



RULE BOOK FOR THE YOUNGSTOWN YOUTH FLAG FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION Modified February 2014

NEW THIS SEASON

- In the case of an inadvertent whistle, the offense has two options:
 - Take the ball where it was when the whistle blew and the down is consumed.
 - Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.
- If a player catches the football or receives a handoff and their jersey is out/untucked, the play will be blown dead and the down is consumed.
- **Flag Obstruction** – Players flags must be on their hips at all times. If a referee notices a player's flags anywhere but on their hips, the play will be blown dead and the down is consumed.
- **UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT**

Fans must also adhere to good sportsmanship, as well:

- a. Yell to cheer on your players, not to harass officials or other teams.
- b. Keep comments clean and profanity free.
 - Fans must also adhere to good sportsmanship, as well.
 - Yell to cheer on your players, not to harass officials or other teams.
 - Keep comments clean and profanity free.
 - Compliment ALL players, not just one child or team
 - Offensive or confrontational language is illegal. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If offensive or confrontational language occurs from players, coaches or parents, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, a 10 yard penalty will be assessed and the guilty party MAY be ejected from the game.
 - If the field monitor or referee witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped, a ten yard penalty will be assessed and the player MAY be ejected from the game. The decision is made at the referee's discretion. No appeals will be considered. **FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!**

REMINDERS

- All coaches must stay on their half of the field at all times. An unsportsmanlike penalty will occur if a coach is caught on the opposing team's side of the field.
- In order for the center to receive a handoff the stand straight up after the snap.
- At least one flag and the ball must cross the first down or goal line in order for a touchdown or first down to be awarded.
- On a defensive holding penalty (in any division) the offense will have the choice of taking the play or 5 yards from the L.O.S. and first down
- Under two minutes remaining in the game, the clock will ONLY stop on incomplete pass or if the runner steps out of bounds. **The clock will not stop to set the pucks if the flag is pulled inbounds.**
- ANY contact on the rusher (in the 9-10, 11-12 or 13-14 division) will result in an "impeding the rusher" penalty.
- The offensive team is responsible for collecting and setting both the line of scrimmage puck and the 7-yard puck based off of the referee's positioning.
- **FORFEITS WILL NOT BE CALLED UNTIL COACHES FROM BOTH TEAMS HAVE BEEN CONTACTED.**

THE ATTIRE

- Home team listed first on the schedule is dark side of jersey and away team listed second is light side of jersey.

- Players are required to wear protective mouthpieces at all times during a game.
- Players must wear their NFL jersey for games.
- Players must have “pocketless” shorts
- **Jerseys must be tucked in at all times.** If a jersey is hanging over their flag belt, the play will be blown dead.
- **Teams must use league appointed footballs during the all games.**
- Molded/screw-in cleats and tennis shoes are permitted. No metal baseball cleats are allowed.

THE POSSESSIONS

- The referee will flip a coin before the start of the game to determine possession of ball for first or second half.
- The team that wins the toss has the choice of offense or defense. At halftime the teams will automatically switch directions and possession.
- The offense has 3 downs to pass midfield and then 3 downs to score. Exception 5-6 and 7-8 Division will have 4 downs to pass midfield and 4 downs to score. A turnover on downs will occur if the offense is short of the first down or end zone resulting in an immediate possession change spotting the ball at the opponent’s 5-yard line.
- All possession changes will start at the offensive team’s 5-yard line. Exception: On interceptions the team will take possession of the ball where the defenders flag was pulled. Penalties on interceptions will be assessed where the interception occurred. Exception: If the game referee judges that a player intentionally or flagrantly commits a penalty then the penalty will be at the point of the foul, no less than the point of interception.

COACHES ON FIELD

- Only one coach will be allowed on the field on offense. Offensive coach must back up, out of the way at the snap of the ball. Defensive coaches (**in the 7-8, 9-10, 11-12 and 12-14**) will not be allowed on the field; however, the coach can direct and align players before the play.

THE PASSING GAME

- Only one forward pass per down. All passes must be forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- Shovel passes are legal, but must be beyond the line of scrimmage.
- QB has a seven (7) second “pass clock.” **THE REFEREE WILL BLOW THE WHISTLE ON THE 7 COUNT.** If the pass is not thrown within seven seconds, the play will be ruled dead, with a loss of down. Once the ball is handed off, the seven-second rule is no longer in effect.
- Interceptions can be returned. Ball is spotted at where the defender’s flag is pulled.
- If a penalty occurs on an interception return by the return team, the penalty will be assessed from the end of the interception.
- If a penalty occurs on an interception return by the defensive team, the penalty will be assessed from the end of the run.

THE RECEIVING GAME

- All players must start with their flag belts on. If a player starts without his flag belt properly secure with all flags attached, his team will be assessed a 5 yard and loss of down penalty.
- All players are eligible to receive passes (including the QB, if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
- Only one player is allowed in motion at a time.
- A receiver is down where his or her flag belt is pulled. Exception: In order to achieve a first down, or a touchdown, the ball carriers **flag belt and ball**, must cross the plane of the first down line and/or goal line.
- If a receiver’s flag belt falls off or is pulled off, before catch is made, the receiver is down where they caught the ball.
- Receiver must have at least one foot in bounds when making a catch.

