



## Flag Football Rules

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## **Article I: Basic Flag Football Rules**

### **A. Overview**

1. Divisions will play 6 on 6.
2. A coin toss determines first possession of the game.
3. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 3 yard line and has four plays to cross midfield.
4. Once a team crosses midfield, it has four more downs to score a touchdown.
5. All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 3 yard line.
6. Each team will be required to play a minimum of 2 different players at QB for at least 1 full drive per game (Coaches Honor)

Trick plays are allowed that fall within the rules of the game. If there are questions regarding the definition of each, please contact the Director of Football or an official for clarification.

### **B. Coaches on the Field**

1. One coach will be allowed on the field during the game from each team to assist in play calling.
2. Coaches will not be allowed to bring any writing utensil onto field and therefore will not be allowed to write on anything depicting a play for his team. Plays should be drawn up prior to entering onto the field.

### **C. Sideline Rules**

1. Only those coaches who have gone through the security screening process and are on the official coaching roster will be allowed to be on the team sidelines during games.
  - ***ALL COACHES MUST WEAR THEIR RED COACH SHIRT TO BE ON THE SIDELINE!!!***

### **D. Tie Game**

#### **1. A tie remains a tie DURING THE REGULAR SEASON, AND THERE WILL BE NO OVERTIME.**

- However, there will be overtime for ties during bowl games. Overtime rules during Bowl Games will follow the NFHS football format. Both teams will get an offensive series and defense series. Each team will start their possession from the 10 yard-line. The team with the most points at the end of this first offensive and defensive series will determine the winner of the game. Starting with the 3rd overtime period, teams will be required to perform the extra point from the 8 yard line.

## **Article II: Field Dimension/Equipment**

### **A. Field Dimensions**

1. The dimensions of the playing field for Flag Football are approximately 35 X 70 yards (3rd-8th Grade) and 25 x 60 yards (PK-2nd grade). There are two 5 yard end zones.

- Field size may change to accommodate field space.

### **B. Equipment**

#### **1. Football Size**

- Pre/K thru 4th Grades = “Pee Wee” size football
- 5th/6th Grades = “Junior” size football
- 7th/8th Grades = “Youth” size football

#### **2. Playing Equipment**

- No player will be allowed to participate in either a practice or a game without wearing a mouthpiece. Coaches and Referees will inspect each player prior to all practices/games to check for mouthpieces.
- Players are not allowed to participate in practice and games with a cast or splint on any body parts.

## **Article III: Game Timing/Timeouts/Scoring**

### **A. Game Clock**

1. There will be 2 halves with a 20 minute running clock. Halftime will be 10 minutes
2. In no case except injury, time outs, and other official delays at the discretion of the official will the clock stop during the game.
3. The clock will stop for change of possession. Change of possession will take no longer than 30 seconds. The referee will begin the play clock, and the offense has 30 seconds before a delay of game penalty (5 yards penalty). 3. The offensive team has 30 seconds to get the ball into play. 4. The clock will stop at the referee's discretion for player injuries. Players must leave the game for at least one play after an injury.

### **B. Timeouts**

1. Each team will have 3 timeouts which can be used anytime during the entire game. Timeouts will be 1 minute long
2. The clock starts after timeouts when next play begins.

### **C. Scoring**

1. Touchdowns = 6 Points 2. Extra Point from 3 Yard Line = 1 Point 3. Extra Point from 8 Yard Line = 2 Points 4. Defensive Safety = 2 Points

### **D. Points After Touchdowns**

1. Turnovers on extra points may not be advanced by the defense and the play is over.

## Article IV: Defense

### A. Defensive Plays/Rushing the Quarterback

1. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend up to the line of scrimmage, until the ball is handed off or there is a forward pass. If the quarterback makes a forward pass behind the line of scrimmage, the defender may step across the line of scrimmage to pull the flag of the receiver.
2. Once the ball leaves the Quarterback's hand either with a forward pass, lateral, or handoff, all defenders may go beyond the line of scrimmage. Remember, there is no blocking or tackling. Rushing defenders WILL be allowed to deflect passes during rush.
3. There is no limit on the players allowed to line up on the line of scrimmage prior to the snap of the ball.
4. Only one player may rush the quarterback, except in 7th/8th grade division which ***will have no rusher***
  - The player rushing must start beyond the line marked by the rush cone or bean bag
  - The rush cone will be marked off by the referee between 10-12 yards
  - The referee will have final say on the marking of the rush cone

### B. Interceptions

1. Interceptions are live, and may be returned for touchdowns. Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start on the 3-yard line. The ball will be spotted where the flag is pulled by the opposing team.

