



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

YMCA FLAG FOOTBALL RULES (ALL AGES)

WIN OR LOSE, I PLEDGE BEFORE GOD, TO PLAY THE GAME AS WELL AS I KNOW HOW TO OBEY THE RULES, AND TO BE A GOOD SPORT AT ALL TIMES, AND TO IMPROVE MYSELF, IN SPIRIT, MIND AND BODY.

Number of Players:

- Each team will play 5v5 (U6 and U8 will play 6v6)

Quarterbacks: Quarterback rushes/sneaks are NOT allowed. The quarterback may NOT cross the cone until a player that is rushing passing the line of scrimmage. Once that happens, the QB may run it or make a pass under pressure.

Equipment: Teams must wear matching colored jerseys provided by the YMCA during the games unless otherwise authorized by a YMCA Director/Coordinator. No jewelry of any kind. No metal cleats, boots, or sandals. Shirts must be tucked in under the shorts. All shorts or pants may not have any belt loops, pockets, or drawstrings. The league will provide game balls and flags. Mouth guards are recommended. Teams will use blue NFL footballs.

Length of game: Play-time will be 40 minutes; two halves of 20 minutes each. Half-time will be 3 minutes. During the final 1 minute of the each half the clock will stop for out of bounds, dead ball plays, penalties, and timeouts. A "coin toss" will determine who will receive the ball first. The offense will have 30 seconds to snap the ball after the referee places the ball on the ground. *If offense takes longer than 30 seconds, a delay of game penalty may be called and the offense will be penalized 5 yards and get the loss of down.* There will be a 21 point mercy rule. If a team is winning by 21 points or greater, the clock will not stop during the last minute of the half.

Overtime: If the teams have the same score at the end of regulation, the game will end in a tie. Overtime play occurs only in Bowl Games and the rules for overtime are as follows:

- A coin flip will determine the team's choice. The winner has the option of choosing offense, defense, or which end zone overtime play will occur at. The losing team will then have the choice of whatever the offense didn't choose (offense/defense or direction).
- Both teams will get the ball once (4 downs) and start from the 20 yard line. From this point regulation rules apply. If the teams are tied after the first overtime the ball will be moved to the 10 yard line for the 2nd overtime and any subsequent overtimes until a winner is decided.

Length of Field:

- Divided every 20 yards with 10-yard end zones. At every 20 yard marker a team will get a new set of 4 downs. The Playing Field Dimensions are 40 x 60 yards. Ball starts on the 5 yard line at the beginning of each half, after a touchdown, after a safety, and after a declared punt.

Coaches: 1 or 2 coaches can be on the field per team during preseason. No coaches on the field during regular season and Bowl Games. Exception: 6u and 8u may have 1 coach on the field.

Keeping Score:

(Preseason) No score will be kept during the first two weeks of the season, as they are considered preseason.

(Regular season) Score and standings will be kept for the next three weeks, and are considered regular season.

(Bowl Game) Each team will play a 6th week, considered their bowl game. The time and location of that game will be determined after the last "regular season" game, and will be based on team's final regular season standings.

Dead balls: The ball is considered dead when:

- The flag is pulled by a player from the opposing team.
- The flag belt falls off before or after the player has control of the ball.
- The ball touches the ground from either a fumble or incomplete pass.
- Play goes out of bounds.
- On a touchdown or safety.
- Any part of the ball carriers body hits the ground, other than their feet or hands.

Timeouts: Each team will be given two timeouts per half. Unused timeouts do not carry over to the second half. Timeouts will last 30 seconds.

Punting / Kicking: There will be no punting or kicking during the duration of the game. On 4th down teams may declare a punt, and the ball will be given to the defense on their 10 yard line. If a team goes for a first down or touchdown on 4th down, and does not make it, the defending team will receive the ball at the spot of the downed ball.

No Run Zone: 5 yards before the end zone lines and goal to gain lines will be a "No Run Zone." *All plays with a line of scrimmage inside the "no run zones" must pass the ball.* If a play is considered a run in this zone the play will be called dead and a loss of down will be assessed. *If the ball is directly on the line a run play may be called.*

Line of Scrimmage: Teams may have one man in motion but they cannot be traveling forward. Once the center has placed his hands on the ball, the ball is set (center may hike between legs or from the side). If the offense moves (besides the person in motion) or enters the neutral zone it is considered a false start. The whistle is blown immediately and the offense is penalized 5 yards and they replay the down. If the defense enters the neutral zone and makes contact with an offensive player it is considered encroachment. The whistle is immediately blown and the defense is penalized five yards and the offense replays the down. If the defense enters the neutral zone and does not get back behind the line before the ball is snapped it is considered an offside penalty. The offense plays out the down and has the option of the result of the play or a 5yard penalty and replay of the down.

