

# 7 on 7 flag football rules

## Start of the game

1. Game time is starting time; there will be no grace period. The officials watch will be the timepiece used to decide game time.
2. The referee shall toss a coin after designating which captain shall call the toss. The winner of the toss shall have first choice of the options for either the first or the second half. The other team shall have the first choice of options for the half the winner of the toss did not select. The options are: to choose whether a team will play offense (receive) or defense or to choose the goal a team will defend. Teams automatically switch ends at the half.

## Game time

1. Games will be two 25-minute halves of running time. Half time will be 5-minutes
2. The offensive team has 25 seconds from the time the ball and restraining line are set by the officials to put the ball back into play. If the team exceeds 25 seconds, officials will call a delay of game penalty.
3. A game or half cannot end on a defensive penalty unless the penalty is refused.
4. In case of tie at the end of regulation play during the regular season, the game will end and be recorded as a tie.

## Passing

1. All players are eligible to receive a pass at 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade. The center is not eligible at 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade.
2. Only one forward pass per down (either over handed or underhanded).
3. No forward hand-off between the quarterback and the center are allowed.
4. The quarterback has a seven-second “pass clock.” If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, play is dead, the down is consumed and the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage. If the QB is standing in the end zone at the end of the 7-second clock, the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage.

## Formations

1. Players in motion do not count as players on the line of scrimmage.
2. Following the ready for play whistle and until a legal snap, no defensive player may encroach, touch the ball, stand in, or in any other way interfere with the offensive team.

## Scoring

1. Touchdown: 6 Points
2. Safety: 2 Points
3. Point after touchdown: From 5-yard line: 1 Point, From 10-yard line: 2 Points
4. Once a team has made their choice on the extra point, they can only change their decision by taking a time-out.

## Running

1. The ball is spotted where the runner’s feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball carrier has the ball. If one foot precedes the other, the forward foot marks the spot.
2. The quarterback cannot directly run the ball.
3. The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
4. Once the ball has been handed off in front or behind the quarterback, all defensive players are eligible to rush.

## Rushing the passer

1. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the QB may defend on the line of scrimmage.
2. Once the ball is handed off, the five yard rule is no longer in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
3. All players rushing the QB may attempt to block a pass. However, no contact can be made with the QB in any way.
4. Offense cannot impede the rusher in any way. Any interference will be considered screening.

## First down

1. A first down is awarded when the offensive team crosses the midfield line whether by pass or run.

## Fumbles

1. All fumbled balls touching the ground are dead immediately at the spot the ball is next put into play at that spot.
2. The team fumbling the ball retains possession of the ball (except on the 4th down).
3. All incomplete laterals or passes behind the line of scrimmage will be spotted where the ball lands.
4. Any player catching a passed or fumbled ball that does not touch the ground can advance that ball.
5. A fumbled ball by an offensive team in their end zone constitutes a safety.

## Flag belts and legal "tackles"

1. Each player must wear a flag belt. Every player must have their shirt tucked in their pants.
2. If a player loses his/her flag belt and has possession of the ball, the defense must touch them with one hand between the shoulders and knees to make the legal "tackle."
3. A legal tackle is made when a defensive player detaches the flag belt from the ball carrier.
4. A shielding infraction will be called if a ball carrier uses his/her hands, arms, the ball or clothing to hide or prevent an opponent from pulling the flag belt.
5. Any ball carrier caught wearing the belt illegally will be ejected from the field of play.
6. The ball is dead if either knee of the ball carrier touches the ground at any time.

## Equipment

1. Only sneakers and artificial turf shoes or football cleats are permitted. (No metal spikes or bare feet will be allowed.)
2. No jewelry (rings, necklaces, or earrings) is to be worn when playing.
3. For clarification, illegal equipment consists of: Headwear containing any hard, unyielding, stiff material, including billed hats, or items containing exposed knots. Pads or braces worn above the waist. Shirts or jerseys that do not remain tucked in. Any hood on a coat, sweatshirt, or shirt that does not remain tucked in. Pants or shorts with any belt(s), belt loop(s), pockets(s), or exposed drawstring(s). Exposed metal on clothes or person. Towels attached at the player's waist.

## Field dimensions and downs

1. The size of the field will be 50-yards by 85-feet, with 10-yard end zones.
2. The field will have no-running zones that will be 5 yards from each end zone and 5 yards on both sides of the midfield line.
3. During a runback, if a penalty pushes the line of scrimmage behind the 5-yard line the ball shall be placed at the 5-yard line.

## Number of players

1. There is a minimum of five players required to start a game and maximum of seven players to continue a game.
2. Free substitution is allowed after the ball is ready for play and before the snap, each player or entering substitute of an offensive team can be lined up anywhere behind the line of scrimmage.
3. All players and coach's on the sidelines are expected to stay one yard from the playing area.
4. Only one player may be in motion parallel to the line at any one time before the ball is snapped.

## Punting

1. On fourth down the Referee must ask the Offensive team if they want to "punt." If they elect to punt the ball is placed at the starting line of the other team and the other team takes possession. If the Offensive team elects not to punt and fails to get a first down [cross the midfield line] the ball is spotted where the player was "tackled" or at the line of scrimmage in the event of an incomplete pass.

## Blocking

1. For 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade there will be no blocking.
2. For 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade the center may screen block with his hands behind his back. He may not use his hands to block. This is for the purpose of developing foot work with our offensive lineman. If hands are used it will be an illegal use of hands penalty.

## Safety and touchbacks

1. A fumbled ball by an offensive team in their end zone constitutes a safety.
2. If a team intercepts a pass in the end zone and does not advance the ball out of the end zone it is a touchback. The ball is put in play on the 10-yard line.
3. Following a safety, the ball shall be placed on the 5-yard line of the team credited with the safety.

**There may be one coach on the field for 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade and no coaches on the field for 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade.**

## Penalties

### Penalties with a loss of 5 yards

Delay of game or illegal substitution  
Interference with opponent or ball before snap  
False start or any illegal act by the snapper.  
Encroachment  
Illegal position at snap  
Player illegally in motion  
Illegal shift  
Illegal handing ball forward  
Illegal forward pass.  
Illegal procedure  
Offsides

### Penalties with loss of 10 yards

Delaying start of either half  
Offensive forward pass interference  
Holding  
Striking, kicking, kneeling (also result in disqualification)  
Clipping, hurdling, tripping  
Illegal participation  
Unsportsmanlike conduct by player, coach, or attendant  
Pushing runner or interlocked interference  
Illegal use of hand or arms  
Roughing the passer  
Holding ball carrier to remove flag  
Guarding the flag or stiff arming