



Mens 6 v 6 Flag Football Rules

COIN TOSS & START:

At the start of each game, the winner of the coin-toss will choose one of two options –

Option 1) Offense or Defense for the start of the game

Option 2) End zone it would like to defend.

The loser of the coin toss gets the other choice.

There are no kick-offs. Play starts on teams own Possession Line. To begin the second half the teams will switch ends and the team that started the game on offense will start on defense.

TEAM SIZE & NON-TEAM PLAYERS:

Each team shall field no more than 6 players. In order to begin a game, a team must have at least four players from its roster. If a team has 4 or more players, but less than 6, a team may recruit players from other teams in the league at the consent of the opposing team. If the opposing team consents, the game will count in the standings. If a player shows up late, they may play, but must replace any non roster player. In the playoffs teams may only play with players on their Roster and players must have played in at least 2 games.

TIME:

Each game consists of two 24-minute halves. There is not stopped time until the last minute of the 2nd half.

The clock will only stop time-outs requested by either team, or referee charged time-outs..

If a team is up by 15 points or more, the clock runs continuously during the last two minutes of play.

If during the final 2 minutes of the game the score differential is 15 pts or less, the referee will stop the clock when...

- 1) An incomplete pass is thrown or a player goes out of bounds
- 2) Either team scores (the clock remains stopped until the opposing team snaps the ball after the PAT attempt; the clock does not run during extra points)
- 3) A change of possession occurs
- 4) A penalty which must be marked off occurs
- 5) A team calls a time out

THE CLOCK DOES NOT STOP ON FIRST DOWNS OR FUMBLES

TIME-OUTS:

Each team is allowed 3 - 30 second time out per game.

EQUIPMENT:

Regulation size ball must be used – only NFL or NCAA Official Size ball allowed in games.

No metal cleats are allowed on any field.

Offense Rules:

FLAGS:

It is each player's responsibility to have his or her flags positioned squarely over each hip and have no part of the flag covered by a shirt.

If a player is missing a flag or has an obscured flag and takes possession of the ball (including the QB taking a snap) the play is ruled dead at that spot.

If an offensive player without both flags accessible takes possession in his/her own end-zone, it is ruled a safety. If a defensive player takes possession in his/her own end-zone, it is ruled a touchback. If either team takes possession in the opponent's end-zone, it is a touchdown.

UNIFORMS:

All players should have like colored jerseys or t-shirts. Games will not start until this is resolved.

Shirts should be tucked in and in no way interfere with flags. Each team will be asked to declare a Jersey color before the start of the season to ensure no duplicates. Violation of this rule is loss of down.

STARTING OF PLAY / HIKING THE BALL:

The ball must be placed *on the ground* and hiked through the air to the quarterback behind the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is in the air, the play has started and the defense can commence their rush. The QB cannot be in motion when receiving the snap (5 yard penalty/repeat down)

Once the ball has been spotted, the offensive team **has 25 seconds** to snap the ball.

If the referee feels that this is being taken advantage of (delay of game), they may:

- 1) On the first offense - Warn the team
- 2) On subsequent offenses - Penalize the offense 5 paces/yards (the team cannot re-huddle)
- 3) After the penalty is marked off the ball **MUST** be snapped within 5 seconds or it will be loss of down
- 4) Within the last two minutes of each half, the clock will stop on delay of game penalties.

If the QB crosses the line of scrimmage and then throws a forward pass it is an illegal forward pass and it will be a 5 pace/yard penalty from the line of scrimmage and loss of down.

The DEFENSE must be on the field and set BEFORE the ball is hiked on a change of possession.

FIRST-DOWNS:

A team may earn one first down in each possession. A first-down may be achieved by crossing the half field marker.

LATERALS:

A lateral is a pitch of the ball (overhand OR underhand) to a fellow team member next to you or behind you. *Laterals are legal only behind the line of scrimmage.* Once the ball is lateraled the player who formerly had possession of the ball may be used a receiver. A lateral **CAN** be picked off. A dropped lateral is a fumble (see fumbles). Reminder: Once the ball is lateraled the defense may rush in immediately.

RUNNING THE BALL/PLAYERS IN MOTION

The quarterback can hand off/pitch the ball to a running back or receiver at any point **BEHIND THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE**. As soon as the ball is pitched or handed off, the defense can rush without finishing the 3 second count. Runners cannot put their head down during a rush. Penalty will be a 10 yard/pace penalty.

The offense can have ONE player in motion on any given play. That motion must be parallel to the line of scrimmage until the ball hiked.

PASS RECEPTIONS:

A legal pass reception requires that the receiver have one foot in bounds at the time control is achieved. No part of the body may be touching an area out of bounds.

BLOCKING:

Normal Blocking is permitted to defend the pass rush.

No Blocking in the back or blocking below the waist is permitted. Penalty 10 paces/yards from spot.

No down field blocking will be permitted.

No Cut or Chop Blocking is allowed. If the referee considers the blocking incident excessively aggressive, a 15-yard penalty will be assessed from the spot of the ball (or to the one-yard line if the offense is less than 15 yards from their own goal line). Depending on the severity of the infraction, the offending player may be ejected from the game and/or league.

FUMBLES

If a player fumbles the ball, the play is dead at the spot where the player lost possession. If a player on either team takes possession of the ball, prior to the ball hitting the ground, possession goes to that team and that player may attempt to advance the ball towards his/her own end zone. Stripping or a blatant attempt to strip the ball will result in a 5 yard penalty with a replay of the down.

FLAG GUARDING:

There is no flag guarding. Flag guarding consists of an offensive player pushing an opponent's hand away from the flag with any part of his/her body. Flag guarding also includes contact initiated by the offensive player such as pushing, dipping their shoulder or stiff-arming the defense.