## Article V: Offense

### A. Start of Offensive Series

1. The play will start when the quarterback holds the ball in his hand, standing at the line of scrimmage, and gives a clear cadence call to start the play.
2. Once the center snaps the ball, the play has started and the defense will be **allowed to rush.**  
**(Only the designated rusher)**
- 3.
4. **Since the 7th/8th grade division will be playing without a rusher, the quarterback will have 7 seconds to throw a forward pass.** (referees will keep the 7 sec clock)
5. There is no limit on the amount of players who can line up on the line of scrimmage.
6. Only one player is allowed in motion at a time.

### B. Running

1. The quarterback cannot run beyond the line of scrimmage with the ball, unless the ball has already been handed off or passed to another player.
2. A run play may not be used in “No Run Zones”
  - “No Run Zones” – Located 3 yards from the intended scoring end zone
  - Laterals or Pitches are allowed to be used in a No Run Zones as long as they are followed by a forward pass.

#### Handoffs, laterals, pitches.

- The player who takes the handoff, lateral, or pitch can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
  - Once the ball has been handed off, lateraled, or pitched all defensive players are eligible to rush.
1. Spinning is allowed. There is NO Diving. The play is whistled dead if the player dives.
  2. Jumping is allowed as long as the offensive player jumping is not advancing up field while jumping.
  3. Flag Guarding is not allowed and is defined as the offensive player intentional guarding his/her flag or pushing away the hand of the defensive player who is attempting to pull the offensive player’s flag. It is not considered flag guarding if the offensive player is using his/her normal running motion.
  4. Laterals or pitches behind the quarterback’s forward progress are allowed, and are considered a running play
    - If the player receiving the ball then throws a forward pass, it would be considered a passing play

### C. Receiving

- All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off or passed backwards from the quarterback).

#### **D. Passing**

1. Passing is defined as one player throwing the ball to another player while the ball travels in a forward flight. If the ball is caught the receiver may advance the ball. If the ball is dropped the pass is incomplete, and the play is over.
2. A quarterback is the player who throws a forward pass. He continues to be the passer until the pass ends, or until he moves to participate in the play.
3. Shovel passes are allowed and considered a forward pass.
4. After a forward pass is completed, laterals are allowed as long as they are pitched behind the player in possession of the football. There are an unlimited amount of laterals allowed once the forward pass is completed.

#### **E. Dead Ball (Substitutions may be made on any dead ball)**

1. Play is ruled “dead” when:
  - Ball carrier’s flag is pulled
  - Ball carrier steps out of bounds
  - Touchdown or safety is scored
  - Ball carrier’s knee hits the ground
  - Ball carrier’s flag falls out
  - Player dives with the ball
  - If an offensive player’s flag is not attached to him when he catches the football, the ball will be down where the catch was made (if defender pulled it beforehand, then a penalty will be assessed from the spot of the catch).

*Note: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground or at the point where the ball carrier fumbled if the ball is fumbled forward*

#### **F. Mercy Rule**

1. No head coach will deliberately run up the score. Head coaches will make all attempts to play his players in different positions to deter a large point spread. Real Life Sports Football will have the discretion to suspend coaches who deliberately run up the score on the opposing team.

#### **G. Blocking**

1. There is no blocking!
2. A player blocking (shadow or other contact) will cause the play to be over at the point of the penalty. There will be a 10 yard penalty from the spot of the foul, and loss of down. Coaches are encouraged to teach their players if the ball doesn’t come to them to continue running away from the play.

## Article VI: Penalties

### A. Defensive Penalties

1. Offside = 5 yards and replay the down. 2. Pass Interference = 10 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down 3. Illegal Contact = 10 yards from the spot of the foul and automatic first down
  - a.  *Holding, blocking, straight arming, etc. (If a player dives for a flag, and causes a player to fall it will be deemed illegal contact (intentional or non-intentional). If a player dives for a flag and pulls a flag without knocking down the player it will be deemed a legal flag pull without penalty. Coaches are encouraged to teach their players to stay on their feet, and not to dive at an opposing player's flag) 4. Illegal Flag pull = 10 yards from the line of scrimmage and automatic first dow*
  - b. Pulling flags before receiver has ball. The defensive player may not wrap his/her arms around the body (bear hug/holding) while searching to pull the flag 5. Illegal rushing = 5 yards from the line of scrimmage and automatic first down
  - c. Rushing from within the line established by the rush cone or rushing more than one defender at once
    - For example, if the rush cone is set at 10 yards beyond the LOS and a player rushes from 8 yards.

### B. Offensive Penalties:

1. Illegal motion = 5 yard penalty, replay down
  - More than one person moving before the offense is set 2. Illegal forward pass = 5 yard penalty and loss of down 3. Illegal contact = 10 yard from the line of scrimmage, loss of down
  - Pushing, blocking, etc. 4. Offensive pass interference = 10 yards from the line of scrimmage, loss of down 5. Flag guarding = 10 yards spot foul 6. Delay of game = 5 yards and loss of down 7. Shirts not tucked in causing interference with the pulling of flags = 10 yard penalty and the ball is down at the spot of the foul

**Games will not end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.**