2013 Youth Flag Football Rules

The following rules and regulations have been established to allow participants to compete in a safe and fair environment. Participants and coaches are to be familiar with these directives. These rules may be subject to change if during the season a team gains an unfair advantage over other teams due to a given rule in the league. All coaches and players will be notified of any rule changes made during the season.

**A. Field**

The field shall be a rectangular area with lines and zones. The field measures 60 yards in length, goal line to goal line and 40 yards in width and have two 5 yard deep end zones.

**B. Equipment**

1. The ball shall be a pee-wee size ball for the 5 – 6 age division and a junior size football for the 7 – 9 age division.

2. No equipment, which in the opinion of the referee could endanger others, shall be used.

3. Helmets, baseball hats, or pads will not be allowed. (Stocking caps are allowed).

4. Participants will not be allowed to participate when wearing jewelry, watches or any other potentially dangerous items.

5.Metal spikes or cleats will not be allowed. Rubber-soled soccer shoes may be worn*.*

6. Players should avoid wearing yellow & red shorts and pants.

**Note : A referee may remove a player at any time for dangerous equipment.**

**C. Players**

1. Each registered player on a team’s roster must play the equivalent of half the game.

2. Teams must have a minimum of five (5) players to begin the game or a forfeit will be declared.

3. Four offensive players must be on or within one yard of the line of scrimmage before a play is started.

4. Quarterback may line up in the shotgun position, or under center.

5. 5-6 Year old division two coaches will be allowed on the field & 7-9 Year old division one coach will be allowed on the field.

**D. Time**

1. The game will consist of two, twenty-minute halves. The clock will run at all times except for times outs and injuries. A fumble does not stop the clock.

2. There will be a five-minute halftime.

**OVERTIME**:

* Games can end in a tie for the 5 – 6 year old division. No overtime will be played.
* For the 7 – 9 year olds:
1. Flip coin to start.
2. Ball will be put in play on 10 yard line
3. Each team gets four downs. The team with the most yards gained or highest score wins game.

**E. Time-outs**

1. Each team will be allowed three, 60-second time-outs per half.

2. Substitutes must be made within thirty (30) seconds.

3. Time outs will not be granted in the final two (2) minutes to team up by eighteen (18) or more points.

**F. Scoring**

Touchdown = 6 points

Extra Point = 1 point from (3) yard line

Extra Point = 2 points from (5) yard line

Safety 2 points

*Note: Teams must notify officials if attempting a 2-point play. Extra points may be scored via the pass or run.*

**G. Coin Toss**

1. The game will not start with a coin toss.

2. The team listed as the “home team” on the [www.quickscores.com/ruston](http://www.quickscores.com/ruston) will have first possession at their 10 yard line.

3. The team listed as the “away team” will designate which goal their team will defend.

**H. Line of Scrimmage/Downs**

1. Four offensive players must be on or within one yard of the line of scrimmage before a play is started.

2. The offensive team has 4 downs and another 1st down can be gained by crossing the next 20 yard.

3. The center cannot retain the snap; the ball must be exchanged to a player in the backfield.

4. Motion is allowed, however, only one player may be in motion per play and the player cannot be moving towards the line of scrimmage while in motion.

**J. Flags**

1. Flags may not be wrapped or tied.

2. All players must wear flags while on the field.

3. The spot on the field where the flag belt is pulled from the ball carrier is where the down ends, and the ball is next put in play.

4. It is the player’s responsibility to be wearing a securely fastened belt.

5. If a player’s flags are inadvertently lost, the player shall be ineligible to handle the ball. If a player without flags handles the ball, the down ends immediately.

6. All flags must be worn over their jersey and jerseys must remain tucked in.

7. A player may not hold or guard their flags from a defensive player. Spinning, stiff arming, or leaving your feet to avoid being deflagged is prohibited. The penalty is that the ball is blown dead at the point of infraction.

**K. Blocking**

1. Players that are blocking must have their arms behind their back.

1. No blocking below the waist or at the backside of a player. Low and rolling blocks are forbidden. The hands must stay in contact with your body when you are blocking.

