



FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

FLAG FOOTBALL IS NON-CONTACT, BLOCKING AND TACKLING ARE NOT ALLOWED.

****NEW 2014****

ONLY ONE DESIGNATED RUSHER/BLITZER. NEW RUSHER INTERFERENCE PENALTIES.

OFFENSIVE PENALTIES: COME WITH A FIVE-YARD PENALTY AND REPEAT THE DOWN. The five yards will always occur from the line of scrimmage. Note the exceptions.

ALL OFFENSIVE PENALTIES ARE BLOWN DEAD AUTOMATICALLY UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED IN THE OFFENSIVE PENALTY SECTION.

Attire

Cleats are allowed, but must be rubber, molded soles. No screw in cleats.

Inspections must be made prior to the game. It is recommended that all players wear a protective mouthpiece.

Field Dimensions and Markings

Length: 60-80 Yards Width: 20-30 yards

End Zones: Maximum 10 yards deep, minimum 7 yards deep

No-running zones: Must be marked 5 yards from each end zone.

POSSESSION

A coin toss determines the possession of the ball in either the first half or the second half. The team that does not win the coin toss will chose the side of the field they will defend.

There are no kickoffs

The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has three plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has three 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. An automatic first down by penalty will overrule the other requirements regarding three plays to make either a first down or score. 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 at half time.

Number of Players

The limit to the number of players on a team is 12. **5 players are on the field at a time.** Teams may play with a minimum of four (4) players (due to injuries). If less than 4 players are available, the game is cancelled.

Timing/Overtime

Game length is 30 minutes. Running time-two halves, 15 minutes each.

Each team has 2 x 60-second time outs per game. The clock stops during a time out.

The games are played with 14 minutes of run time each half. Once we hit the one-minute warning, then there will be three offensive plays left in each half. A one/two point conversion is not considered an offensive play.

Overtime:

If the score is tied at the end of regulation time, teams move directly into overtime. A coin toss determines first possession of overtime. The team that wins the coin toss starts with the ball on its own five-yard line. Play continues as in regulation until one-team scores. Each team must have the

same amount of possessions. There will be no timeouts granted during the overtime period. *The only exception would be if the defense returned an interception to the opponent's endzone for 2 points

Scoring

Touchdown: 6 points Extra point: 1 point (played from 5-yard line)
2 points (played from 12-yard line) Safety: 2 points and possession of ball on 5 yard

Note: An interception return to opponent's end zone on any extra-point play by the defense will result in the defense scoring 2 points plus gaining possession for the next series at its own five-yard line.

Common Misconceptions and General Rules

- Play Action Blitzing-once the quarterback turns his/her back to the play (with a running back in the back field) this is play action and any and all defenders can rush the quarterback
- NO DIVING ON DEFENSE
- The Quarterback is only player that can call the snap count, all TEAMS MUST USE "**DOWN, SET, HUT**" to snap the ball. There is no fake signals or verbal calls allowed.
- ONLY allowed one player in motion at a time. No player can be moving towards the opponents endzone at the time of the snap. They may be moving backwards or laterally. If a penalty occurs it will be enforced at the end of the play.
- NO FORWARD HANDOFFS AT ALL-all running backs must receive the ball (hand-off/pitch) behind or beside the quarterback
- OFFENSE MUST HUDDLE BEFORE EVERY PLAY
- Please remind your athletes: It is up to the ball carrier to avoid contact with the defender. **Good defensive position should be rewarded by the officials.**
- Offensive players are not allowed to run interference on the defense in any situation, this includes interference on the blitzer or a defensive player trying to get flags
- PLEASE REVIEW ALL OTHER RULES BELOW!

Running

To start the play, the ball must be snapped between the legs of the snapper.

The center is the player who gives the ball to the quarterback via a snap. The center cannot take a direct handoff back from the quarterback (no center sneak play).

The quarterback is the player who receives the ball directly from the snap.

The quarterback cannot run with the ball past the line of scrimmage.

An offence may use multiple hand-offs behind the line of scrimmage. Only backward or lateral hand-offs are allowed during a down.

Tosses or sweeps behind the line of scrimmage are allowed and are running plays. Downfield tosses are not permitted. Once a player has possession of the ball beyond the line of scrimmage, any loss of possession will be blown dead by the official.

"No-running zones" are located 5 yards from each end zone. When the ball is on or inside the 5-yard line going towards the opponent's end zone, the offense cannot use a running play to cross the line of scrimmage.

The player who takes the hand-off can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.

All defensive players are eligible to rush once the ball has been handed off or tossed, or there is a play-action fake.

Spinning is allowed, but offensive players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player (no diving or no jumping).

The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.

It is up to the ball carrier to avoid contact with the defender. Good defensive position should be rewarded by the officials.

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 may be in motion, but not in motion towards the opponent's end zone at the snap.

