

PREMIER
FOOTBALL



PREMIER
FLAG FOOTBALL FEDERATION

5 MAN ELIGIBLE RULE BOOK

REVISION ■ REV062124



EQUIPMENT

THE BALL

- The ball must meet specifications of size and shape for a regulation football. During the game, each team must use a legal ball of their choice when in possession.

FLAG BELTS

- Each Player on the field must wear a **popper flag belt**. The flags must be of contrasting color to the pants. Flags cannot match shorts, and must be at least 12 inches long. Flags must be worn on hips as intended, any looping, tying, cutting, or flag alteration of any kind will be an unsportsmanlike penalty 10 yards plus loss of down.
- All players must start with their flag belts on. If a player starts without his flag belt properly secured with all flags attached, his team will be assessed a 5 yard and loss of down penalty.

SHOES:

- Tennis shoes, molded cleats and screw-in cleats will be allowed as long as the cleats are not worn down and metal is sticking out.
- No metal spikes are allowed!

JERSEYS

- Teams must have similar colored jerseys or shirts.
- Teams must bring a dark and light t-shirt; visitors are required to change if both teams are similar in color.
- No article of clothing shall cover any portion of the player's flag. Shirts must be long enough to be tucked in or short enough to a minimum height of 4 inches from the bottom of the jersey to waistline. Penalty: 10 yards

HATS

- Baseball hats are allowed but must be worn backwards.
- Boonie hats (soft brim) or the like are allowed, but no lanyard can be attached.

PROTECTIVE GEAR

- Players may tape their forearms, hands and fingers. Players may wear gloves, elbow pads and knee pads. Braces with exposed metal are not allowed and must be taped. All protective headwear must be approved by game officials prior to game time.

JEWELRY

- Players must remove all watches, earrings or any other jewelry that Officials deem hazardous.

FIELD AND ROSTERS

FIELD *(Size may vary slightly depending on the facility/park restrictions)*

- Field Length = 60 yards
- Field Width = 25 yards
- End Zones (2) = 7 yards

TEAM ROSTERS

- Team rosters will consist of 15 maximum players.
- Players can only be on one (1) waiver/roster. **No Exceptions**, even if the other team approves it. If a player is found playing on a team illegally, the team will forfeit the game in which the illegal player participated.

MINIMUM PLAYERS

- Forfeit will be called at game time if minimum players are not present to start.
- Teams must start and play throughout the game with a minimum of 3 players. If at any point a team has only 2 players during game play the game will be called a forfeit regardless of the score.
- The score of a forfeited game will be 28-0.

THE GAME

COIN TOSS

- A coin toss shall begin each game. The captain winning the toss shall choose one of the following options:
 - Offense
 - Defense
 - Designate which goal his team will defend
 - Defer choice to the second half
- Loser of the coin toss shall make a choice of the remaining options.
- Before the start of the second half, the choice of options shall be reversed.

POSSESSIONS

- The offensive team takes possession of the ball on the 5-yard line and has 3 plays to cross mid-field.
- If the offensive team fails to cross mid-field, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on their 5 yard line.
- If the offensive team crosses mid-field, they will have 3 plays to score a touchdown.
- If the offense fails to score after crossing mid-field, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on their 5 yard line.
- All drive and possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line.
 - **Exception:** *On interceptions, the team will take possession of the ball where the defender's flag was pulled. Penalties on interceptions will be assessed where the interception occurred.*
 - **Exception:** *If the referee judges that a player intentionally or flagrantly commits a penalty then the penalty will be at the point of the foul, no less than the point of the interception.*
- Teams will switch ends after the first half.

THE GAME

GAME CLOCK

- The game will consist of two halves 12 minutes each. The clock will start on the referee's ready for play whistle.
- Halftime will be 1 minute.
- The huddle clock will be 25 seconds. Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 25 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay of game penalty is enforced. Penalty will result in loss of down.
- First Half Clock
 - The clock will run continuously during the 12 minutes of the first half unless a team timeout is used or play is stopped by an official (e.g. deal with an injury, challenge, referee conference, game management purposes, etc.)
 - The head official will give a verbal one-minute warning.
 - The clock will run during point-after-touchdown attempts (PATs) in the first half unless either team opts to use a team timeout.
- Second Half Clock
 - In the second half the clock will run continuously for the first 11 minutes unless a team timeout or an official's time out is used.
 - The one-minute warning will stop the clock in the second half if the score difference is 8 points or less.
 - The head official will give a verbal one-minute warning as close as possible to the actual marks but will not interrupt a live play.
 - At the one minute warning officials will use a 'stop' clock mechanic for the remainder of the contest.
 - Downing the ball will only be counted as a 20 second run off the clock.

