

# Flag Football Rules

## START OF THE GAME

- Game time is starting time; there will be no grace period. The officials watch will be the timepiece used to decide game time.
- The referee shall toss a coin after designating which captain shall call the toss. The winner of the toss shall have first choice of the options for either the first or the second half. The loser shall have the first choice of options for the half the winner of the toss did not select. The options are: to choose whether a team will play offense (receive) or defense or to choose the goal a team will defend. Teams automatically switch ends at the half.

## GAME TIME AND TIME OUTS

- Games will be two 18-minute halves of running time. Only the last two minutes of the second half will be stopped for all dead ball situations such as: time-outs, penalties, change of possessions, out of bound plays, incomplete passes, and all scores.
- Half time will be 2-minutes
- The offensive team has 25 seconds from the time the ball and restraining line are set by the officials to put the ball back into play. If the team exceeds 25 seconds, officials will call a delay of game penalty.
- A game or half cannot end on a defensive penalty unless the penalty is refused.

## PASSING

- All players are eligible to receive a pass.
- Only one forward pass per down (either over handed or underhanded).
- No forward hand-offs between the quarterback and the center are allowed.
- At the time of a pass reception, the receiver must have the "first football" down and in bounds for a complete pass (Ball in complete control).
- Any number of backward or lateral passes are permitted.

## FUMBLES

- All fumbled balls touching the ground are dead immediately at the spot the ball is next put into play at that spot.
- The team fumbling the ball retains possession of the ball (except on the 4th down).
- The kick, which strikes the ground after being touched by a receiver, is dead at that point.
- All incomplete laterals or passes behind the line of scrimmage will be spotted where the ball lands.
- Any player catching a passed or fumbled ball that does not touch the ground can advance that ball.
- A fumbled ball by an offensive team in their end zone constitutes a safety.
- The offensive team may not fumble a ball forward in mid-air to advance the ball.

## FLAG BELTS AND LEGAL "TACKLES"

- Each player must wear a flag belt; each team will have a different color. Every player must have their shirt tucked in their pants.
- If a player loses his/her flag belt and has possession of the ball, the defense must touch them with one hand between the shoulders and knees to make the legal "tackle."
- A legal tackle is made when a defensive player detaches the flag belt from the ball carrier.
- A shielding infraction will be called if a ball carrier uses his/her hands, arms, the ball or clothing to hide or prevent an opponent from pulling the flag belt.
- Any ball carrier caught wearing the belt illegally will be ejected from the field of play.
- The ball is dead if either knee of the ball carrier touches the ground at any time.

## TIE AND OVERTIME GAMES

- In case of tie at the end of regulation play during the regular season, the game will end and be recorded as a tie.
- During the playoffs, overtime will be played as follows: each team will get four downs from the ten yard line (closest to their opponent's goal) to score. Whichever team scores in the fewest amount of downs, wins.
- Each team will get one 30-second timeout per overtime.

## EQUIPMENT

- Only sneakers and artificial turf shoes are permitted. (No metal spikes or bare feet will be allowed.)
- No jewelry (rings, necklaces, or earrings) is to be worn when playing.

## FIELD DIMENSIONS AND DOWNS

- The size of the field will be 60-yards by 40-yards, with 10-yard end zones.
- The field will be divided into 3 20-yard zones. A team has four downs to cross each consecutive line (First down every 20-yard line marker). If a team has a penalty which pushes the line of scrimmage behind a new 20-yard line the offense must still pass the original first down marker.
- During a runback, if a penalty pushes the line of scrimmage behind a new 20-yard line, the first down line will be that 15-yard line.

## NUMBER OF PLAYERS

- There is a minimum of six players required to start a game and maximum of seven players to continue a game.
- Free substitution is allowed after the ball is ready for play and before the snap, each player or entering substitute of an offensive team can be lined up anywhere behind the line of scrimmage.
- There will be a one-yard restraining line for the defensive team while in any formation or situation; the officials will mark off the restraining line.
- Only one player may be in motion parallel to the line at any one time before the ball is snapped.

## PUNTING

- The referee will ask the offensive team on all fourth downs if they intend to punt or "go for it." There are no fakes allowed.
- All players must remain at the line of scrimmage until the ball is kicked. Defensive players may put their hands up and/or jump to attempt to block the punt as long as they do not cross the line of scrimmage.
- On a bad snap, the ball is dead where it first touches the ground.

## BLOCKING

- The only type of blocking allowed is screen blocking. All blocking must be made with the blocker in an upright position with both hands clasped in front of or behind their backs or directly at their sides.
- No player may use his/her hand to go through, over, or around an opponent.
- No body blocks, roll blocks, or shoulder blocks are allowed at anytime (Penalty will be expulsion from game and automatic suspension from league play). Offensive players may not keep their elbows out when blocking, they must be against the body.

## INADVERTENT WHISTLE

The ball will be ruled dead at the spot where it was when the whistle was blown.

## Safety and Touchbacks

- A fumbled ball by an offensive team in their end zone constitutes a safety.
- If a team intercepts a pass in the end zone and does not advance the ball out of the end zone it is a touchback. The ball is put in play on the 10-yard line.
- If a team receives a punt in their end zone and does not advance it out of the end zone, it is a touchback. The ball is put in play on the 10-yard line.
- Following a safety, the ball shall be placed on the 10-yard line of the team credited with the safety.

## SCORING

1. Touchdown: 6 Points
2. Safety: 2 Points
3. Point after touchdown:
  - a. From 3-yard line: 1 Point
  - b. From 10-yard line: 2 Points

## PENALTIES

### Section 1: Penalties with a loss of 5 yards

- Delay of game or illegal substitution (\*Whistle blown to end play).
- Free kick infractions
- Interference with opponent or ball before snap
- False start or any illegal act by the snapper\*.
- Encroachment
- Less than 4 players on A's line at snap
- Illegal position at snap
- Player illegally in motion
- Illegal shift
- Illegal handling ball forward
- Illegal forward pass by A or B
- Illegal procedure
- Offsides

### Section 2: Penalties with loss of 10 yards

- Delaying start of either half
- Offensive forward pass interference (A's down counts)
- Holding, illegal block, or blocking below the waist
- Striking, kicking, kneeing (also result in disqualification)
- Clipping, hurdling, tripping
- Illegal participation
- Unsportsmanlike conduct by player, coach, or attendant
- Pushing runner or interlocked interference
- Illegal use of hand or arms
- Roughing the kicker (automatic first down)
- Roughing the passer
- Defensive pass interference (ball spotted at infraction; automatic first down)
- Holding ball carrier to remove flag
- Guarding the flag or stiff arming

### Section 3

Measurement of half the distance to the goal line is done inside the 10-yard line for 5-yard penalties and inside the 20-yard line on 10-yard lines.