



Youth Flag Football Rules

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Basics

- a. The HOME Team has first possession.
 - i. For Playoffs, the higher seed has the choice
- b. Each team will be given 4 downs to either 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 its drive from its start line. -(Indoor) 5-yard line
- d. For the youngest group (4-5) they will start from the red line. -(Outdoor) 20

Yard Line

- e. All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's start line.
 - i. (Outdoor) 20 Yard Line
 - ii. (Indoor) 5-yard line,
 - iii. (Indoor, 4-5 age group) Red Line
 - iv. No yardage will be lost beyond the Red Line for the 4-5 age group and there are no safeties
 - v. Unless a penalty is enforced and the ball is moved accordingly. Interceptions may be returned.
- f. Outdoor: Players must be at least 3 yards off the sideline. The referees can assess a Unsportsmanlike penalty if the players are too close to the sidelines.
- g. Teams change sides after the first 20 minutes. (Playoffs, the possession changes to the team who started on Defense)
- h. There are no kickoffs, and no blocking is allowed.
- i. The play clock is 25 seconds.

Playoffs

- a. Ages 4-5 and 6-7 get 8 games and no playoffs
- b. Ages 8-9, 10-11, 12-13, and 14-17 will have playoffs and seedings will be decided by below.

Team rankings

- a. Points for win and tie
- b. Head to head.
- c. Points against
- d. Points For

- e. Coin toss

Players/Game Schedules

- a. Indoor Rec:6v6 must have a minimum of 5 players to avoid a forfeit. 4 of those players must be rostered and paid.
- b. Outdoor Competitive/High School Rec:7v7 must have a minimum of 6 players to avoid a forfeit. 5 of those players must be rostered and paid.

Age Groups are

- a. Recreational: 4-5, 6-7, 8-9, 10-11, 12-13, 14-17* (*outside)
- b. Advanced: 6-7, 8-9, 10-11, 12-13, 14-17* (*outside)
- c. High School players can be asked for their photo ID's at any time.
- d. The Field House can combine ages if needed.
- e. Players may play up in age divisions but not down into a lower age division without League permission.
- f. Teams generally consist of somewhere between 8 and 12 players, however we do not put a limit on numbers of players allowed on each team.
- g. Rosters will lock at Week 3 meaning that no player can register after that date or be moved from one team to another.
- h. Copy of Birth Certificate and/or Picture ID can be required if age of child is in question

Timing/Overtime

- a. Games are played in two - 20 minute halves with a one minute halftime. (Halftime can be shortened if games are behind schedule)
 - i. REGULAR season games can end in a tie.

- b. If the score is tied at the end of the 2nd half, during the playoffs, teams move directly into overtime.
- c. OVERTIME (for Playoffs)
 - i. Each team has a chance to score.
 - ii. 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. There is no extra point following a touchdown.

Scoring

- a. Touchdown: 6 points
- b. Extra point: All extra points are running play or pass plays. NO KICKS
 - a. 1 point (played from 5-yard line)
 - b. 2 points (played from 12-yard line (Outdoor), the RED Line in (Indoor))
- c. Safety: 2 points

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. Offense may use multiple handoffs.
- c. Laterals/Pitches are allowed.
 - i. If the ball hits the ground at any time, it will be considered dead at the spot where the ball touched the ground.

- ii. 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. A Forward Fumble is defined as a ball that was in player possession and was lost, and it was not a forward pass attempt, and the ball hits the ground in advance of the player who lost player possession.
- d. The player who takes the handoff or Lateral can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage. Once the ball has been handed off or lateraled, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- e. Spinning is allowed, but players are not allowed to “Hurdle” an opposing player.
- f. 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 and the ball must cross the line to gain for a 1st down, or the goal line for a touchdown.
- h. Hand-offs cannot occur between the legs. (No Center Sneak Play)

Passing

- a. ** Only 1 forward pass allowed**
- b. Shovel passes are allowed. Shovel pass is a forward pass.
- c. Interceptions may be returned.
- d. There is no time limit on how long the QB has to throw the ball
- e. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
- f. Only one player is allowed in motion at a time.
- g. The Quarterback is defined as the person who takes the snap from the

center.

- h. The Quarterback cannot run with the ball over the line of scrimmage.
- i. Once the ball has crossed the Line of Scrimmage, you cannot come back behind the line of scrimmage and throw a forward pass.

Dead Balls

- a. The ball must be snapped between the legs to start play.
- b. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball, as long as substitution rules are followed properly.
- c. Play is ruled "dead" when:
 - a. Ball carrier's flag is pulled
 - b. Ball carrier steps out of bounds (Outdoor)
 - c. Touchdown or safety is scored
 - d. Any part of the Ball Carrier's body touches the ground other than his hands
 - e. Ball carrier's flag falls out
- d. The official must blow the ready for play whistle before a play can be run.