THE RUNNING GAME

- The QB cannot run the ball. The QB can only run the ball if he or she has taken a direct hand-off.
- Only direct hand-offs behind the line of scrimmage are legal. Anyone behind the line of scrimmage can receive a hand-off. **Exception: The ball cannot be handed off between the center’s legs.**
- No laterals or pitches of any kind, anywhere on the field, are allowed.

- The player who takes the hand-off can throw the ball, as long as he or she does not cross the line of scrimmage first.
- Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- Once the ball has been handed off, the seven-second pass rule is no longer in effect.
- Defensive players cannot pass the line of scrimmage, during a direct hand-off play, until the ball is handed off.
- Spinning is allowed. However, jumping or diving **TO ADVANCE** the ball is not allowed.
- If a flag falls off while the player is running then the player is down where the flag dropped.

THE “RUN ZONES”

- “No Run Zones” located five (5) yards from each end zone and five (5) yards on both sides of mid-field.
- “No Run Zones” are designed to avoid short yardage situations. Exception: 5-6 division will not use the “No Run Zone”.
- “No Run Zones” come into effect only when offensive team is approaching a first down or the end zone. Exception: If the offensive team has already achieved a first down, but has been pushed back into a “No Run Zone”, then the “No Run Zone” is no longer in effect.

THE RUSHING OF THE QUARTERBACK

- All players that rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage, which will be designated by the rushing puck. Any amount of players can rush the quarterback. Exception 5-6 & 7-8 division = no rushing.
- The 5-6 and 7-8 divisions will use pucks as well but they will be one yard apart. The 2nd puck will serve as the L.O.S. for the defense. They are not allowed to cross that puck until the ball is handed off.
- **REMINDER:** Once the offense gets within one yard (or closer) of the endzone or first down, the defensive puck will not be used.
- If the offense draws any rusher to commit or jump that seven-yard marker, that rusher CANNOT rush during that play. However, any other defender that is seven yards back (behind the rushing puck) may rush instead.
- **ALL RUSHERS MUST LINE UP ONE YARD ON EITHER SIDE OF THE CENTER and/or RUSH PUCK THEY CAN NOT LINE UP DIRECTLY IN FRONT OF THE CENTER. OR THE GIVE UP THEIR “RIGHT OF WAY”**
- The rusher has the right of way QB. Offensive players must avoid the rusher. If this path is crossed AND contact is made involving the rusher then an offensive penalty will be assessed.
- Players not rushing the quarterback may defend the line of scrimmage, as long as he or she is at least one yard from the line of scrimmage.
- A rusher must go for the quarterback’s flags. The rusher may attempt to block the pass but it is a penalty to make contact with the quarterback’s arm.

THE DEAD BALLS

- A play is ruled dead when: ball carriers flag is pulled, ball carriers flag falls off, ball carrier steps out of bounds, ball carriers knee touches the ground, ball carrier lets the ball hit the ground, ball carrier fumbles the ball away, and after a touchdown, or extra point is scored.
- There are no fumbles. The ball will be spotted where the player loses control of the ball.

THE PENALTIES

- Defensive penalties are 5 yards and an automatic first down. TACKLING IS 10 YARDS
- All offensive penalties are 5 yards and loss of down from the line of scrimmage except for flag guarding, blocking/screening, diving and jumping which will be marked off from the point of infraction.
- **On a defensive holding penalty (in any division) the offense will have the choice of taking the play or 5 yards from the L.O.S. and first down.**
- Defensive tackling is 5 yards added to the end of the play and first down.
- Any type of blocking or screening is illegal and will result in a penalty.
- Extra attempts: If the attempting team throws an interception and commits an infraction after the interception than when the opposing team takes offensive possession of the ball they will get an additional 5 yards from the line of

scrimmage. If a flagrant foul or intentional foul occurs on the extra point play the penalty will still be assessed from the line of scrimmage.

- ALL CALLS BY THE REFEREES ARE FINAL.
- Games will not end on any accepted live ball defensive penalty.
- Any offensive penalty in their end zone will result in a safety (2 points).

THE SCORING AND TIME SITUATIONS

- Scoring: Touchdown = 6 points, Extra point (5 yards) = 1 point, Extra point (12 yards) = 2 points, Safety = 2 points.
- There is a 30 second huddle clock (45 seconds for 5-6 division), which will start once the line of scrimmage is marked.
- Each team is allowed two timeouts (60 seconds long) per half. You can NOT carry a timeout over into the next half.
- Referee may stop the clock at own discretion.
- The clock will only stop at the **two-minute** warning of the **second half** for an incompletion, extra point, or if the offense gets out of bound. **If a team is up by more than 16 points at the two minute warning, the clock will stop at all under two minutes.**

OVERTIME PROCEDURES

- During each overtime, both teams will get a possession. Once the coin determines who's on defense and offense, the teams get one play from the extra point (they can choose to go for one or two points). If the score is tied after the first overtime, then the roles reverse in the 2nd overtime. If the score is tied after the 2nd overtime, each team will get one play from the five yard line going out. **The team that gains the most yards, WINS!! Another coin toss will determine who starts on offense and defense.**

THE Y.Y.F.F.A. will provide an atmosphere where players, friends and families can feel comfortable enjoying a day of football. Any players, teams, or family members that jeopardize that environment may be asked to leave. **THE YOUNGSTOWN YOUTH FLAG FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION** operates under a **NO TOLERANCE POLICY**.

All rules are subject to League Directors discretion.

