

Adult Flag Football Rules

Referees

1. Responsible for keeping up with the time, score, making calls, and enforcing all rules and regulations.
2. Call out the updated score after all touchdowns and conversions.
3. Call out 2-minute warnings and 10 second play clock warnings.
4. Allow play to continue when in doubt about a call.
 - a. Inadvertent whistles – it will be up to the referee as to whether the whistle affects play.
5. Do not allow participants to influence calls.
6. Do not hesitate to consult other referees to make sure the call is correct.
7. Keep up the pace of the games.
8. Maintain order at all times.
9. Referees reserve the right to address anything not covered in the rules.

Team Responsibilities to the Referees

1. Be respectful.
2. Be honest. Lying and cheating will not be tolerated and are grounds for ejection.
3. Keep up the pace of the games.
4. Only Team Captains are permitted to speak with the referee in the event of a disputed call.

Team Responsibilities to the League

1. Arrive to scheduled games on time and ready to play.
2. Give notice in the event of a forfeit. Teams are afforded one forfeit. Multiple forfeits will result in removal from league play.
3. Adhere to all roster policies. Failure to do so may result in player and/or team removal from league play.
4. Be respectful of all participants at all times.

Rosters

1. Participants must be 18 years of age or older.
2. Rosters may contain up to 14 participants.
3. Participants may be added and dropped throughout the season. However, once a participant is dropped, they cannot be added back.
4. Once a participant plays in a game, they cannot be added to another team's roster.
5. Participants must play in half of the regular season games to qualify for the playoffs. (ie: 3 games of a 7 game season, 4 games of an 8 game season, etc.)
6. Participants must check-in with staff prior to games to ensure their participation is recorded.

Field

1. Dimensions: 35yds wide, 74yds long.
2. First Downs will be separated by 20yds and marked with lines and/or cones.
3. End zones will be 7yds deep and marked with lines and cones.

Equipment

1. Flags and belts will be provided. However, participants may bring their own if there are two flags at least 15in in length. Flags must be on the hips prior to the snap of the football.
2. A football will be provided. However, teams may bring their own if they are adult regulation size.
3. Participants must wear shirts of their team's color. Shirts should remain tucked in at all times, and never covering flags.
4. Shoes are required. Steel cleats are not allowed.

Start of the Game

1. The referee will flip a football. The visiting Captain will call laces or spaces. The winning Captain will have the following options:
 - a. Choice of offense or defense in the 1st half.
 - b. Choice of which side of the field to defend in the 1st half.
 - c. Defer their option to the 2nd half.
 - d. **To begin the 2nd half**, the Captain with the option may choose between offense, defense, or which side of the field to defend.
2. There will be no kickoffs. The offense will begin with the football on the 3-yard line.
3. Each team must have at least six players on the field.

Clock

1. Each game will consist of two 20-minute halves, and a 5-minute halftime.
2. The playclock will be 25 seconds.
3. Each team will have two 1-minute timeouts per half. Unused timeouts do not carry over to the next half.
4. The 1st half will feature a continuous game clock. Only timeouts will stop the clock.
5. If a timeout is called after a touchdown, the game clock will not run until the football is snapped on the next possession.
6. In the event that a touchdown is scored with no time left on the game clock, the conversion will be allowed.
7. The 2nd half will have a 2-minute warning, at which point the game clock will stop. If the football is snapped prior to the warning, and runs under 2-minutes during the play, the warning will be honored at the end of the play.
8. After the 2-minute warning, the game clock will stop if following occurs:
 - a. A penalty is called. The offended team has the option of stopping or running the clock.
 - b. An incomplete pass.
 - c. The ball carrier goes out-of-bounds.
 - d. A first down is gained.
 - e. There is a score.
 - f. There is a change of possession.
 - g. There is a timeout called.
 - h. The game clock will not run during conversions.
9. A half cannot end on a defensive penalty.
10. The referee reserves the right to stop the clock if unforeseen problems slow gameplay.
11. The 2nd half will feature a running clock if the point differential is at least 17 points (3 possessions).

Downs

1. The offense has four downs to convert a first down.
2. If the offense fails to convert a first down, the opposing team will begin their possession where the football was last downed.