Note: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the runner loses possession of the ball

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 lateralled, the seven-yard rule no longer is in effect, and all defenders may rush the passer.
- d. A special marker, or the referee, will designate seven yards from the line of scrimmage.
- e. Remember, no blocking or tackling is allowed.

- f. If a rusher passes the rush line prior to the ball being snapped, they must return to behind the line before they can rush the passer.

Sportsmanship/Roughing

- a. Coaches will not purposely run up the score.
 - i. Coaches are subject to suspensions if it seems 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 act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. The Field Marshal can act as a second set of eyes when it comes to ejecting players.
- d. FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.
- e. Trash talking is illegal.
 - i. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. - Trash talk is talk that may be offensive to officials, opposing players, teams or spectators.
 - ii. If trash talking occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the player or players will be ejected from the game.

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.
- e. Shirts must be tucked into the player's pants/shorts and flags must be fully visible outside of the player's clothing.
- f. No jewelry is allowed to be worn during play.

- g. Short pockets cannot be taped or stapled.
- h. All hats must be turned backwards.

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 he/she deems necessary.
- c. Outdoor: Players must be at least 3 yards off the sideline. The referees can assess a Unsportsmanlike penalty if the players are too close to the sidelines.

Defense:

- a. Encroachment: Three yards and automatic first down
- b. Pass Interference: 10 yards from the previous spot, Automatic 1st 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 automatic first down;
 - ii. (Indoor) 5yds and Automatic 1st down
- d. Illegal Flag pull (before receiver has ball):
 - i. (Outdoor) 10 yards and automatic first down;
 - ii. (Indoor) 5yds and Automatic 1st 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 marker)
 - i. (Outdoor) 5 yards and automatic first down;
 - ii. (Indoor) 3yds and Automatic 1st down
- f. Impeding the runner:
 - i. (Outdoor) 10 yards from the spot of the foul or the end of the run

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.

Offense

- a. For Offensive Spot fouls, the penalty is enforced from the end of the run or the spot of the foul, whichever hurts the offense the most.
- 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 the 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 1st down. (It would be 1st and goal)
- d. Encroachment, False Start, Illegal Motion, Illegal Procedure:
 - i. (Outdoor) Five yards and loss of down.
 - ii. (Indoor) 3yds and loss of down
- a. Pass Interference:
 - i. 10 yards from the previous spot, loss of down. (Indoor and Outdoor)
- b. 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 hurts the offense more.
- c. Illegal forward pass (pass thrown beyond line of scrimmage):
 - i. (Outdoor) 5 yards from the spot of the foul and loss of down.
 - ii. (Indoor) 3yds and loss of down
- d. Offensive pass interference: (illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender)
- e. 10 yards from the previous spot and loss of down. (Indoor and

Outdoor)

- f. FLAG guarding:
 - i. (Outdoor) 10 yards (from the spot of the foul) and loss of down.
 - ii. (Indoor) 3yds and loss of down
- g. Delay of game:
 - i. (Outdoor) 10 yards and loss of down;
 - ii. (Indoor) 5yds and loss of down. Clock will stop under 1 min in the game.
- h. Unsportsmanlike Conduct -15yds
- i. Penalty will be assessed from the end of the run.
- j. 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's the offended team's choice.
- k. Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.
- l. Players/Coaches cannot question any officials' calls/decisions .
- m. Games cannot end on an accepted penalty, unless the penalty carries a loss of down and/or player safety is a concern.
- n. Any situation not covered in these rules shall be decided by the game officials.
- o. All Game official decisions are final.

Coaches on the Field: Recreational and Advanced Divisions

- a. All coaches must be registered on the team roster. Photo ID's can be requested to be shown by coaches.
- b. 2 coaches per team are allowed on the field at all times for 4-5 year olds and 6-7 year olds.

- c. Coaches must be clear of the play before the snap, and cannot affect the play during the down.
- d. It will be the officials' decision as to what, if any, penalty needs to be called due to coaches' interference.
- e. 1 coach per team is allowed on the field for the 8-9 and 10-11 divisions. The coach must stay within 5 yards of the wall.
- f. The offensive and defensive coach must be against the wall on the player's side during the down (Only applies to 8-9 and 10-11 age groups).
- g. No coach is allowed on the field for ages 12-13 and 14-17.
- h. 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.
- i. **IN NO WAY CAN THE DEFENSIVE COACH HOLD UP THE SNAP OF THE BALL.**
 - i. If this means he needs to call his defensive plays from the Bench, then so be it.
 - ii. If any coach is deemed to be in the way by the officials, he can be Penalized (Delay of game, unsportsmanlike conduct) and asked to leave the field to coach from the Bench.