

NFL Flag Football

PLAYER REQUIREMENTS

- Each player **MUST** have their NFL Flag Jersey and a mouthguard
 - any player missing either of these will not be permitted to play
 - Flags must be attached and not tied
- Each player **MUST** have their **JERSEY TUCKED IN** to their shorts with flag belt outside
 - Excess flag belt must be tucked in
- If a player's shorts has pockets, the pockets **MUST BE TAPED SHUT**
 - This is the responsibility of the parents – the YMCA will not provide tape
 - A player **CANNOT** play with untaped pockets

GAME PLAY

- **ALL PLAYERS MUST RECEIVE AS EQUAL OF PLAYING TIME AS POSSIBLE**
 - As equal as possible means if you have a player that cannot sustain playing as long as others, it is acceptable for them to play a little less or as much as they can
 - In the event of only having one substitute, all players must rotate equally (unless as noted above)
- Although there are point totals associated with scoring, **NO OFFICIAL SCORE WILL EVER BE KEPT**
 - Emphasis should be placed on how to score and the different ways of scoring, but not what overall score is
- 5v5 format and **must have a "center" to snap the ball**
 - **Exception:** Center may hand the ball on his/her right side to the QB
 - Teams may play with no more than 5 players and no less than 4 players
 - If a team only has 4 players, the opposing team may still play with 5
 - Teams may only have one running back; **NO DUAL RUNNING BACKS**
- AWAY Team starts the game with the ball on their own 5-yard line
- Home team wears color jersey and Away team wears white jersey. The schedule denotes which color each team should wear
- The offensive team always takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has 3 downs to cross midfield
 - **EXCEPTION TO 5-YARD LINE START:** interceptions (see passing section)
 - Once a team crosses midfield, it has 3 downs to score a touchdown
 - 4th down is ALWAYS an "auto-punt"
 - automatic change of possession and the opposing team starts its drive from its own 5-yard line
- After a score, teams can go for 1 or 2 point conversions (see scoring section)
 - After the conversion, regardless of success, the opposing team takes over on their own 5-yard line
- Teams change sides after the first half and the team that started the game on defense now starts with the ball at their own 5-yard line
- **THERE WILL NEVER BE ANY TACKLING, BLOCKING, KICKING OR PUNTING**

******NOTE REGARDING WEATHER******

Practices and Games will be held outdoors at their respective location regardless of weather. In the event of severe inclement weather, decision on whether to cancel will more than likely be made on a game-by-game basis (TELL THE PLAYERS TO PLAN TO SHOW UP!!) We do not have much room to reschedule games, so cancellations will be a very last resort!!!

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TIMING

- Games are played to 43 minutes running time
 - 2, 20-minute halves and a 3-minute half time
 - If a team does not have a minimum of 4 players at game time, there will be a 5-minute "grace period" to allow more players to show up
 - After the grace period, the opposing team must give the team short on players enough players to get them to at least 4 (5 when possible)
 - If the opposing team has plenty of subs, enough players should be given to allow both teams to have as equal number players as possible
 - The 1st half game clock starts when the referee blows the whistle to start and says "clock's running" regardless of if the teams are on the field or not
 - The referee will blow the whistle at 2-minutes during halftime allowing the teams 1-minute to prepare to start; clock will start when 3 minutes has elapsed
 - As soon as both teams are ready, play will begin
 - Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 45 seconds to snap the ball
 - Teams will receive **one warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced**
- The only stoppage in the play clock will come when a timeout is called or during the 2-minute warning at the end of each half
 - 2-minute warning – clock stops for out of bounds, penalties and change of possession
 - Each team has one 30-second timeout per half
 - Referee has final determination on keeping time

SCORING

EXPLAIN TO THE KIDS HOW YOU SCORE, BUT DO NOT EMPHASIZE ON WINNING OR LOSING.