Number of Players & Substitutions

1. Gameplay will consist of 7v7. Teams may play with only 6 participants. The other team reserves the right to still play with 7 participants.
2. It is the responsibility of the defense to complete their substitutions between plays.
3. All substitutions must be made from the same sideline.

Spotting the Football

1. The football will be spotted based on where it is when a player goes out-of-bounds, has their flag pulled, or does down.
2. Once a fumble hits the ground, it may not be recovered. The football will be spotted where it hits the ground.

Line of Scrimmage (LOS)

1. The referee will set two cones prior to each snap: the line of scrimmage and the rush cone (7 yards off the LOS). These will be placed in the middle of the field.
2. The offense may snap the football within 5-yards to the left or right of the middle of the field where the LOS cone is placed.
3. There is no minimum to the number of offensive players on the LOS.

Snapping the Football

1. Snaps must be from the ground.
2. A play begins on the snap, not on the Quarterback's snap count.
3. One offensive player is allowed in motion, either backwards or laterally.
4. If two or more players are in motion at the same time, all of them must come set prior to the snap.

Rushing Offense

1. The offense may run the football at any point using a handoff, toss, or lateral.
2. The Quarterback may run if there is a mesh point. Fake tosses or laterals do not count.
3. The Quarterback may run the football if the defense crosses the LOS.

Passing Offense

1. Any player behind the LOS is eligible to throw a forward pass.
2. The offense is allowed one forward pass during the play.
3. Once the football is in the hands of an ineligible passer, it may not be thrown forward thereafter during the play.
4. An eligible passer must have part of their body behind the LOS. Even if part of their body is over the LOS, they are still eligible so long as part of their body does not cross the LOS until they release the football.
5. Throwing the football away is not allowed. Any pass thrown must be done so in an attempt at a completion.
6. Spiking the football is not allowed.

Receivers & Completed Catches

1. A receiver is ineligible if they step out-of-bounds. If they are forced out, they are still eligible, but must return to the playing field as soon as possible.
2. A receiver who is ruled ineligible for going out-of-bounds may touch the football if:
 - a. They return to the playing field.
 - b. After they return to the playing field, an eligible player touches the football first.
3. The football must be secured, and at least one foot or other body part must get down in bounds.
4. The football may touch the ground during a completed catch if it is deemed the ground did not aid in securing the football.

Punts

1. The offense must make it known that they are punting.
2. If the offense elects not to punt after deciding to do so, they must give the defense adequate time to adjust.
3. The coverage team may not cross the LOS until the ball has left the punter's foot.
4. Punts may be returned if caught in the air.
5. Punts are down where they cross the out-of-bounds line in the air, or where they hit the ground.
6. A muffed punt may be recovered if the return man fails to complete the catch and the football bounces to the coverage team prior to hitting the ground. Muffs may not be returned.
7. Touchbacks will go to the 3-yard line.
8. The return team may not rush the punter.

Blocking

1. You may not use your hands to block.
2. You may not stick body parts out (ie: knees, elbows, etc.) in an attempt to block.

3. Blockers may set moving screens.
4. There will be contact! Do not initiate hard contact, lower shoulders, trip, elbow, etc.

Defense

1. Pressing is not allowed.
2. Bull rushing blockers is not allowed.
3. Stripping the football is not allowed.
4. You may blitz every play. Defenders who blitz must line up behind the 7-yard cone.
5. If a defender is inside the 7-yard cone at the snap, then they must drop behind the cone in order to blitz.
6. If there is a mesh point, toss, or lateral, then every defender becomes eligible to blitz.
7. Hold up flags in the air once they are pulled.

Turnovers

1. Interceptions may be returned.
2. Fumbles may be recovered and returned if they do not hit the ground. This includes:
 - a. Intercepted tosses.
 - b. Intercepted laterals.
 - c. A mishandled punt.
3. Once a fumble hits the ground, it is down there.

Scoring

1. Touchdowns are worth 6 points.
2. Conversions are worth either 1 or 2 points from 3 or 7 yards out respectively.
3. Defensive scores are worth the points that the offense was attempting to score.
4. Safeties are worth 2 points and result in a change of possession. The other team will get the ball on the 3-yard line.

The Ball Carrier is Down When

1. They run out-of-bounds.
2. Any part of their body other than their hands and feet touch the ground.
3. Their flag is pulled.
4. They do not have both flags and are touched with at least one hand.