TIME OUTS

- Each team is entitled to (2) 30 second time outs per game.
- Each team is entitled to (1) 30 second time out per overtime period.
- Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
- In the event of an injury, the clock will stop then restart when the injured player is removed from the field of play.
- If a time out is called after a TD the clock will not run until the change of possession and the offense snaps their ball.

SCORING

SCORING

- Touchdowns = 6 points
- Extra point from 5 yards out = 1 point (Pass Only)
- Extra point from 12 yards out = 2 point (Pass or Run)
 - Note:** A team that scores a touchdown must declare whether it wished to attempt a 1 or 2 point conversion. Any change, once a decision is made to try for the extra point, requires a charged time out. Decisions cannot be changed after a penalty.*
- Interception returned from any extra point try is worth 2 points.
- Safety = 2 points
- Forfeited game = 28 points (game time is forfeit time)

MERCY RULE

- No Mercy Rule during pool play games. If a team is up by 28 points or more during bracket play at any time, the game will be over..

OVERTIME:

- If the score is tied after the 2nd half, teams move directly into overtime.
- A coin flip determines first possession, 1 timeout per OT period
- Teams will go in reverse order if more then 1 OT is required
- Teams can elect to go for 1 or 2 points
- Winner will be determined once the value of the extra point exceeds the other team's attempt

POINT AFTER TOUCHDOWN (PAT)

- Following a touchdown, once the scoring team has informed an official of which point conversion choice they want to attempt, the decision cannot be changed unless the scoring team uses a team timeout.
- If a penalty occurs during an extra point attempt, the penalty will be assessed but the extra point value remains the same.
- Decisions cannot be changed after a penalty. For example, if the offense attempts a 1-point PAT and is penalized five yards for a false start, they cannot change their mind and go for a 2-point PAT. They will still be attempting a 1-point try even if they call a timeout.
- Defensive unsportsmanlike conduct, personal fouls, or roughing penalties during a successful touchdown attempt will be assessed at half the distance to the goal during the PAT attempt (e.g., 2-point PAT attempts will be spotted at the 6-yard line, 1-point PAT attempts will be spotted at the 2.5-yard line). All other defensive penalties may be declined by the offense and the score will stand.
- Dead ball fouls committed by the offense that do not carry a loss-of-down penalty (false start) may result in penalty yardage assessed and the down replayed.
- Fouls by the offense during a successful PAT attempt that carry a loss-of-down penalty (flag guarding, illegal advancement, illegal forward pass, etc.) will result in the PAT being no good.
- Fouls committed by the offense in unsuccessful PAT attempts will be declined by the defense and the PAT will be "no good" and will not be replayed.
- Fouls by the defense during an unsuccessful PAT attempt will result in a retry after the options are administered.
- If the PAT-attempting team throws an interception and then commits a flagrant foul after the interception during the attempted return (physically contains the ball carrier; bear hugs, aggressively holds, tackles, etc. without making a clear, legal attempt to pull the ball carrier's flag, the ball carrier will be awarded two points).

LIVE BALL & DEAD BALLS

LIVE BALL

- The ball is live at the snap and remains live until the Official whistles the ball dead.
- **Imitation Offensive Signals**- The defense may not imitate the offensive team's signals by trying to confuse the offensive players while the Quarterback is calling out signals to start a play. This will result in an Unsportsmanlike Conduct Penalty. 10 yards

DEAD BALLS

- The ball is ruled dead when:
 - A snap to a Quarterback hits the ground.
 - A fumble hits the ground (no fumble recoveries are allowed).
Note: If the referee feels that there is an intentional fumble to better the offense, then it will be loss of down from the previous line of scrimmage.
 - A ball carrier's knee touched the ground.
 - A ball carrier steps out-of-bounds.
 - A ball carrier's flags are legally removed.
Note: If a ball carrier's flags fall off inadvertently, play shall revert to a 1 hand touch between the shoulders and knees.
 - A touchdown, point after touchdown or safety is scored.
 - Any Official can whistle a play dead.
 - Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
 - Ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground.

NEUTRAL ZONE

- The Official will indicate the Neutral Zone and Line of Scrimmage. It is an automatic dead ball foul if any player on the offense or defense enters the Neutral Zone. In regards to the Neutral Zone, the official may give both teams a "courtesy" Neutral Zone notification to allow their players to move back behind the line of scrimmage.

SPOTTING THE BALL

- The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground. There are no fumbles.
- The ball will be spotted wherever the ball was at the time of the flag pull.