A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception. (A receiver cannot return on to the playing field from an out of bounds position)

Passing

Interceptions change the possession of the ball.

The defence can return interceptions.

On interceptions that occur and remain in the end zone, the ball will become dead and will result in the ball belonging to the intercepting team at its 5-yard line. Should an interception occur in the end zone and the ball carrier leave the end zone, the ball will belong to the intercepting team at the spot the ball becomes dead. However, should the ball carrier return to the end zone and be de-flagged, or the ball be ruled dead the result would be a safety for the other team.

Shovel passes (all forward passes) are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.

Once a player catches the ball he/she is no longer allowed to lateral the ball. This applies to receivers as well. (i.e. hook and laterals are not permitted)

Dead Balls

Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.

Play is ruled "dead" when:

- Official blows the whistle.
- Ball carrier's flag is pulled or becomes illegal.
- Ball carrier steps out of bounds.
- Touchdown or safety is scored.
- When any part of the ball carrier's body, other than a hand or foot, touches the ground.

If the ball carrier's flag falls off, the play will be whistled dead and the ball will be spotted at the spot where the flag fell off.

Note: There are no fumbles. The ball will be spotted where the ball carrier's feet were when the fumble was made. I.e. A bad snap will be blown dead and the ball will be spotted at the center's feet. There is no stripping of the ball.

Rushing the Quarterback

The player who rushes the passer must be a minimum of **SEVEN YARDS** from the line of scrimmage and be **lined up within 2 yards (side to side)** of the ball when the ball is snapped. **Only one player may be designated to rush the quarterback (new 2014)**. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend one yard from the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off or tossed, or there is a play-action fake, the seven yard rule no longer is in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage. A special marker (bean bag) will designate **seven** yards from the line of scrimmage.

REMEMBER, BLOCKING OR TACKLING ARE NOT ALLOWED.

Sportsmanship/Roughing

If the referee witnesses any acts of flagrant contact, 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. (Trash talk is talk that may be offensive to officials, opposing players, teams, or spectators.) Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If trash talking occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the player or players will be ejected from the game.

Once a flag is pulled, the defensive player should hold the flag above his/her head so that the referee can spot the location of the flag pull. The pulled flag should be handed to the player who lost the flag or to a teammate. Intentionally throwing the flag onto the ground is considered poor flag etiquette.

Penalties

All penalties are 5 yards (except for Pass Interference - 15 yards). The down will be repeated, and will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, unless otherwise noted.

All penalties can be declined.

Penalties will not exceed half the distance to the opposing team's goal line from the line of scrimmage.

Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.

All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage except for flag guarding.

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 the penalty.

Defensive Penalties

Offside -- 5 yards and automatic first down

Pass Interference -- 15 yards and automatic first down

Illegal contact (holding, blocking, etc.) -- 5 yards and automatic first down

Illegal flag pull (before receiver has ball) -- 5 yards and automatic first down

Illegal rushing (starting rush from inside 7-yard marker) -- 5 yards and automatic first down.

Substitution fouls (player enters field after ball is blown ready for play, i.e. To deceive opponents, or 6 players on the field)

Disconcerting signals (signals to distract opponent or simulate offensive signals prior to snap) -5 yards repeat down

Interference with opponent or ball at the snap - 5 yards repeat down

Offensive Penalties

Delay of game- 5 yards and repeat the down.

Substitution fouls- 5 yards and repeat the down.

Illegal motion (more than one person moving and not resetting, etc.) -- 5 yards and loss of down;

False Start – 5 yards and repeat the down.

Illegal Snap –5 yards and repeat the down.

Offensive holding –5 yards and repeat the down.

Illegal shift or failure to pause for one second –5 yards and repeat the down.

Player out of bounds (if player goes out of bounds, player cannot return to the field and catch ball). Unless a referee can determine that the player was forced out of bounds by a defender.

***PLAY SHOULD CONTINUE AND NOT BE BLOWN DEAD AS A RESULT OF THE PENALTY**

Illegal forward pass (pass received behind line of scrimmage) -- 5 yards and repeat the down.

Offensive pass interference (illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender) -- 5 yards and repeat the down.

***PLAY SHOULD CONTINUE AND NOT BE BLOWN DEAD AS A RESULT OF THE PENALTY**

Flag Guarding -- 5 yards from the point of foul. Continue down count.

Rusher Interference - It is illegal for a receiver to run a pattern that interferes with a rusher on his/her direct path to the quarterback. This is based on referee's discretion. Protocol: 1st offence is a team warning. 2nd offence will be automatic loss of down. The referee will blow the play dead once the infraction occurs.

Tie Breakers

These were also used by the NFL/CFL program. They encourage/reward good defense as opposed to running up scores.

1. **Win/Loss record in the round robin**
2. **Head to Head**
3. **Points scored against**
4. **Points scored for**
5. **Coin toss**

The most important rule of all... HAVE FUN!!!