If a player is called for flag guarding, the play is dead at the point of the infraction.

Spinning to avoid a tackle is legal, as long as none of the above listed events occur simultaneously.

TOUCHDOWNS:

Both the ball and **both flags** must be over the goal line in order for it to count as a touchdown or extra point. No diving over the line will be allowed.

POINT AFTER TRY (PAT):

After a touch down is scored, each team is allowed a PAT for either 1 or 2 points. If a team goes for 1 point the ball is placed 5 paces from the goal line. If a team goes for 2 points, the ball is placed 10 paces from the goal line. (lines will be marked)

The defense may *only* run back an interception during a 2-point PAT. On an interception of a 2-point attempt if a defensive player uses excessive force to tackle the receiver impeding them from scoring the 2-points will automatically be awarded.

The clock does not stop during a PAT, except within the last two minutes of a game. A PAT is allowed if the touchdown was scored as time ran out in either half.

SAFETIES:

A safety (2 points) will be scored if a player:

- Fumbles, is tackled or runs out of bounds in their own end zone
- Snaps the ball out of their own end zone

As a result, the team on defense receives 2 points, and the defense will take possession on their own Possession Line.

*Also, a player having intercepted a pass cannot be tagged in the end zone for a safety unless he/she has previously crossed the plane of the end zone with the ball.

PUNTING:

If the team elects to punt, the defense will begin their offense on the Possession Line. The offense must declare punt or play after a 3rd down that does not result in a first down. The decision cannot be changed without the use of a timeout by the offense.

Defensive Rules

PASS RUSHING:

The defense must complete a 3-second count at a normal speaking cadence (1 Mississippi, 2 Mississippi etc.) before pursuing the quarterback behind the line of scrimmage. After the three second count is completed any number of defensive players may rush behind the line of scrimmage. The penalty for an early rush is 5 yards and repeating the down. Offense has the option to decline the penalty and accept the results of the play.

The quarterback may advance the ball by running before the 3-second count is completed. If the quarterback goes tucks ball and begins running motion the defense may rush immediately. If the ball is lateraled or handed off behind the line of scrimmage the defense may rush as soon as the change of possession occurs.

TACKLING:

A player is “tackled” by removing at least one flag from the ball carrier’s belt. If a flag is removed by a defensive player, prior to full possession (as determined by referee), the offense is not considered tackled and play continues with no infraction charged. Players may not leave their feet in attempt to "tackle" the ball carrier.

INTERCEPTIONS

Interceptions of forward or lateral passes may be advanced. If a defensive and offensive player both appear to have possession or are struggling for possession, the reception is granted to the offense.

On an interception if a defensive player uses excessive force to tackle the receiver half the distance of the goal will be awarded. On a 2-point conversion the 2 points will be awarded.

General Rules and Penalties

OVERTIME:

“ Regular season games can result in a tie.

“ Playoffs – Each team will receive a possession at the 2pt conversion line. Play will continue until one team scores and the other does not. (one goal line will be used during this time)

PENALTIES

Any play in which a player exhibits extreme roughness will result in ejection from the game and/or the league if deemed necessary by the referee and league staff.

Normal rules and penalties of the NCAA apply unless exceptions have been made herein.

Some Common Examples of Penalties:

Illegal Contact – At or Behind the Line of Scrimmage

- In cases where the person(s) initiates any contact (at the ref’s discretion), it will be ruled a 5 pace/yard penalty from the line of scrimmage and we will replay the down.
- If this contact is deemed excessive by the ref, an “unnecessary roughness” penalty of 10 paces/yards can be assessed in addition to the “illegal contact,” making the total penalty 15 paces/yards.

Illegal Contact – Down Field

- 5 paces/yards from point where the ball carrier is at the time of the infraction
- Other forms of illegal contact include: Tripping, Clipping, Contact to the head, Contact with a player already on the ground, deliberately running into a player, Tackling, & Throwing a player to the ground

Offsides – (Offensive)

- 5 paces/yards, play is ruled dead immediately, no option to decline, down is replayed

Defensive Offsides/Early Rush

- 5 paces/yards and down is replayed- *OFFENSE HAS THE OPTION TO DECLINE THE PENALTY AND ACCEPT RESULTS OF PLAY.*
- *If offsides is called on a gender play and the offense ACCEPTS the penalty then next play does not have to be a gender.*

Unnecessary Roughness

- This includes any illegal tag such as grabbing jerseys, shorts, or excessive pushing.
- This will result in a 10 pace/yard penalty from the point of infraction AND automatic 1st down.

Defensive Pass Interference - a defensive player must make an attempt to play the ball. They must turn around in an attempt to see the ball. If they do not turn around, whether or not contact is made, defensive pass interference will be called.

- Ball is spotted at the point of the infraction a first down is awarded only if the results moves the ball over the half field line.
- If the pass interference is in the end zone, the ball comes out to the 1 pace/yard line and it will be 1st down.
- *OFFENSE HAS THE OPTION TO DECLINE THE PENALTY AND ACCEPT RESULTS OF PLAY.*

DEFENSIVE PLAYERS CANNOT AT ANY TIME SHOVE A PLAYER INTO THE WALL ANY VIOLATION OF THIS RULE WILL BE AUTOMATIC 15 YARD PENALTY AND DEPENDING ON REFEREES DISCRETION CAN RESULT IN AN EJECTION OR REMOVAL FROM LEAGUE.

Defensive Holding

- 5 pace/yard penalty from line of scrimmage, replay down
- Offense can accept or decline penalty