

# *5 vs. 5 Flag Football Rules & Regulations*

(Rules apply to All Levels of Play)

## The Basics

- Designated team captains will meet at midfield for a coin toss before the start of the game. Away team captain will choose heads or tails before the referee tosses the coin into the air. Winning team gets first choice deciding to start on offense or defense; No Deferring.
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has up to four plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has up to four 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.
- You will have three downs to get to midfield and then another three downs to get a touchdown. If no 1<sup>st</sup> down/touchdown is obtained in the three downs, you have the option on fourth down to risk going for it or “punt”. If you choose to go for it and fail to achieve the first down/touchdown, the defense will take over from that spot rather than going back to their 5-yard line. If you choose to punt, the defense will take over from their 5-yard line and no fourth down will be played.
- The No-Run rule will be enforced five yards from midfield and five yards from end zone. Failure to comply will result in a loss of down.
- If the offensive team fails to cross midfield when going for it on 4<sup>th</sup> down, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from the spot of the ball.
- Interceptions are returnable; possession will start wherever the interceptor is marked down.
- Second Half - Teams change sides after the first 20 minutes. Possession starts with whichever team started on Defense to start the game.
- Teams have 30 seconds between plays.
- Coach huddles happen on the sidelines; Coach is not allowed on field.  
**Exception:** One Coach is allowed on field for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Division.
- Playing Field dimensions: approximately 50 yards long by 25 yards wide; 10-yard end zone These dimensions can be modified to suit the area or other concerns.

## **Players/Game Schedules**

- Teams must field a minimum of four players at all times.

## **Timing/Overtime**

- Games are played in two, 20-minute halves with a running clock.
- Clock stops on/in:
  - Timeouts
  - Out of Bounds
  - Incomplete Passes
  - Turnovers
  - Last two minutes of each half
- Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball; 45 seconds in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Division. Teams will receive one warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced.
- Each team has one, 60-second and one, 30-second time out per half.
- Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
- *There is no overtime in the regular season.*

## **Scoring**

- Touchdown: 6 points
- Extra point: 1 point (played from 5-yard line MUST PASS) or 2 points (played from 10-yard line)
- Extra Point Attempt Return for TD: 2 points
- Safety: 2 points
- Forfeits: Any forfeit will be scored as 7-0 for the non-forfeiting team

**Please remember that scoring is part of the game but not the main focus; always place the kids before the win!**

## **Running**

- The quarterback cannot run with the ball past the line of scrimmage.
- Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Offense may use multiple handoffs.
- 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 (i.e., no diving, no jumping).
- The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.
- Laterals and backward pitches are NOT allowed.

### **No-Running Zones**

- Will be marked 5 yards from each end zone and 5 yards on both sides of midfield.
- The no-run zone is only in play when there is a line to gain (i.e., attacking to the midfield line and end zone) and is 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.

### **Passing**

- **All passes must be forward. Passes do not have to cross the line of scrimmage, but they must clearly be forward of the throwers hand. No backward or swing passes that are not clearly forward.**
- Shovel passes are allowed.
- 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 end of the run back.

### **Dead Balls**

- Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- Play is ruled "dead" when:
  - Ball carrier's flag is pulled.
  - Ball carrier's flag falls out.

- Ball carrier steps out of bounds.
- Touchdown or safety is scored.
- Ball carrier's knee hits the ground.
- Quarterback does not throw ball in seven seconds.
- Bad snap. **Exception:** 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Division is allowed to re-snap on a bad snap (limit 1 per possession) and does not include shotgun snaps.
- There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground.  
**Note: Defense is not allowed to take the ball out of the hands of the offensive player in possession of the ball, they must go for flag.**
- There are no kickoffs, no throw offs, no blocking, and no contact allowed.

### **Rushing the Quarterback**

- 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 quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.
- Once the ball is handed off or thrown, the seven-yard rule no longer is in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage. A special marker, or the referee, will designate seven yards from the line of scrimmage.
- No blocking or tackling is allowed.
- For 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Division only, only 1 blitz allowed per possession and offense must be beyond the midfield.

