



**FREDERICKSBURG**  
**FIELD HOUSE**

# Youth Flag Football Rules

## 1. The Basics

- a. Home team has the first possession.
  - i. For Playoffs, the higher seed has the choice
- b. Each team will be given four down to make a first down or make a touchdown.
- c. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts their drive from their start line. (Indoor-5-yard line).
- d. All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's start line.
  - i. Outdoor-20-yard line
  - ii. Indoor-5-yard line
  - iii. Unless a penalty is enforced, the ball is moved accordingly.
- e. Interceptions may be returned.
- f. Outdoor: Players must be at least 3 yards off the sideline. The referees can assess an unsportsmanlike penalty if the players are too close to the sidelines.
- g. Teams change sides after the first 20-minutes.
  - i. For playoffs, the possession changes to the team who started on defense.
- h. There are no kickoffs.
- i. No blocking of any kind is allowed.

## 2. Players/Game Schedules

- a. Indoor Rec: 6v6 must have a minimum of 5 players to avoid a forfeit.
- b. Outdoor Competitive/High School Rec: 7v7, must have a minimum of 6 players to avoid a forfeit.
- c. Age groups are: 4-5, 6-7, 8-9, 10-11, 12-13, 14-17 (outside).
- d. High School players can be asked for their photo ID at any time.
- e. The Field House reserves the right to combine ages if need be.

- f. Players may play up in age divisions but not down to a lower age division unless approved by the League Director.
  - g. Teams generally consist of somewhere between 8 and 12 players, however there is no roster maximum allowed on each team.
- 3. Timing/Overtime**
- a. Games are played in two-20 minutes halves with a one minute halftime. (Halftime can be shortened if games are behind schedule).
  - b. Regular season games can end in a tie.
  - c. If the score is tied at the end of the second half during the playoffs, teams move directly into overtime.
  - d. Overtime: Each team has a chance to score. The winner of the Overtime coin flip will decide if they want to play offense or defense first. The ball will be placed at the top of the defense's arc and the offense will have one play to score. If they score, the other team must score on their attempt in order for the game to continue. If they do not score and the second team does, the second team wins. If the first team on offense scores and the second does not, the first team wins.
- 4. Scoring**
- a. Touchdown: 6 points
  - b. Extra points: All extra points are running plays or passing plays. No kicks.
    - i. 1 point (played from the 5-yard line)
    - ii. 2 points (played from the 12 yard line (outdoor), the red line (indoor))
  - c. Safety: 2 points
- 5. Running**
- a. The quarterback cannot run with the ball over the line of scrimmage.
  - b. Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. The offense may use multiple handoffs.
  - c. Laterals and pitches are allowed.
  - d. If the ball hits the ground at any time, it will be considered dead at the spot where the ball touched the ground.
    - i. The exception will be, if there is a "forward fumble", the ball will be marked dead where the runner lost possession of the ball, unless the forward fumble lands in the end zone. It will then be treated as a touchback or safety.
      - 1. A forward fumble is defined as a ball that was in player possession, was lost, was not a forward pass attempt and the ball hit the ground in advance of the player who lost possession.
  - e. The player who takes a handoff or lateral can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage. Once the ball has been handed off or lateralled, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
  - f. Spinning is allowed, but players are not allowed to hurdle an opposing player.
    - i. Hurdling is defined as jumping while your feet or knees are extended in advance of your body. Any act deemed unsafe by the official can be ruled

as a penalty. It is up to the officials to determine when someone leaves their feet, whether or not it is hurdling.

- g. The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's flags are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is. Both flags must cross the line to gain a 1st down, or the goal line for a touchdown.
- h. Hand-offs cannot occur between the legs.
- i. No center sneak plays.

## **6. Passing**

- a. Only one forward pass is allowed.
- b. Shovel passes are allowed and count as a forward pass.
- c. There is no time limit on how long the quarterback has to throw the ball.
- d. All players are eligible to receive a pass. This includes the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage.
- e. Only one player is allowed in motion at a time.
- f. The quarterback is defined as the person who takes the snap from the center.
- g. The quarterback cannot run with the ball over the line of scrimmage.
- h. Once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage, you cannot come back behind the line of scrimmage and throw a forward pass.

## **7. Dead Balls**

- a. The ball must be snapped between the center's legs to start play.
- b. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball as long as substitution rules are properly followed.
- c. Play is ruled dead in the following situations;
  - i. The ball carrier's flag is pulled.
  - ii. The ball carrier steps out of bounds (outdoor).
  - iii. Touchdown or safety is recorded.
  - iv. Any part of the ball carrier's body touches the ground other than his hands.
  - v. The ball carrier's flags fall out.
- d. There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the runner loses possession of the ball.

## **8. Rushing the Quarterback**

- a. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped.
- b. Any number of players can rush the quarterback.
- c. Once the ball is handed off or lateraled, the seven-yard rule is no longer in effect and all defenders may rush the passer.
- d. The referee will designate the seven-yard mark before every play.
- e. No blocking or tackling is allowed.

## **9. Sportsmanship/Roughing**

- a. Coaches will not purposely run up the score.
  - i. Coaches are subject to suspensions if it is seen to be an issue with your team continually running up the score.

- b. Coaches are responsible for the play of their players and can be suspended along with their players if it is deemed that the players are repeatedly unsportsmanlike.
- c. If the Field Marshal or referee witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike actions, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game.
- d. Foul play will not be tolerated.
- e. Trash talking is illegal.
- f. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. Trash talk is talk that may be offensive to officials, opposing players, teams or spectators.
- g. If trash talking occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the player will be ejected from the game.