INADVERTENT WHISTLE (In the case of an inadvertent whistle the offense has 3 options)

- The ball is in the player possession – the team in possession may elect to put the ball in play where declared dead or replay the down.
- The ball is loose from a fumble, backwards pass or illegal forward pass – the team in possession may elect to put the ball in play where possession was lost or replay the down.
- During a legal forward pass the ball is returned to the previous spot and the down is replayed.

Note: If a foul occurs during an inadvertent whistle, an accepted penalty shall be administered as in any other play situation. When the foul is accepted, disregard the inadvertent whistle.

OFFENSE

RUSHING

- All offensive players may run the ball at any time, except in the no-run zones which are located 5 yards before mid-field and 5 yards before the goal line only in the direction that the offense is going.
- Teams may handoff (unlimited), pitch, or throw back in the backfield. UNLIMITED laterals or throwbacks behind the LOS are allowed for the player to remain eligible to pass.
- Pitching (backwards/laterally) is allowed downfield (unlimited). Handoffs are allowed forward or backwards when behind the line of scrimmage, and only backwards beyond the line of scrimmage. A handoff DOES NOT count as a lateral/throwback.
- A forward pass DOES have to cross the LOS to be a legal play.
- If the ball is placed on the "Back" of ANY player, the player MUST run the ball (no give and go to the QB on the back)
- Ball is spotted where the ball is at the time of the flag pull. The ball must break the plane of the midfield or goal line to be considered a first down or touchdown.
- Only the center needs to be lined up on the LOS

BLOCKING

- CONTACT IS ALLOWED: Open hand contact allowed between shoulder and waist. Blocking in the back is not allowed.
- Players may block down field. Blocking downfield is only allowed once the ball is completed downfield. Players may block downfield for all running plays or when the pass is behind the LOS except when the LOS is established inside the no run zone. Offensive players blocking downfield before the ball is thrown downfield will be assessed a pass interference penalty (5 yards from the LOS).
- Crackback Blocking and Blindsided blocking is NOT allowed. Crack-back block is a blind-side block on a player by an opponent who starts downfield and then cuts back toward their own goal line to make contact. A blind-side block is engaging an opponent other than the runner who does not see the blocker approaching.

PASSING

- There is no 5 second count to pass the ball if not rushed.
- There is no arm in motion, if the ball is in hand when the quarterback's flag is pulled then it will be ruled a sack.
- Interceptions may be returned.
- The rusher may not have any contact with the QB (no hitting the QB arm or knocking the ball out of the QB hand).
- If ANY part of the players body is behind the LOS it is a legal pass
- **Intentional grounding** – A passer may not intentionally throw the ball into the ground to avoid a loss of yardage. *Exception: In the last minute of the game, a passer may throw the ball into the ground to stop the clock and conserve time for his team. The play is legal, provided the passer is not trying to avoid a loss of yardage.*

OFFENSE

RECEIVING

- All players are eligible to receive passes.
- Only one player is allowed in motion at a time. All motion must be parallel to the Line of Scrimmage and no motion is permitted towards the Line of Scrimmage.
- A player must have at least one (1) foot in-bounds to make a legal reception.
- In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.
- 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.
- Receivers may be bumped one time within 5 yards of the Line of Scrimmage.

RUSHING THE PASSER

- Players may rush from anywhere as long as any part of their body is not across the LOS.
- The Center is protected when he snaps the ball. The Center cannot be touched until he/she picks up their head and takes one step towards his/her pattern or assumes a blocking position.
- A Ball Spotter shall be used to mark the Line of Scrimmage and the Rush Line.
- Players rushing the Quarterback may attempt to block the pass, however, NO contact can be made with the Quarterback in any way. Blocking the pass or attempting to block the pass and then making contact with the passer will result in a Roughing the Passer Penalty. Players must go for the Quarterback's flags.
- A sack occurs if the Quarterback's flags are pulled behind the Line of Scrimmage. The ball is placed where the ball is at when the flag is pulled. A safety is awarded if the sack takes place in the offensive team's end zone.

SNAPS

- Ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to one side, to start the play. Direct snaps are illegal.

FORMATIONS

- **Minimum players on the line:**
 - Offense must have a minimum of one player on the Line of Scrimmage (the center) and up to four players on the Line of Scrimmage. The Quarterback must be off the Line of Scrimmage.
- **Motion:**
 - Offensive players must come to a complete stop for 1 second before the ball is snapped unless he is the only player in motion.
 - One player at a time may go in motion 1 yard behind and parallel to the Line of Scrimmage.
 - No motion is allowed towards Line of Scrimmage.
 - Movement by a player who is set or a player who runs toward the Line of Scrimmage while in motion is considered a false start.
 - The center must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion between his legs to a player in the backfield and the ball must completely leave his hands.

