a player from one squad may fill an opening on the other squad.
- **No player should play two (2) quarters more than anyone else on the team.**  
No player should play 3 quarters unless all players have played 2 quarters or are playing in their 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter. No player should be playing should play 4 quarters unless all players have played 3 quarters or are playing in their 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter.
- Set squads should rotate starting offense every game -OR- squad members should change every week in order that each player has a turn to start.
- The only exception to these substitution rules will be do to injury or referee's discretion.
- Players may be substituted during a quarter for medical reasons or injuries only. Normal fatigue (Example: A coach says a player needs a break. The referee stops play and quickly assesses the player's condition. The referees will look for signs of dehydration, headaches, pale skin, blue lips, nausea, and feelings of vomiting).

## **Coin Toss**

- The team winning the opening toss will choose either offense or defense.
- The team losing the toss will choose which end zone is theirs.
- The first offensive team will begin with the ball on its own 10-yard line.
- The second half will begin with the team that did not have first possession with the ball on their own 10-yard line, going in the opposite direction.

## **Offense** – (TRICK PLAYS ARE NOT PERMITTED)

## SCORING

- **TOUCHDOWN:** An offensive touchdown will result in 6 points.
- **EXTRA POINT:** Point-after touchdown will be tried from the 5-yd line (Can be a run or pass play).
- **2-POINT CONVERSION:** 2-pt conversion will be tried from the 10-yd line (Pass play ONLY).
- **SAFETY:** A safety is worth 2 points and possession of the ball at the 10 yd line. A safety will result if a penalty occurs on the offensive team in their own end zone or if the offensive player's flag is pulled (this includes a situation where the offensive player's flag falls from the belt and a tackle results from a 2-hand touch while the player is in the end-zone).

## FIRST DOWNS

- **LINES TO GAIN:** The 20, 40, and 20-yard lines will represent lines of gain. In order to achieve a first down, a team must advance the ball across the nearest line of gain after they receive a fresh set of downs.
- **GOING FOR IT/PUNT:** If a team is unable to achieve a first down after 3 downs, they may choose to go for the line of gain on 4<sup>th</sup> down or punt the ball. If a punt is chosen, the officials will move the ball downfield 30 yards. If a team goes for a 1<sup>st</sup> down and fails, their opponents will gain possession at the spot of the resulting play.
- **START OF PLAY AFTER A PUNT:** A team will not start any closer to their own goal than the 10-yard line as a result of a punt.

## PRE-SNAP, HAND OFFS, and PASSES

- **LINE OF SCRIMMAGE:** Offense must have at least 5 men on the line of scrimmage.
- **LEGAL PASS:** A PASS is defined as a ball thrown OVER the line of scrimmage.
- **CENTER SNAP:** The center may snap the ball between his legs or from the side.
- **CENTER SNEAKS:** Center sneaks are illegal.
- **QUARTERBACK:** The quarterback is defined as the first person to touch the ball following a snap (it's okay to utilize 1 or 2 players as set quarterbacks. However, if you have other's who want to play the position; you should find ways to give them that opportunity).
- **QUARTERBACK RUN:** The quarterback cannot run with the ball unless a defensive player crosses the defensive line of scrimmage in an attempt to rush the quarterback.
- **HANDOFFS:** Direct handoffs, backward laterals, and pitches are permitted from anywhere on the field as long as they are backward laterals and not forward passes, pitches, or handoffs.

- **NO RUNNING ZONES:** “No-running” zones will be located INSIDE the 5-yard line from each end zone in order to encourage more passing and fewer power-running situations.

### **RUNNING PLAY RULES**

- You can NEVER have 3 running plays in a row EXCEPT:

If the QB ran 2 plays in a row and the defense **rushes** the QB on the next play the QB is eligible to run instead of pass. However, if the QB ran on the 3<sup>rd</sup> play because the defense rushed, the QB must pass on the next play.

- The 3<sup>rd</sup> play of an offensive series **must** be a pass (unless the above situation occurs).
- The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
- Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- **BALL CARRIER:** The ball is spotted where the ball carrier’s flags/hips are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is. (For example, the player will not be awarded a touchdown by stretching the ball across the goal line while the hips are behind the goal line when the flag is pulled.
- All players are eligible to receive passes.
- **OFFENSIVE MOTION:** Only one player in motion is allowed at a time.
- **RECEPTION:** A player must have at least one foot in bounds when making a reception.
- **FUMBLES:** There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground.
- A fumble counts as a running play, unless it occurs after the pass is complete.
- There will be no penalty for a fumble in the backfield on a “pass-only” down, however the next down will remain “pass-only”.
- **FLAG GUARDING:** Flag guarding is illegal and will be considered as stiff arming or otherwise using the arm to prevent a defender from pulling the flag.

### **BLOCKING**

- **CONTACT:** No contact is allowed (no hip-blocking, elbows, chicken wings, tripping, etc.).
- **HANDS:** Hands must be behind the back.
- Penalty will occur on the player that initiates contact.
- Defensive players must go around.
- **LEAD/DOWNFIELD BLOCKING:** Lead blocking is not allowed (Illegal Blocking).