#### **10. Attire**

- a. Cleats are allowed, except for metal spikes and screw-ins.
- b. No pockets are allowed in shorts/shirts.
- c. Inspections must be made before the game starts.
- d. Coaches are responsible for the equipment their teams wear.

#### **11. Penalties**

- a. All penalties will be called by the officials in charge of the game.
- b. Officials have the right to stop the clock in any situation they deem necessary

#### **12. Defensive Penalties**

- a. Encroachment: Three yards and automatic first down.
- b. Pass Interference: 10 yards from the previous spot and automatic first down, unless it occurs in the end zone. In that case, it will be 1st and goal from the 1-yard line.
- c. Illegal contact (holding, blocking, etc.):
  - i. Outdoor: 10 yards and an automatic first down
  - ii. Indoor: 5 yards and an automatic first down.
- d. Illegal flag pull (before receiver has the ball):
  - i. Outdoor; 10 yards and automatic first down
  - ii. Indoor: 5 yards and automatic first down
  - iii. If this foul occurs and in the official's opinion a touchdown would have been scored, the official can award a touchdown.
- e. Illegal pass rushing (starting rush from inside 7-yard mark)
  - i. Outdoor: 5 yards and automatic first down
  - ii. Indoor; 3 yards and automatic first down
- f. Impeding the runner;
  - i. Outdoor; 10 yards from the spot of the foul and replay the down
  - ii. Indoor; 5 yards from the spot of the foul or the end of the run, and replay the down.
  - iii. If this foul occurs and in the official's opinion a touchdown would have been scored, the official can award a touchdown.

#### **13. Offensive Penalties**

- a. For Offensive spot fouls, the penalty is enforced from the end of the run or the spot of the foul, whichever penalizes the offense more.
- b. Loss of down is defined as the loss of the right to replay the down after a penalty is enforced.
- c. If the spot of a foul on offense is beyond the line to gain and the runner legally crossed the line to gain, the penalty would be enforced from that spot and the offense is awarded the first down. (It would be first and goal).
- d. Encroachment, false start, illegal motion, illegal procedure;
  - i. Outdoor; five yard and loss of down.
  - ii. Indoor; 3 yards and loss of down
- e. Pass Interference; 10 yards from the previous spot and loss of down for indoor and outdoor.
- f. Illegal contact (holding, blocking, etc.): 10 yards from the previous spot and loss of down unless the foul occurs past the line of scrimmage. It will then be enforced from the end of the run or the spot of the foul, whichever penalizes the offense more.
- g. Illegal forward pass (pass thrown while beyond the line of scrimmage);
  - i. Outdoor; 5 yards from the spot of the foul and loss of down
  - ii. Indoor; 3 yards and loss of down
- h. Offensive pass interference (illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender); 10 yards from the previous spot and loss of down for indoor and outdoor.
- i. Flag Guarding
  - i. Outdoor; 10 yards from the spot of the foul and loss of down.
  - ii. Indoor; 3 yards and loss of down.
- j. Delay of game;
  - i. Outdoor; 10 yards and loss of down
  - ii. Indoor; 5 yards and loss of down. Clock will stop under 1 minute remaining in the game.

#### **14. Unsportsmanlike Conduct**

- a. Unsportsmanlike conduct penalties are 15 yards
- b. Penalty will be assessed from the end of the run.
- c. If the penalty occurs during a touchdown play, the touchdown counts, and the penalty is enforced from the succeeding spot or the offended team's next possession, it is the offended team's choice.
- d. Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.
- e. Players and coaches cannot question any officials' calls/decisions.
- f. Games cannot end on an accepted penalty unless the penalty carries a loss of down and/or player safety is a concern.
- g. Any situation not covered in these rules shall be decided by the game officials.
- h. All game official decisions are final.

#### **15. Coaches on the Field**

- a. All coaches must be registered on the team roster. Photo ID's can be requested to be shown by coaches.

- b. Two coaches per team are allowed on the field at all times for the 4-5 year old and 6-7 year old divisions.
- c. One coach per team is allowed on the field for the 8-9 year old and 10-11 year old divisions.
- d. The offensive and defensive coach must be against the wall on the player's side during the down.
- e. No coaches are allowed on the field for the 12-13 year old and 14-17 year old divisions.
- f. Both coaches must move to be in place by the 10 second play count on each down. It is the official's decision as to whether a penalty will need to be called.
- g. In no way can the defensive coach hold up the snap of the ball.
  - i. Coaches must be clear of the play before the snap and cannot affect the play during the down.
  - ii. It will be the official's decision as to what, if any, penalty needs to be called due to coaches' interference.
  - iii. If any coach is deemed to be in the way by the officials, he can be penalized with a delay of game or unsportsmanlike conduct penalty and asked to leave the field and coach from the bench.

**16. Playoffs**

- a. Ages 4-5 and 6-7 get 7 regular season games and one playoff game.
- b. Ages 8-9, 10-11, 12-13 and 14-17 will have playoffs with seedings determined by the following;
  - i. Overall record
  - ii. Points for wins and ties
  - iii. Head to head
  - iv. Points against
  - v. Points for
  - vi. Coin toss

**17. Ball Sizes**

Division	Ball Size
4-5	Pee-Wee Ball (K2)
6-7	Pee-Wee Ball (K2)
8-9	Pee-Wee Ball (K2)
10-11	Junior Ball (TDJ)
12-13	Youth Ball (TDY)
14-17	Senior Ball (TDS)