DEFENSE

PASS COVERAGE

- Defensive players can Jam the receiver at the line and up to 5 yards downfield. However, you cannot hold, trip or grab the receiver.
- Pass interference normally occurs above the waist; entangled feet are not considered pass interference. Incidental contact is not considered pass interference.
- A player may “find” their opponent by reaching out and placing a hand on them as long as touching does not delay, impede, twist, or turn their opponent. This is not considered pass interference.
- A player may use their arms or hands to intentionally obstruct the receiver’s view (face guarding) of the ball without turning their own head to play the ball as long as noteworthy contact is not made with the receiver.
- If defensive pass interference occurs in the end zone the ball will be placed on the one-yard line, automatic first down.
- Interceptions may be returned. Interceptions in the end zone that are not returned to the field of play will result in a touchback and the ball will be spotted on the 5-yard line.
- Contact away from the direction of the pass is not considered pass interference but may be considered illegal contact.
- Whether a pass is catchable or uncatchable has no bearing on pass interference. The benefit of the doubt is given to the receiver. Examples of pass interference include:
 - Shoving or pushing off to create separation.
 - Playing through the back.
 - Hook and turn: grabbing the torso and turning an opponent before the pass arrives.
 - Arm bars, hooking, restricting, grabbing wrists, or turning a receiver.
 - Blocking downfield before the ball has been touched, commonly seen through “pick plays”.

FLAG PULLING

- **De-flagging:** De-flagging is the legal removal of a flag from an opponent in possession of the ball. Pushing, striking, holding, slapping or tripping when attempting to pull a flag is not permitted. Defensive players may leave their feet to pull a flag. Offensive players are not permitted to protect or guard their flags.
 - A legal flag pull takes place when the ball carrier is in full possession of the ball.
 - Defenders can dive to pull flags but cannot tackle, hold or run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.
 - It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball carrier’s possession at any time.
 - If a player's flag inadvertently galls off during the play, the de-flagging reverts to a one hand touch of the runner between the shoulder and the knees.
 - If a flag is removed illegally, play should continue with the options of the penalty or the play.
 - A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off a player who is not in possession of the ball.
 - Tampering with the flag in any way to gain an advantage including, tying the flag, cutting the flag, using foreign material or other such act are illegal.
 - Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defender’s access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping the head, hand, arm or shoulder, or intentionally cover the flags with the football jersey.

PENALTIES

| Penalty | Yardage | Penalty Assessment | Result |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|--|--|
| Flag Guarding | 5 | Spot of foul | Loss of down |
| Illegal Advancement | 5 | Spot of foul | Loss of down |
| Illegal Forward Pass | 5 | Previous spot | Loss of down |
| Offensive Pass Interference | 5 | Previous spot | Loss of down |
| Defensive Pass Interference | 10 or spot foul | 10 from Previous spot or spot foul (whichever the offense chooses) | Automatic 1st down |
| Personal Foul/Unnecessary Roughness | 15 | End of the play or previous spot | By the Offense: Loss of down By the Defense: Automatic 1st down |
| Unsportsmanlike Conduct | 15 | End of the play or previous spot | By the Offense: Loss of down By the Defense: Automatic 1st down |
| Roughing the Passer | 10 | Previous spot | Automatic 1st down |
| Delay of Game | 5 | Dead ball – Previous spot | Replay down |
| False Start | 5 | Dead ball – Previous spot | Replay down |
| Offsides | 5 | Previous spot | Replay down |
| Encroachment | 5 | Dead ball – Previous spot | Automatic 1st down |
| Cool Down Period | 0 | No foul | Player must sit out 5 plays |
| Illegal Shift or Illegal Motion | 5 | Previous spot | Loss of Down |
| Stripping or Attempted Stripping | 5 | Spot of the foul | Automatic 1st down |
| Illegal Contact | 5 | Previous spot or spot of the foul | By the Offense: Loss of down By the Defense: Automatic 1st down |
| Early Flag Pull | 5 | Previous spot | Automatic 1st down |
| Illegal Participation | 5 | Previous spot | By the Offense: Loss of down By the Defense: Automatic 1st down |
| Illegal Blocking | 5 | Spot foul or from previous spot if behind LOS | Loss of down |
| Holding | 5 | Spot foul OR from previous spot if behind LOS | By the Offense: Loss of down By the Defense: Automatic 1st down |
| Charging | 5 | Spot of the foul | Loss of down |
| Last Man Rule | 15 or TD | Spot of the foul | Automatic 1st down or TD if inside the 5 yard line |