Diving & Hurdling

1. Diving to pull flags or makes catches is legal.
2. A player may not dive for first downs, touchdowns, or additional yardage.
3. Hurdling and jumping to avoid flag pull is illegal.

Overtime

1. Possession will be determined the same way that it is at the beginning of a game.
2. There will not be a game clock, only a play clock.
3. One period is defined as each team having one possession.
4. Each team will get one 1-minute timeout per overtime period.
5. Teams will alternate starting possessions if overtime goes to multiple periods.
6. For the first two periods:
 - a. Each team will start their possession at the 20-yard line.
 - b. There will be touchdowns and conversions.
7. Beginning with the third period:
 - a. Each team will get one play from the 7-yard line to score.
 - b. These will be counted as 2-point conversions.
8. Overtime will go on until a winner is decided.

Penalties

1. All penalties may be accepted or declined except those that are issued as offenses against the referee.

2. The offended team has the option to run or stop the clock when a penalty is called inside the two-minute warning.
3. Penalties occurring within the yardage range and in the end zone will result in the football being moved to the 1-yard line. (ie: 5-yard penalties inside the 5-yard line, 10-yard penalties inside the 10-yard line, etc.)
4. If the spot of the foul occurs past the next first down marker, the penalty yardage cannot take away the first down.
5. 5-yard penalties:
 - a. Offsides: The defense lines up in or past the neutral zone.
 - b. False Start: An offensive player jumps forward prior to the snap.
 - c. Illegal Blitz: A defender blitzes from within the 7-yard cone without the offense attempting a toss, lateral, or mesh point.
 - d. Illegal Scramble: The quarterback runs the ball prior to being rushed by the defense and/or does not go through with a fake handoff.
 - e. Delay of Game: The offense fails to snap the football within 25 seconds of the end of the previous play. The defense intentionally slows the game.
 - f. Illegal Snap: The Center moves the ball without snapping it, or fails to snap the ball from the ground.
 - g. Illegal Participation: A team has more than seven players on the field.
 - h. Illegal Motion: Having more than one player in motion at once, or failing to set all players if more than one was in motion.
 - i. Illegal Blocking: Including but not limited to using hands, tripping, lowering shoulders, initiating hard contact, etc.
6. 5-yard penalties from the spot of the foul and a loss of down:
 - a. Flag Guarding & Obstruction: The ball carrier uses the football or their body to shield their flag from being pulled. Also includes having flags covered by untucked shirts, having flags tucked into pants, not having flags on each hip, etc. prior to the snap.
 - b. Illegal Forward Pass: The football is thrown forward more than once, has already crossed the LOS in the hands of an ineligible passer, or is thrown forward by an ineligible passer.
 - c. Intentional Grounding: When a forward pass is thrown without the intent of completing the pass.
7. 5-yard penalties and an automatic 1st down:
 - a. Intentionally pulling a player's flag who does not have the football.
 - b. Intentionally stripping the football.
 - c. Intentionally wrapping up the ball carrier.
 - d. Roughing the Passer: The defender may not intentionally impede the Quarterback's throwing motion or accidentally make hard contact with the throwing arm while going for the flag.
 - e. Reckless Play: Accidentally, but recklessly not making an attempt to avoid hard contact, diving into players, etc. during a competitive play.
8. 10-yard penalties:
 - a. Unsportsmanlike conduct: Excessive language, arguing, cheating, lying, intentional hard contact, etc.
 - b. Offensive Pass Interference: An offensive player impedes the defender's ability to fairly defend against the pass.
9. 10-yard penalty and an automatic 1st down:
 - a. Defensive Holding & Pass Interference: A defender who impedes an eligible receiver's ability to fairly catch the football.
10. Referees reserve the right to eject players who are not in control or are deemed unsafe. Anyone who is ejected must leave the facility immediately. The Director will review the conduct of any player ejected to determine if they may return to league play the following game.

Playoffs

1. Seeding will be decided by the following criteria, and in this order:
 - a. Winning percentage.

- b. Head-to-head.
- c. Average point differential (will not include forfeit scores of 6-0).
- d. Record versus common opponents ahead in the standings.
- e. Coin flip.