

NFL Flag Football League Playing Rules and Guidelines



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GAME PLAY

- Team listed first takes possession in the first half, second team listed the second half
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has four (4) plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has four (4) plays to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on its 5-yard line.
- If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its 5-yard line.
- All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line.
- Teams change sides and possession each half.

COACH AS QUARTERBACK (K/1 DIVISION ONLY)

- Offense team coach will assume the position of Quarterback for the entire game.
- The purpose of this is to allow for more offensive possession in the teams zone.
- The Coach QB must adhere to the 7 Second Pass Clock and is limited to pass or hand off directly to another offensive player.
- He/She is not an eligible receiver, may not block, or interfere in any way with a defensive player attempting to tackle (after a hand off).
- Failure to adhere, or act in an unsafe or irresponsible manner will result in the removal of the coach from the field for the remainder of the game.

THE TEAM

- Teams must field a minimum of five (5) players at all times.
 - Recommended Offense – 1 QB, 1 RB, 2 WR, 1 C
 - Recommended Defense – 2 DL, 2 CB, 1 S
- Teams consist of 10 players (5 on the field with 5 substitutes).
- Offense must start with at least two **on the line of scrimmage, including the center.**

GAME TIMING

- K/1 division will play 2 - 20 minute halves, running clock
- 2/3 division will play 2 - 25 minute halves, running clock



- **4/5 division will play 2 – 25 minute halves, running clock**
- **All players will be required to play a total of at least 12 downs per game.**
- Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced.
- There are no time outs
- Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.

OFFICIATING

- The Parks and Recreation Department will supply a referee.

SCORING (2/3, 4/5 DIVISIONS ONLY)

- Touchdown: 6 points
- Extra point: Team Choice
1 point (played from 3-yard line) or
2 points (played from 5-yard line)
- Safety: 2 points

Please note: K/1 Division no score will be kept, 2/3 and 4/5 Divisions score will be kept by the referee on the field. No league standings will be kept for either division.

RUNNING

- The quarterback cannot run with the ball beyond the line of scrimmage.
- Absolutely NO laterals or pitches of any kind **beyond the line of scrimmage.**
- “No-running zones,” located 5 yards from each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield, are designed to avoid short-yardage, power-running situations.
- 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.
- Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player (no diving).
- The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.
- Receiving the snap – the **quarterback** must take the snap directly (no indirect snaps) either directly under the center or in the shotgun formation.

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.

PASSING

- All passes must be forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- The quarterback has a seven-second “pass clock.” If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, play is dead, loss of down. Once the ball is handed off, the seven-second rule no longer is in effect.
- Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception. Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start on the 5-yard line. At the time of the interception, the whistle is blown and the ball is declared dead.

DEAD BALLS

- The ball must be snapped between the legs, or off to one side, to start play. Shotgun snaps are allowed.
- 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.
 - At the point of an interception (interception returns are not allowed).
 - Ball carrier’s knee hits the ground.
 - Ball carrier’s flag falls out.

Please note: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground and the team does not lose possession.

RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK

- No rushing the Quarterback.
- Screen block – Offensive line man may use a “screen block” where he/she must keep their hands either to their sides or behind their back. No body contact is allowed.

Please note: There are no kickoffs, and no hand blocking is allowed. We will be using a screen block with hands placed behind the blocker, or down at the blockers waist.

PENALTIES

- All penalties will be called by the referees.

DEFENSE

Offsides	5 yards and automatic first down
Interference:	10 yards and automatic first down
Illegal Contact (blocking, tackling, etc.)	10 yards and automatic first down
Illegal Rushing (rushing from inside marker)	10 yards and automatic first down

OFFENSE

Illegal Motion/False Start	5 yards and loss of down
Illegal Forward Pass (pass beyond L.O.S.)	5 yards from spot and loss of down
Flag Guarding	10 yards from spot and loss of down
Pass Interference	10 yards from L.O.S. and loss of down
Delay of Game (30 second snap count)	5 yards and loss of down

- Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage.
- Only the team captain may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players cannot question judgment calls.
- Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.

ATTIRE

- Cleats are allowed, except for metal spikes. Inspections will be made.
- All players must wear a protective mouthpiece; there are no exceptions.

SPORTSMANSHIP/ROUGHING

If the referee witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.

Trash talking is illegal. Referees have the right to determine offensive language. (Trash talk is talk that may be offensive to referees, opposing players, teams, or spectators.) If trash talking occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the player or players will be ejected from the game.

Sportsmanship is defined as the practice of participating in sports with a conduct and attitude considered to be befitting of a participant in that sport, especially fair play, courtesy, striving spirit, and grace in losing. It encompasses both Ethical Behavior and acts of Integrity.

Sportsmanship is important because the goal is to have fun, win or lose. Good sports behavior means treating all opponents with fairness, generosity, courtesy and respect. As well as, not retaliating or reacting in a negative way to any situation or player regardless of the circumstances.