

Flag Football Rules & Information

7th-9th Grade



1. Players:

- Teams consist of **6 players**, with a **minimum of 5 required** to play.
- All 5 players (including the center) are eligible to receive a pass.
- A center must snap the ball on every play.
- **Coaches are allowed on the field the first four games of the season.**

2. Equipment:

- No metal cleats. Only hard plastic or screw-in cleats are allowed. Running shoes and turf shoes are acceptable alternatives.
- Shirts must be tucked in.
- Players must wear flags over each hip and one on the back. Improperly wearing or modifying the flags will result in a flag guarding penalty.
- Football size: Youth

3. Timing:

- Games consist of two 20-minute halves with a 5-minute halftime.
- Each team receives two time-outs per half (one minute each, non-carryover)
- Running clock, except:
 - Last minute of the 1st half
 - Last two minutes of 2nd half (clock stops on timeouts, incompletions, out of bounds, etc.)
- Mercy Rule: If a team is ahead by 17 or more points in the second half, the clock will only stop for injuries or timeouts.
- No overtime.

4. Scoring:

- **Touchdown:** 6 points
- **Extra Point:** must be declared prior to play
 - From 5-yard line = 1 point
 - From 10-yard line = 2 points

5. Gameplay:

- **Teams have 30 seconds from when the ball is spotted to hike the ball. Failure to do so will result in a delay of game.**
- **NO RUNNING PLAYS** – the ball must cross the line of scrimmage in the air.
- **No blitzing.** All 6 defenders must drop into coverage.
- **The ball may be passed behind the line of scrimmage, but it must cross the line of scrimmage in the air within five seconds of the snap.**
- **Lateral Passes are allowed.**
- If the ball has not been passed over the line of scrimmage within 5 seconds, the play is ruled dead and down is lost.

- The ball is spotted where the flag is pulled.
- Fumbles are dead balls, and the offense retains possession where the fumble occurred and is a loss of down.
- All possessions start at the team's own 10-yard line (including turnovers).
- **There are no kickoffs.** Following a touchdown and extra point attempt, the opposing team will begin possession at its own 10-yard line.
- **Punts: On your 4th down you can choose to punt. To do so you must declare your intention to the ref. You cannot choose to punt and then have your players go out for a pass.**
- First downs are earned by passing the next 10-yard line marker.
- **Blocking and Contact**
 - **No offensive blocking downfield:** 10-yard penalty
 - **Defensive Contact is not allowed. The Defense should put themselves in the way of the offense but cannot push or move players off of their lane. That being said the Offense cannot plow through the defense.**
- **Interceptions** result in an immediate change of possession. The intercepting team is allowed to advance the ball and complete the play.
- **Muff: If the snap is not caught the QB may pick up the ball and pass it.**

6. Flag Guarding & Ball Carrier Rules:

- Flag Guarding: No blocking, swiping, or covering flags – 15-yard penalty from the spot.
- Ball carriers must use agility, not power:
 - No trucking, hurdling, stiff arms, or lowering the shoulder.
 - 10-yard penalty from the spot of the foul

7. Penalties:

Pre-Snap / Procedural Penalties

Infraction	Penalty	Enforcement	Notes
Offsides	5 yards	From LOS	
False Start	5 yards	From LOS	
Delay of Game	5 yards	From LOS	
Illegal Shift / Motion	5 yards	From LOS	1 player in motion only
Extra Time-Outs	5 yards	From LOS	–

Passing Game Penalties

Infraction	Penalty	Enforcement	Notes
Illegal Forward Pass	5 yards	From LOS	Loss of Down

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Intentional Grounding	5 yards	From LOS	Loss of Down
Offensive Pass Interference	15 yards	From LOS	–
Defensive Pass Interference	15 yards	From LOS	Automatic First Down; Half distance to goal if inside (30 yds)

Personal Fouls / Contact & Conduct

Infraction	Penalty	Enforcement	Notes
Roughing the Passer	10 yards	From LOS	Automatic First Down
Illegally Rushing the QB	10 yards	From LOS or result	Automatic First Down
Offensive/Defensive Holding	10 yards	From LOS or SOF	Backfield = LOS, Downfield = SOF
Tripping or Tackling	10 yards	From LOS or SOF	Automatic First Down
Excessive Yelling/Screaming	10 yards	From LOS	Automatic First Down
Unnecessary Roughness	10 yards	From SOF	
Unsportsmanlike Conduct	15 yards	From LOS	Automatic First Down + Ejection

Flag / Ball Carrier Violations

Infraction	Penalty	Enforcement	Notes
Flag Guarding	10 yards	From LOS	Loss of Down
Stiff Arming	10 yards	From LOS	Loss of Down
Lowering the Shoulder / Trucking	10 yards	From LOS	Loss of Down
Illegal Tackling of Runners	10 yards	From LOS	Loss of Down

Runner Illegally Wearing Flags	10 yards	From LOS	Loss of Down
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