2. Down field blocking is allowed, provided it is a legal block.

**L. Passing**

1. All players are eligible to receive a pass.

2. All forward passes must be thrown from behind the line of scrimmage.

3. There may be more than one forward pass, forward passes must be thrown from behind the line of scrimmage.

4. If a pass is caught simultaneously by opposing players, the ball shall be blown dead and awarded to the offensive team.

5. A receiver needs only one foot inbounds for a legal catch.

6. The clock will not stop after an incomplete pass.

**M. Fumble/Dead Ball**

1. All fumbles are dead when it hits the ground and the ball goes back to the team that had possession of the ball at the point of the fumble, except after the 4th down.

2. The ball may not be fumbled forward.

3. A live ball becomes dead when:

* an official blows the whistle and declares it dead
* the ball goes out of bounds
* any part of the ball carrier’s, other than the hand or foot, touches the ground
* a forward pass strikes the ground
* a ball carriers flag is removed
* an inadvertent whistle occurs

4. A fumble does not stop the clock

***5. Please remember that if a ball carriers’ knee is down, the play is over and blown dead.***

**N. Defensive Restriction**

1. Defensive players may not use their hands as blockers. They must attempt to avoid blockers. Incidental contact with the hands will be allowed, but should the defender gain an advantage by use of the hands, he/she will be penalized.

2. Defensive players may not impede the forward progress of the ball carrier.

3. Defense must line up three yards off the ball, with an immediate rush allowed. Inside the opponent’s 5 yard line, the 3 yard buffer will be removed.

**O. Substitutions**

1. Substitutions can be made at any time and the player may re-enter the game as often as he wishes when the ball is dead. All substitutions must be made within 30 seconds.

2. All players must report from the sideline to the huddle.

**P. Punting**

1. Prior to making the ball ready for play on 4th down, the Referee must ask the Coach if he/she wants to turn over possession of the football to the opposing team. If the response is yes, the Referee will inform the other team and then mark off 20 yards in advance of the scrimmage line. It will be first down for that team. There are **NO** punts.

2. After a safety, the offensive team will start with the ball on their 10 yard line.

**Q. Penalties**

**15-Yard Penalties** (from line of scrimmage)

1. Unnecessary roughness (loss of down)

2. Unsportsmanlike Conduct (disqualification of coach and/or player involved)

**10-Yard Penalties** (from line of scrimmage)

1. Tackling ball carrier

2. Impeding the runner

3. Stiff-arming or tripping

4. Defensive pass interference (10 yards from line of scrimmage)

5. Offensive pass interference (10 yards from line of scrimmage & loss of down)

6. Illegal use of hands or arms or flailing elbows

7. Holding

8. Clipping

9. Roughing kicker or passer

10. Blocker leaving his feet

**5-Yard Penalties** (from line of scrimmage)

1. Delay of game

2. Kick-off out of bounds

3. Too many players on the field

4. Too few players on the line of scrimmage

5. Offsides

6. Too many timeouts requested

Note: *The offended team may take or decline a penalty. A declined penalty will result in the play standing as called.*

**R. Special Rules/Helpful Hints**

1. Please remember that if a ball carriers’ knee is down, the play is over and blown dead.

2. An emphasis should always be placed on sportsmanship!. Please remind your team of the importance of fair play and proper sportsmanship.

3. Two coaches are allowed on the field in the offensive huddle to help set the players. However, the coach must stand behind the offense once the play begins. Two coaches are allowed on the field to help set the defense but must move to the sideline prior to each snap of ball..

**S. Benches**

Teams will use the same side of the field for team area. Spectators need to keep a safe distance from the sidelines.

**T. After the game**

* Please have the players remove the flags before any post-game team meeting. The players should gently place flags in separate piles on the ground at the 50 yard line.
* Parent will form the Cheering Tunnel after each game for the players to run through and cheer for the players.
* For the last scheduled game of the evening, have the players put the flags in the equipment boxes as directed by the staff.