

Flag Football Basics

1. Games will consist of two 20-minute halves and a five-minute halftime. The clock will only stop for timeouts and injuries.
2. Each team has one 60-second timeout per half.
3. Play will be 7v7 as long as teams have enough players available.
4. Captains (must be switched each week) for each team will meet for a coin toss before the game. The visiting team calls the toss. The winner can select offense or defense. The loser of the toss has the choice of direction. Possession changes to start the second half to the team that started the game on defense.
5. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has four (4) downs to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has three (3) downs to score a touchdown.
 - a. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield after 3 downs, they can “punt” on the 4th down which means possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its own 5-yard line OR they can go for it on the 4th down. If they opt to go for it and do not cross midfield, the opposing team will start its possession from the spot.
 - b. If the offense fails to score, after crossing midfield, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team starts its drive on its own 5-yard line.
 - c. Offensive teams MUST declare 4th down intent or snap the ball prior to the expiration of the 25-second play clock.
6. Teams switch sides in the second half.
7. No-run zones are in place to prevent teams from conducting power run plays. While in the no-run zones (a 5-yard imaginary zone before midfield and before the end zone), teams cannot run the ball in any fashion. All plays must be pass plays, even with a handoff.
8. We will not be playing overtime if the game ends in a tie.
9. Scoring will be as follows:
 - a. Touchdown = 6 points
 - b. PAT = 1 point (5-yard line, pass only) or 2 points (10-yard line, run or pass)
*Decision on which to go for must be declared. Any change requires a charged time out.
 - c. Safety = 2 points (This occurs when the ball-carrier is declared down in his own end zone. Runners can be called down when their flags are pulled by a defensive player, a flag falls out, they step out of bounds, their knee or arm touches the ground, a fumble occurs in the end zone or if a snapped ball lands in or beyond the end zone.)
 - d. Extra points that are returned = 2 points.
 - e. If a team is winning by 28 points or more, the game is over. Once a 28 or more point advantage is gained, no PAT will be attempted.

- No contact allowed. This includes tackling, diving, blocking, and screening.
- All passes must be forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- Only direct handoffs are permitted - no laterals or pitches anywhere on the field.
- The quarterback has a 7-second pass clock to get rid of the ball.
- The quarterback can't run with the ball unless it was handed off first.
- Offensive players must steer clear of the rusher and may not get in his/her way.
- Any defensive player lined up seven yards off the line of scrimmage is eligible to rush.
- If the ball is handed off, any defender may rush.
- Interceptions are returnable (even on extra point attempts).
- The ball is dead when it hits the ground, the offensive player's flag is pulled from their belt, the ball-carrier steps out of bounds, or the ball-carrier's body—outside of hands or feet—touches the ground.
- All offensive flag football penalties result in a loss of down and yardage.
- All defensive flag football penalties result in an automatic first down and some are associated with yardage.



Defensive Spot Fouls

Spot fouls are penalties assessed from the spot on the field where the foul occurred.

- Defensive pass interference: player significantly hinders an eligible receiver's opportunity to catch the ball; automatic first down
- Holding: player restrains another player who is not in possession of the ball; +5 yards and automatic first down
- Stripping: player smacks or grabs the football out of the ball-carrier's possession; +10 yards and automatic first down

Offensive Spot Fouls

Any loss of down on the third down results in a turnover, with the other team taking possession.

- Screening, blocking or running with the ball: player uses physical attempts to gain yardage by obstructing the path of their opponent; -10 yards and loss of down
- Charging: player challenges their opponent for space without using their arms or elbows; -10 yards and loss of down
- Flag guarding: ball-carrier intentionally obstructs the defender's access to their flag; -10 yards and loss of down

Defensive Flag Football Penalties

- Unnecessary roughness: using methods beyond what is necessary to pull the flag off the opponent; +10 yards and automatic first down
- Unsportsmanlike conduct: excessive celebration, abusive language, punching, kicking, etc.; +10 yards and automatic first down
- Offside: player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped; +5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
- Illegal rush: rusher is not lined up at least seven yards off the line of scrimmage; +5 yards from the line of scrimmage and automatic first down
- Illegal flag pull: player pulls the flag off an opponent before they have full possession of the ball; +5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
- Roughing the passer: player makes contact with the passer after they've thrown a forward pass; +5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
- Taunting: type of unsportsmanlike conduct where the player purposely creates ill will between teams; +5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down

Offensive Flag Football Penalties

- Unnecessary roughness: using methods beyond what is necessary to pull the flag off the opponent; -10 yards and loss of down
- Unsportsmanlike conduct: excessive celebration, using abusive language, punching, kicking, etc., -10 yards and loss of down
- Offside/false start: player charges or moves in a way that indicates the start of the play before the ball is snapped; -5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
- Illegal forward pass: player throws the ball forward once they are past the line of scrimmage; -5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
- Pass interference: eligible receiver significantly hinders the defensive player's opportunity to intercept the ball; -5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
- Illegal motion: players shifting and not coming to a complete stop before the ball is snapped; -5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
- Delay of game: team fails to snap the ball and put it in play; -5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
- Impeding the rusher: rusher's path or line is occupied by a moving offensive player; -5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
- Illegal procedure: technical rules violation, such as illegal formation; -5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down