

YOUTH FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

SECTION 1. THE GAME

The game will be played with six players from each team on the field (League discretion). The game will consist of two 20-minute halves (running clock). Each team will be allowed 1 timeout per half, or you may defer first half timeout for a maximum of 2 timeouts in the second half. Each timeout will last for 30 seconds. In a championship game, there will be an overtime period with a coin flip in the event of a tie, college style finish, each team will have chance to score or advance the ball as far as they can.

SECTION 2. THE FIELD

The field is 180' x 80' (including end zones). The end zones are located from the edge of the soccer goalie box to the end boards. The boards around the field constitute the out- of-bounds line, any contact with the boards is considered out-of bounds and down at the spot of contact.

SECTION 3. TEAMS

Each team will consist of NO MORE than 18 players. Each player must sign the roster (or parental signature for players under the age of 18) to be eligible to play. All rosters will be finalized by the 2nd game of the season. Each team will be responsible for providing matching color uniforms with permanently attached numbers for each player on their team.

SECTION 4. RULES

RULE 1: TACKLING

A tackle is the removal of a flag worn by the ball carrier. The defender should drop the flag or hold it up in the air so it can be spotted by the official. If a flag inadvertently falls off, the ball carrier is down when touched with one hand by the opposing team. If a player carrying the ball falls or touches any part of his/her body to the ground (except their hands) they are down at spot of contact with the field. If the ball carrier touches the boards with any part of their body, they are down at spot of contact. All offensive players must begin each play with an attached flag in order to be eligible.

RULE 2: SPOTS OF BALL

If the ball touches the ground at any point during a play, it will be considered down. There are no fumbles. The ball will be spotted at the point of where the ball came out.

RULE 3: SCORING & TIME OUTS

A touchdown will be worth 7 points. Safeties are worth 2 points. There are no field goals. "Punting" is allowed, although teams will not physically kick the ball. Each team will receive 1 time out per half. First half time out (1) can be carried over to the second half for a maximum of 2 timeouts in the second half. A time out will not exceed 1 minute in duration and the clock will be started at the snap of the next play. The offensive team will get 25 seconds between plays. Any play that is not started by the end of 25 seconds will result in a delay-of-game penalty. The referee will let the offensive team know when there is 10 seconds left on play clock.

RULE 4: FORFEITS

Any team that does not have the minimum number of players (4) present to begin a game by 10 minutes after scheduled start time will forfeit the game.

RULE 5: SCRIMMAGE, SERIES OF DOWNS, FIRST DOWNS SECTION 1: THE SNAP

All plays from scrimmage must be started by a snap from center. The center may snap the ball in the traditional style or from the side, but the ball must be in contact with the ground and the center must not have any part of his/her body beyond the ball.

SECTION 2: FORMATIONS

The offensive team must snap the ball into the backfield (no center keepers or laterals at the line of scrimmage) to the quarterback. All players are eligible, and the quarterback can run immediately. One player can be in motion (laterally or backwards) at the snap of the ball. Otherwise, all offensive players must be set before the ball is snapped.

SECTION 3: THE RUSH

Defensive teams will line up no closer than 1 yard from the line of scrimmage. Each team has 1 automatic rush per four downs. Teams can rush after referees 3 second countdown on any down.

SECTION 4: FIRST DOWNS

A first down is achieved by getting the ball across the midfield stripe. Each team will get four downs to cross midfield, and another 4 downs to score a touchdown. A team will start its possession, after a TD is scored at their own goal line. If a TD is not scored by the opposing team, then they will begin the drive at the spot of final possession.

RULE 6: BLOCKING

Blocking must be done in the following manner to be legal. Hand must be open and arms must be bent at elbows (no stiff arms) or hands closed and next to your own body and block with the forearms. Blocking is permitted in the backfield (behind the line of scrimmage) only. You may "run interference" for your ball carrier, but cannot make contact with an opponent trying to make a tackle. The following are considered illegal blocks: Blocker uses excessive force to knock defender off their feet. Block above shoulders or below waist. Block to the back or blind side. Blocker holding opponent and/or clothing. Use of stiff arms. Blocker may not leave feet when blocking.

RULE 7: ILLEGAL CONTACT

- 1) No contact may be made with a receiver in pass pattern.
- 2) Defensive player may not use closed hand to grab, push or pull player.
- 3) Defensive player cannot physically tackle or trip ball carrier.
- 4) Defensive player cannot hold a ball carrier to aid in the taking of flag.
- 5) Offensive player cannot use a stiff arm or lower head into defensive player.
- 6) Offensive player may not hurdle or dive to score or gain yardage.
- 7) Receiver cannot push off, block, set picks or inhibit defender's movement in secondary on passing plays.
- 8) Excessive force cannot be used by any player at any time.