## Defense

- **MERCY RULE:** Score will be kept in order to apply the mercy rule. A defense CANNOT rush the QB once their team is up by 18 points or more. If a defender of the team that is up rushes the QB while the mercy rule is in effect, it will result in an illegal defense penalty. If the QB hands the ball off to a runner, the defense is allowed to rush.
- All players who rush the quarterback must be 7 yards beyond the line of scrimmage at the time when the ball is snapped (this will be indicated by the back judge).
- If a defensive player breaks the \*disc line it is considered a rush and the QB may run with the ball.
- Any number of players can rush the quarterback.
- Once the ball is handed off, all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
- Tackling is NOT allowed.
- Rushers are not allowed to run into blockers. Rushers are responsible for running past the block. Contact with a blocker will result in a penalty.
- Defensive players are not allowed to bat or strip the ball away from an offensive player running with the ball.
- Defensive player must pull the flag from the offensive player with possession of the ball in order for the play to stop.
- Interceptions are live balls in which the defense becomes the offensive team. They may be returned for scores.
- If an offensive player's flag comes off during a play the defense MUST TWO HAND TAG the offensive player they are pursuing to stop the play.

\*The "Disc Line" is:

1. An imaginary horizontal line made by the disc that stretches to the left and right side of the playing field.
2. A disc on the offensive and defensive side of the ball, marking the line of scrimmage for each side. The space between the defensive line and the offensive line is the neutral zone. If during a fake hand-off the defense steps beyond the defensive line they will not be penalized but must retreat back to their line to avoid being penalized for an illegal rush. Once the defensive rusher breaks the defensive line it is considered a rush and the quarterback may run. The quarterback may also run if the defensive players on the line break the offensive line cone.
3. Measured by the official before each play and is moved each play by the officials.
4. Determined by the officials and the officials have the final say so if the disc line was broken by a player or not.

## **Coaches**

Only ONE offensive coach and ONE defensive coach may be on the field of play at a time. The additional coaches will remain on the sideline and clear of play. Offenses should not use the defensive coach or officials to set up pick plays. If the officials deem that the offense is trying to gain an advantage by using the defensive coach or official it will result in an offensive pass interference.

## **Penalties**

### **Defense:**

Offside	5 yds from LoS
Pass Interference	10 yds from LoS or result of play; auto first down
Illegal contact/Holding/Roughing	10 yds from LoS; auto 1 <sup>st</sup> down
Illegal flag pull (grab clothing, body part)	10 yds from LoS; auto 1 <sup>st</sup> down
Illegal rushing	5 yds from LoS; replay down
Illegal defense (when mercy rule is in effect)	10 yards from LoS or result of play; auto 1 <sup>st</sup> down

### **Offense:**

Illegal motion (2 men moving at snap)	5 yds from LoS
Illegal forward pass (past line of scrimmage)	5 yds from LoS; loss of down
Illegal Play (Pass only down – run the ball)	5yds from LoS; replay down
Offensive pass interference	10 yds from LoS; replay down
Flag guarding (jumping, hands, bending)	10 yds from spot; down counts
Delay of game (post time out or normal snap)	5 yds from LoS
Illegal Blocking (hands, elbows, knees)	5 yds from spot; down counts
Lead Blocking (referee's discretion)	10 yds spot of foul; down counts

Illegal Contact (non-established position, holding) 10 yds from spot; down counts

### **Unsportsmanlike Conduct/Unnecessary Roughness:**

- a) If an official witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, or other unsportsmanlike act including taunting, the player may be ejected and a 10 yd penalty/auto first down (if defensive) assessed.
- b) The defensive player should attempt to pull the flags of the quarterback, not bat the pass down. If the official deems that a player is reckless when pursuing the quarterback, he may call a 10 yd penalty/auto first down
- c) The offensive ball carrier must avoid contact with the defender. In the event of a collision, the default call will be against the offensive player. However, if the official deems that the contact was initiated by the defender, the penalty will be assessed on the defense. If the penalty is against the offense it will be 10 yards from the spot and the down counts. If the penalty is against the defense it will be 10 yards from the line of scrimmage and an automatic first down.

## **COACHING PRIVILEGE**

**OFFICIAL TIME-OUT** – SOMETIMES THINGS HAPPEN AND/OR PEOPLE ACT OUT IN WAYS THAT ARE LESS THAN EXEMPLARY FOR MODELING CHRIST-LIKENESS ON THE FIELD. HERE AT ONE GOAL SPORTS, WE BELIEVE THAT MATTERS SHOULD BE ADDRESSED IMMEDIATELY TO FURTHER DEMONSTRATE THAT LEADING BY EXAMPLE IS TOP PRIORITY. IF YOU WITNESS SOMETHING THAT IS OUT OF ORDER (RULE VIOLATION, UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT, ETC), PLEASE CALL AND OFFICIAL TIME-OUT, BRING THE COACHES AND REFEREES TOGETHER AND REASONABLY RESOLVE THE MATTER THEN AND THERE. BY DOING THIS, YOU WILL GUARD YOUR HEART AND PREVENT A BITTER ROOT FROM SPRINGING FORTH. THIS WILL ALSO REDUCE THE NEED TO EMAIL OR CALL OGS ABOUT A SITUATION THAT COULD HAVE BEEN RESOLVED ON THE FIELD.

## **INJURY PARTICIPATION**

**CASTS/BOOTS/BUBBLE WRAP** – CHILDREN REQUIRED TO WEAR A CAST OR MEDICAL BOOT FOR A BROKEN OR FRACTURED LIMB **WILL NOT** BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN OGS SPORTS. BUBBLE WRAP IS NOT AN OPTION.