- Touchdown: 6 points
- Extra point
 - 1-point conversion = 5 yard-line and must be a pass
 - 2-point conversion = 12 yard-line and can be a run or pass
- Safety: 2 points
 - Defensive team starts with ball on their own 5-yard line

RUNNING

- **NO QUARTER BACK OR CENTER SNEAKS**
 - The quarterback cannot run the ball
 - **4th-6th Division: if being blitzed, the QB can run**
- Direct handoffs and pitches behind the line of scrimmage are permitted
 - The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage
 - Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush
- Offense may use multiple handoffs, as long as they're behind the line of scrimmage
- **NO LATERALS ARE PERMITTED (a pass or pitch beyond the line of scrimmage).**
- Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player
 - no diving or jumping over a defensive player
- The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is
- "No-Run Zones"
 - located five yards from each end zone and five yards on either side of midfield
 - are designed to avoid short-yardage, power-running situations

RECEIVING

- All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage)
- As in the NFL, only one player is allowed in motion at a time
- A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception

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PASSING

- Shovel passes are allowed
- **The quarterback has a 10-second "pass clock." If a pass is not thrown within the ten seconds, play is dead, loss of down.**
 - Once the ball is handed off, the 10-second rule no longer is in effect
 - **1st-3rd Division:** will not have a pass clock
 - Delay of game may be called if referee feels QB is intentionally not throwing the ball to kill time
- **Interceptions**
 - **1st-3rd Division:** non-returnable; possession change at spot of interception
 - **4th-6th Division:** interceptions CAN be returned, the play is live until the defensive player has his flag pulled, steps out of bounds or drops the ball.

DEAD BALLS

- The ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to one side, to start play
 - **Exception:** center may hand ball on his/her right side to the QB
- Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- Play is ruled "dead" when:
 - Ball carrier's flag is pulled
 - Ball carrier steps out of bounds
 - Touchdown or safety is scored
 - Ball carrier's knee hits the ground
 - Ball carrier's flag falls out
 - **1st-3rd Division:** At the point of an interception
- **There are no live fumbles.**
 - The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground and a loss of down occurs

RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK

- **5-7yr Division:** there will not be any rushing of the quarterback
- **8-10yr Division**
 - permitted 1 rusher per down
 - The player who rushes the passer must be a minimum of ten yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped
 - However the QB may run with the ball once a defensive player has blitzed/rushed (crossed the line of scrimmage)
 - Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage
 - Once the ball leaves the quarterbacks hands, the ten-yard rule no longer is in effect, and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage. A coach of the defensive team or the referee will designate ten yards from the line of scrimmage
 - Remember, no blocking or tackling is allowed

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SPORTSMANSHIP/ROUGHING

- Ball-carriers **MUST** make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position
- If the referee or any YMCA Representative witnesses any act of overly aggressive play, intentional tackling, elbowing outside of the realms of the scope of the game, cheap shots, etc. or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be warned or ejected from the game
 - FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED
- Trash talking is illegal
- Referees and YMCA Representatives have the right to determine offensive language
 - Trash talk is talk that may be offensive to officials, opposing players, team or spectators
 - If trash talking occurs, the referee or YMCA Representative will give one warning
 - If it continues, the players, coaches, and/or spectators involved will be ejected from the game
- Unsportsmanlike conduct
 - Defense +10 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic 1st down
 - Offense -10 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
 - If loss of down occurs on 3rd down, opposing team takes over ball on their own 5-yard line

PENALTIES

- Referee has final call on all penalties
- All penalties can be accepted or declined, except for those called prior to the snap
- Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play
- Only the coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations
- Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it

ii. Defensive spot fouls

Defensive pass interference	Automatic first down
Holding	Automatic first down
Stripping	+10 yards and automatic first down

iii. Offensive spot fouls

Screening, blocking or running with the ball	-10 yards and loss of down
Charging	-10 yards and loss of down
Flag guarding	-10 yards and loss of down

iv. Defensive penalties

Defensive unnecessary roughness	+10 yards and automatic first down
Defensive Unsportsmanlike conduct	+10 yards and automatic first down
Offside	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Illegal rush <small>(Starting rush from inside 7-yard marker)</small>	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Illegal flag pull <small>(Before the receiver has the ball)</small>	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Roughing the passer	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Taunting	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down

v. Offensive penalties

Offensive unnecessary roughness	-10 yards and loss of down
Offensive unsportsmanlike conduct	-10 yards and loss of down
Offside / false start	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal forward pass <small>(Any pass received or lands behind the line of scrimmage or throwing a pass after crossing the line of scrimmage)</small>	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Offensive pass interference	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal motion <small>(More than one person moving)</small>	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Delay of game	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Impeding the rusher	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal Procedure	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down

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FIELD DIAGRAM

