

YOUTH FLAG FOOTBALL RULES



Rosters – ALL Leagues

- 5-on-5

Equipment

Game balls: Provided at game site. Not provided for practices.

6U – **Mini** | 7-9U – **Pee Wee** | 10-12U – **Junior**

Flags: Provided at game site. Not provided for practices.

Team shirts: Provided by SCPR

Teams may choose to wear their own, but no competitor advertising is permitted

Mouth guards: Not provided by SCPR. Use is optional.

GAME PLAY

7U – 12U – Four 10-min quarters + 5-min halftime | 1 timeout per HALF | Sub between plays as needed

If score is within 8 points or fewer with 2 min or less remaining in the game, clock will stop on touchdowns; will start again on first snap of new possession; PAT will be untimed in this scenario only

6U – Four 8-min quarters + 3-min halftime | No timeouts | Sub between plays as needed

FIELD SIZE

7U – 12U – 30 yards x 60 yards

Each new possession starts at own 15-yard line

6U – 20 yards x 30 yards

Each new possession starts at own 5-yard line

Stoppages: 5-minute halftime | 1-minute quarter breaks | 30-second play clock (*official discretion may be used in cases of obvious stalling*) | 1 timeout (1 min) per team, per half |

SCORES & STANDINGS

7U – 12U – Scores and standings will be kept.

Score considered FINAL when difference reaches 35. Game continues, but score no longer kept.

See overtime rules below – 10-12U only

Age 7-9U will end in tie.

Winning coach should report score. In case of tie, team listed first should post score.

6U – Scores and standings are not kept.

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IN GAME RULES – Offense

Blocking: Non-contact "screen" blocking is permitted. Blockers shall not initiate contact.

Catches: Player needs one foot established in bounds at time of possession

Flags: When flag is pulled or falls off for any reason, play whistled dead

First Down: Controlling team has 4 downs to cross the first down line

Fumbles: Play is ruled dead after any fumble, which includes a bad snap

Fumbling team retains possession unless 4th Down

Officials will use discretion in younger ages or in blowouts to award a do-over on a bad snap

Overtime (10U+ only): Alternating possession (each team has chance to possess ball) from opponent's 15-yard line winner determined.

PAT: Teams will have the option to try for 1-point or 2-point conversion after scoring touchdown.

Conversion distances: 5 yards (1 point), 15 yards (2 points)

- *Interceptions thrown on conversions are live. Defensive team earns the number of points being tried by the offense if they return the conversion all the way back to opposite end zone.*

Possession: Determined by COIN TOSS to start game/OT | New possessions will start no further back than new controlling team's own 15 yard line – *this includes all scenarios.*

Team might begin a possession further down the field, in situations such as a turnover or punt/placement at midfield, but never further back than own 15.

Pre-snap: Only one player in motion at a time

Penalty not called for multiple players moving, only for multiple players IN MOTION/trying to deceive the defense.

Punt: No fake punts. Punting team must announce intention to punt. Punter may not be rushed.

- Option A: Punt | Option B: Go for it | Option C: Place ball at midfield for opponent to take over

Snap: Ball must be snapped/handed backward to a player in the backfield to be entered into play. Ball does not HAVE to be snapped between the legs.

Touchdown: Player crosses plane of the goal line with any part of the football | TD is worth 6 points

Quarterback: May not run the ball at any time – even if he is rushed | May hand off or pass at any time

IN GAME RULES – Defense

Blitz: Defensive players must be 7 yards back from LOS (*official will mark*) to be eligible to rush |

Multiple rushers may rush, as long as they were behind the marking official when ball was snapped |

Officials will use discretion in younger ages or in blowouts to issue warnings before penalizing

If a team leads by 18+ points, they may no longer rush the QB

Interceptions: Ball is live/in play until ruled dead by official (*See also: Above rule on INT on PAT attempt*)

Tackle: A "tackle" is made by removing ball carrier's flag | Player should hold flag up to show official –

then return to the player it was pulled from – this is basic good sportsmanship

The spot of the ball will be at the official's discretion, based on where they believe the ball was when the flag was removed from the runner's belt.

Actual tackling of a player will be penalized (listed below).

Officials will use discretion in cases of "tackling" deemed accidental, if it did not impact yardage gained

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IN GAME RULES – Penalties

Dead ball: Illegal carry – An act by a rusher in which he/she intentionally fails to avoid defender/contact to gain an advantage. *Translation: Players may not simply run over other players.* This act shall be whistled dead. No yards shall be penalized.

**This will be treated as a warning on the first offense, but a player committing this act multiple times will be penalized as unsportsmanlike for ensuing violations.*

5 yard PEN: Delay of Game | Elbowing | False Start | Flag Guarding | Holding | Illegal block | Illegal pass | Illegal rush | Illegal Shift | Offsides | Pass Interference | Tackling | Tripping

10 yard PEN: Unsportsmanlike conduct [+1 full half suspension at discretion of officials]

Note: Many of these penalties are subjective, as is the nature of flag football. Keep in mind that officials will use discretion in monitoring and evaluating intent in some of these things, especially flag guarding. We will always strive to err on the side of safety, but things will never be cut and dry.

Sportsmanship Point of Emphasis

NEW in 2024 – Officials and staff will now carry **YELLOW** and **RED** cards.

These cards will be issued for sportsmanship violations only – *not for anything regarding the in-game league rules.*

YELLOW – 5-yard penalty and loss of down (LOD). If the guilty party is on defense at the time of the infraction, the LOD would occur at the beginning of their next offensive possession.

RED – 15-yard penalty, plus an automatic ejection and suspension of a minimum of one game. Official's discretion may be used as to who is ejected from the game – if the official deems that the coach is responsible for the parent and could/should have diffused the situation, the coach may be ejected as well.

Game officials and site staff both have the authority to issue these cards to players, coaches and spectators.

This is a point of emphasis in an attempt to improve the quality of sportsmanship in our league and its recreational environment.

Reminder: Refunds are not issued as a result of missed games stemming from sportsmanship violations.