RULE 8: ENFORCEMENT OF PENALTIES

- 1) All penalties committed while a play is in progress (with a live ball) will be marked off from the original line of scrimmage and the down will be replayed. Notable exceptions are: Defensive Pass Interference (1st down at spot of infraction). Flag Guarding (5 yard penalty from spot of infraction and loss of down).
- 2) Captain of the offended has the right to refuse any penalty, whether a live or deadball foul.
- 3) Double fouls offset each other.
- 4) Half the distance rules apply only when infractions would place the ball on or in the goal area.
- 5) The referee has the option to upgrade any foul into an unsportsmanlike penalty and/or eject a player, captain, spectator, etc. (for the balance of the game) who has blatantly committed a foul with excessive force and /or in an unsportsmanlike manner. Ejected person must leave vicinity of game. Referees will report incident to the league for further review and additional disciplinary action.
- 6) If the official feels a game has gotten out of control due to unsportsmanlike behavior, he will immediately forfeit the game and will report the incident to the league for further review and additional disciplinary action.
- 7) Holding will result in an automatic first down at the spot of the foul +5 yards.

RULE 9: OFFSIDES (5 YARD PENALTY -REPLAY DOWN)

- 1) Once set, ANY offensive player on the line of scrimmage that moves will be called for illegal motion. This is called immediately by the officials. You CANNOT reset.
- 2) Defensive player crosses the 1 yard neutral zone at any time when ball is set for play.

RULE 10: DELAY OF GAME (5 YARD PENALTY-REPLAY DOWN)

- 1) If the offensive team takes over the twenty-five (25) seconds to hike the ball in play once official has whistled ball is ready for play.
- 2) If player kicks or throws ball unnecessarily.

RULE 11: ILLEGAL PROCEDURE (5 YARD PENALTY-REPLAY DOWN)

- 1) Illegal snap from center.
- 2) Illegal movement when offense is set.
- 3) Too many men on the field
- 4) Teams call for timeout when they have none remaining.

RULE 12. FLAG GUARDING (5 YARD PENALTY-LOSS OF DOWN-Penalty will be marked from spot of foul.)

- 1) Ball carrier uses hand, arm, ball, etc., to obstruct defender from grabbing flag.
- 2) Jersey or some other obstruction covers flag

RULE 13: ILLEGAL BLOCKING & ILLEGAL CONTACT (5 YARD PENALTY- REPLAY DOWN). SEE RULES 6 & 7.

RULE 14: PASS INTERFERENCE (5 YARD PENALTY-REPLAY DOWN)

- 1) Offensive player interferes with defensive player's attempt to intercept a pass.
- 2) Defender hits, bumps or holds receiver attempting to catch a pass. FIRST DOWN AT SPOT OF INFRACTION

RULE 15: UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT (10 YARD PENALTY-POSSIBLE EJECTION AND/OR SUSPENSION/EXPULSION FROM LEAGUE).

- 1) Not playing in the spirit of friendly competition and good sportsmanship. To gain an advantage over an opponent by devious means.
- 2) Use of excessive force to intimidate or cause injury.
- 3) Abusive, taunting or intimidating language.
- 4) Flags wrapped, covered, or illegally altered.
- 5) Any form of fighting, pushing, shoving, punching, or attempt to injure another person.
- 6) Dispute of calls by players other than designated captains, and/or in an uncontrolled, abusive or threatening manner.

RULE 16: PENALTIES IN LAST 2 MINUTES OF GAME.

Penalties inside the last 2 minutes of the game by the team in the lead will come with a stoppage of the game clock. This is so teams cannot deliberately delay the game by taking penalties so the clock will run out on the team trying to catch up. SUMMARY OF PENALTIESLOSS OF A DOWN (AND 5 YARD PENALTY): Illegal forward pass. Flag Guarding (5 yard penalty from spot of infraction and loss of down).

LOSS OF 5 YARDS:

- Timeout illegally used or requested.
- Delay of game.
- Illegal snap from center.
- Offensive player illegally in motion at snap.
- Offsides.
- Too many men on field.

LOSS OF 5 YARDS:

- Use of excessive force.
- Offensive pass interference.
- Striking, kicking, elbowing, and tripping.
- Hurdling, diving, lowering head.
- Roughing the passer (automatic first down).
- Illegal contact.
- Illegal block.
- Defensive holding.
- Flag guarding (also loss of down from spot).
- Stripping of the ball.

OTHER PENALTIES:

- Defensive pass interference-First down at the spot of the infraction.
- Unsportsmanlike conduct-10 yard penalty

Football Sizes

1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th & 6th grade – Pee Wee Football
7th & 8th Grade – Junior Football