Defensive Rushing: ONE player may rush the quarterback at any time during each play. In order to rush the quarterback the player/s must start 10-yards back from the line of scrimmage. A cone will indicate the 10 yard distance. In the instance of an illegal rush play will be allowed to continue. If an improper quarterback rush is performed, the offense will have the option of the result of the play, or a five yard penalty and a replay of the down. ***Defensive players that do not start behind the 10 yard cone marker may not cross the line of scrimmage to disrupt a play until the ball is actually handed off to a running back or receiver. They may not cross the line and wait for the quarterback to hand the ball off and then pull the flag. If they do this, or cross the line of scrimmage on a fake hand-off a penalty may be called.***

Backwards Passes and Fumbles: A player may not intentionally throw a backwards pass out of bounds to waste time or to avoid being downed. Laterals are allowed as long as the ball travels backwards. Once a ball touches the ground it is considered a dead ball, and the down is over.

Forward Pass and Interceptions: If a player is in the air catching a ball, one foot must land in bounds with the ball in their possession. If members of opposing teams catch the ball simultaneously, you can run the ball like a normal interception, down the field. There will only be one forward pass allowed per play. All players are eligible receivers. Even the quarterback is eligible if he/she laterals the ball behind the line of scrimmage.

Pass Interference: It is pass interference if an eligible receiver is de-flagged or touched prior to touching the ball on a pass thrown beyond the line of scrimmage. If defensive pass interference occurs the offense will receive ball at the spot of the foul and get an automatic first down. If the defensive pass interference occurs in the end zone, the ball will be placed at the 1 yard line, and the offense will get an automatic first down. If offensive pass interference occurs the result will be a 5 yard penalty from the initial line of scrimmage, and loss of a down. If the pass interference by either team is intentional or unsportsmanlike the player may be removed from part or all of the game. Note: It is not an interference if 2 players go up for a catch and one or both get knocked down.

Substitutions: Players may substitute on every play, timeouts, after touchdowns, and injuries.

Safety: If the offensive ball carrier brings the ball into their end zone under their own power and their flag is pulled, it is a safety. If the offensive team commits a foul in the end zone, it will be declared a safety. The defensive team will receive 2 points, and get the ball on their 5-yard line.

· Exception: When a player on the defensive team intercepts a forward pass and their momentum takes them into their end zone where the ball becomes dead, the ball will belong to that team at the spot of the initial interception.

Scoring: Touchdown = 6 Points

Extra 1 point = Successful play from the 5 yard line

Extra 2 points = Successful play from the 10 yard line

Extra 3 points = Successful play from the 20 yard line

Safety = 2 points

Personal Fouls: This is a non-contact league. No player shall:

- Punch, strike, strip, or attempt to steal the ball from a player who has possession.
 - Trip or clip an opponent.
 - Throw, hold, or tackle the runner to the ground.
 - Make any contact with an opponent deemed as unnecessary roughness outside the rules.
 - Deliberately drive or run into a defensive player.
- *All of these infractions are a 5-yard penalty, either from the end of the play or from the spot of the foul, depending on the circumstance.*
- *All penalties on the offense result in the loss of yardage and the loss of down.*
- *All penalties on the defense result in replay of down for offense and could get more yardage.*

Sportsmanship / Roughing: If the referee witnesses any act of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any other unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be asked to sit out of part or all of the game. **Foul play will not be tolerated.**

· Trash talking is not permitted by any players, coaches, or spectators. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If trash talking occurs, the

referee will give one warning. If it continues, the player, coach, or spectator will be asked to sit out of all or part of the game or leave the playing area.

Roughing the Passer: Any contact to the quarterbacks upper torso while throwing will result in a 5-yard penalty from the previous spot and an automatic first down. This includes the quarterbacks arm as he throws.

Line Blocking: Since defensive quarterback rushers start 10 yards from the line of scrimmage NO blocking for the quarterback is allowed. An illegal block will be a 5 yard penalty at the discretion of the defense. If a player is blocking during any other part of the play their hands must be to their sides or behind their back. Blockers are allowed to move, but if a blocker uses their arms or excessively use their shoulders or head there will be a 5-yard penalty from the line of scrimmage and a replay of the down.

The Flag Belt: All shirts must be tucked in and not hang over the belt. Should a player lose their flag belt during a down and that player gains possession of a live ball, that player will be considered down at the spot where they gained possession. Any play that results from a player that has illegally tied or altered the flag belt will be disallowed and a 5-yard penalty and a loss of down will be assessed from the line of scrimmage. The ball is spotted dead where the flag was pulled, not where the ball is at the time of the flag pull. If the quarterback's flag is pulled before the ball leaves the hand he is down. Triple threat flag belts will be used.

Guarding the Flag Belt: Runners shall not guard their flag by using their hands, arms, or the ball to deny the opportunity for an opponent to pull, or remove the flag belt. Flag Guarding includes:

- · Swinging the hand or arm over the belt.
- · Lowering the shoulder, placing an arm over the belt.
- · Using the ball to protect the flags.
- · Stiff-arming an opponent.
- · Continuous jumping or spinning simply to prevent the flag from being pulled. A penalty of 5-yards will occur from the spot of the foul and the offense loses that down.

Official Authority: An official has the authority to rule on any situation not specifically covered in the rules. His/Her decision is final, unless ruled otherwise by the site supervisor. The officials have the right to eject players or have them sit out part or all of the game. Fans, coaches, and spectators are all subject to the rules and disciplinary policies that are found in YMCA's code of conduct rules.

**To put Christian principles into practice
through programs that build healthy
spirit, mind, and body for all.**