### **Hiking the ball**

- The ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to one side, to start play.  
**Exceptions:**
  - If a female center is hiking to a male quarterback, they are allowed to side hike, but the ball must start from the ground as they cannot hold it up in the air.
  - 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Division, anyone can side hike.

### **Sportsmanship/Roughing**

- If the field monitor or referee witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped

penalty will be assessed and the player may be ejected from the game  
(Referee Discretion)

### **FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.**

- Trash talking is illegal.
- Officials have the right to determine offensive language. (Trash talk is talk that may be offensive to officials, 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.

### **Defensive Penalties**

- **Offside** -- 5 yards from the line of scrimmage and repeat the down.
- **Illegal contact** (holding, blocking, etc.) -- 5 yards and repeat the down.
- **Illegal flag pull** (before receiver has ball) -- 5 yards and repeat the down.
- **Illegal rushing** (starting rush from inside 7-yard marker) -- 5 yards and repeat the down.
- **Substitution fouls** (player enters field after ball is blown ready for play, i.e., to deceive opponents, or 6 players on the field) -- 5 yards and repeat the down.
- **Interference with opponent or ball at the snap** -- 5 yards and repeat the down.
- **Defensive holding** -- 5 yards from the spot of the foul.
- **Pass Interference** -- 10 yards and automatic first down.
- **Roughing the Passer** -- 10 yards and automatic first down.
- **Unnecessary Roughness** -- 10 yards and automatic first down.
- **Unsportsmanlike Conduct** -- 10 yards and automatic first down.

### **Offensive Penalties**

- **Delay of game** -- 5 yards and loss of down.
- **Substitution fouls** -- 5 yards and loss of down.
- **Illegal motion** (more than one person moving, etc.) -- 5 yards and loss of down.
- **False Start** -- 5 yards and loss of down.
- **Illegal Snap** -- 5 yards and loss of down.
- **Offensive holding** -- 5 yards and loss of down.

- **Pass Clock Violation** -- If quarterback does not throw ball in seven seconds, results in loss of down.
- **Player out of bounds** (if player goes out of bounds, player cannot return to the field and catch ball) -- 5 yards and loss of down.
- **Offensive pass interference** (illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender) -- 5 yards and loss of down.
- **Flag guarding** (swatting opponents' hands away in an effort to guard or stiff-arms) -- 5 yards from the point of foul and loss of down.
- **Unnecessary Roughness** -- 10 yards and loss of down.
- **Unsportsmanlike Conduct** -- 10 yards loss of down

### Attire

- Cleats are allowed, except for metal spikes. Inspections will be made.
- **All players must wear a protective mouthpiece; there are no exceptions.**
- No pockets or hoops on shorts or bottoms.
- No hats with brims or bills.
- The official game shirt **MUST** be the outermost garment worn during play.
- Shirts must be tucked in.
- Excess belts must be cut or tucked away.
- Belts and flags cannot be covered by game shirts or any layers of clothing.

### Playoffs

#### Seeding Playoffs

- Teams will be ranked based on season standings. Example: 4 team division – The number 1 and 4 teams in the regular season will play first round and the number 2 and 3 teams will play first round. Winners of those games will play for the championship.

#### Tiebreakers for Post Season

- Tiebreakers will be in the following order:
  1. Head-to-Head Competition
  2. Point Differential
    - a. In 3- or more-way tie, Point differential will be for all head-to-head games (No Max). Will then revert to Scenario 1

- b. Max of 20 points
- 3. Total Points Allowed
- 4. Coin Flip

### **Overtime (Playoffs Only)**

- If the score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, teams move directly into overtime (only in the playoffs).
- Coin flip will determine possession; called by away team Captains.
- The referee will determine which end of the field the overtime will take place on.
- Each team will get one possession starting at midfield
  - In the event of a score, the offense will decide if they want to go for a one point or two-point conversion; if the team to get possession first scores, the defense will have a chance on offense to either tie or win the game.
  - Both teams must go for a two-point conversion on the third round of Overtime (should it last that long)

**and the most important rule of all... HAVE FUN!!!**