



Please read all rules so that you understand and follow them in the games. Team captains are responsible for making sure their players have read the rules.

ADULT FLAG FOOTBALL RULES & REGULATIONS

GENERAL ELIGIBILITY AND REGISTRATION

- A. Team fee is due when turning in the registration form. All current player fees and signatures must be received prior to the start of the first game.
- B. No player is allowed on the playing surface prior to signing the waiver release form and paying the annual Player's Package/Membership Fee. Violation of this rule will result in a forfeit for every game in which the ineligible player has participated.
- C. Participants should have adequate health and accident insurance coverage to cover any injury that may occur.
- D. A player cannot be registered with more than one team playing in the same league.
- E. A player must be 17 years of age or older to play in the league.
- F. Football at the YMCA Sports Center is intended to be enjoyable for all. Please display good sportsmanship at all times. Rough play or bad language will not be tolerated and may result in facility dismissal.
- G. Failure to abide by all league and facility rules will result in your team being dropped from the league.

GAME

- H. A coin toss determines first possession.
- I. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its end zone line and has four (4) downs to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has four (4) downs to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to make a first down or score after a first down is made, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over at their own end line.
- J. All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's end zone line.
- K. Substitutions are to occur at the YMCA designated team bench near the score table.
- L. Teams change sides after the first 20-minute half.

TEAMS

- A. Play is 5 versus 5. Teams must field a minimum of four (4) players at all times.
- B. Make sure you have adequate substitutes and compensate for players who may have conflicts.
- C. Teams must only use players on their roster. Players may be added to the roster during regular season play. Absolutely no additions or substitutions may be made for playoff games. A player is eligible when their team fee and player's package are paid in full and they have signed the league waiver.
- D. If a team (at least four players) fails to arrive within 5 minutes of the designated start time the opposition will be spotted 7 points and the game will be shortened by 10 minutes. If the team is more than 10 minutes late they will automatically forfeit the contest. If a team captain knows the team will be late or cannot show, he is responsible for contacting YMCA Sports Center in advance. Any neglect will result in the team being dropped from the league.
- E. The only players allowed inside the boards are the 10 players involved in the play. All substitutes must stay off the field and behind the closed door.

TIMING/OVERTIME

- A. Games consist of two 20-minute halves with continuous clock. It will stop for timeouts and in the final minute of the second half for incomplete passes, out of bounds, and change of possession.

- B. The offense has 25 seconds to snap the ball after the referee blows his whistle to start the play.
- C. If a timeout is called after a touchdown, the ensuing conversion will be an un-timed down.
- D. Each team is allotted one (45 second) timeout per half. Timeouts cannot be carried over to the second half or overtime.
- E. If the score is tied at the end of regulation, the game goes to an overtime period. Each team will be given the ball and have 4 plays to score from mid-field. This will continue until a winner is decided. If the game is still tied after the first possession, the teams **MUST** go for a 2 point conversion the next time they score.
- F. Officials may stop the clock at their discretion.
- G. If there is point difference of 30+, the clock will not stop in the second half.

SCORING

- A. Touchdown = 6 points
- B. Extra point = 1 point (played from 5-yard line), 2 points (played from 12-yard line), 3 points (played from midfield and **if successful** that team will retain possession from the goal line. Limited to last ten minutes of second half only).
- C. Safety = 2 points. When the line of scrimmage is the goal line, there can be no safeties.
- D. An interception returned during an extra point try will be worth 3 points.

RUNNING

- A. The quarterback can only run once a rushing defender has crossed the line of scrimmage.
- B. Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Pitch plays are allowed, but only if behind the person pitching the ball. Offense may use multiple handoffs.
- C. “No-handoff zones” and “no pitch zones” are located 5 yards in front of the end zone and 5 yards in front of midfield (the first down). These zones only occur if the line of scrimmage is within the five yards. They are designed to avoid short-yardage, power running situations.
- D. The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
- E. Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- F. Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player. Jumping to gain yardage will result in a penalty.
- G. The ball is spotted where the ball is when the flag is pulled, where the carrier’s knees hit the ground or where they go out of bounds.

RECEIVING

- A. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off or pitched behind the line of scrimmage).
- B. Only one player is allowed in motion at the time of the snap.
- C. A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.
- D. There is no bumping or jamming receivers at the line when on defense.

PASSING

- A. The offense will have 7 seconds to move the ball past the line of scrimmage once the ball is received on the snap.
- B. Interceptions may be run back.
- C. Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start at the end line.

DEAD BALLS

- A. The ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to one side, to start play.
- B. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- C. Play is ruled “dead” when:
 - Ball carrier’s flag is pulled.
 - Ball carrier steps out of bounds.
 - Touchdown or safety is scored.
 - Ball carrier’s knee hits the ground if flags were not pulled.

- If the ball carriers flag falls off, it is one hand touch to tackle.
- D. **There are NO fumbles.** The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground unless fumbled forward, then the ball is spotted where it left the ball carriers hand. If the ball is lateral backwards and lands in the opponents end zone, the play is ruled a safety, unless the opponents team touches it before it lands in the end zone, then it is a turnover on downs and the defense will now take the ball on offense on the opposite end zone.

RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK

- A. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. The referee will walk off this distance and stand along the sideline; all defenders must be behind the referee's line to be eligible to rush. Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage. Players rushing the quarterback cannot use their hands to push, grab, throw, or in any way try to move a blocker out of the way to get to the quarterback. The defender is responsible for using footwork only to get around the blocker. "Linemen" may protect the quarterback with their hands behind their back, or below their waist, using footwork only to disrupt the path of a rushing defender. They **may not raise their hands**, throw their bodies into the rushing defenseman in an overtly physical way, push the rushing defenseman or grab the rushing defenseman; such will result in a penalty.
- B. Once the ball is handed off, the seven-yard rule is no longer in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
- C. Roughing the passer will result in a penalty. This includes but not limited to... hitting the arm, pushing the quarterback. Any contact with the "quarterback" other than grabbing for the flags will not be tolerated.

SPORTSMANSHIP

- A. If the referee witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, overtly physical contact or any un-sportsmanlike act, the referee may call illegal contact, and a warning or ejection may be issued.
- B. If a team is winning by 30 points or more, the team may only rush once per set of 4 downs.
- C. If a team is winning by 50 points or more, there is no rushing allowed.
- D. **Officials have the right to determine offensive language. A warning or ejection may be given. All calls made by the referees will be supported by the league director.**
- E. Any person ejected from a game will serve a minimum of an additional game suspension and must be cleared by the League Director before returning to play. If another ejection occurs, the player will be suspended from the league.

PENALTIES: Referee will call all penalties. Non-offending team may decline penalties.

Defensive Penalties:

- A. Off sides - 5 yards and automatic first down
- B. Pass Interference - 10 yards and automatic first down during regular play. If the violation occurs during the final 1-minute of play, offense will receive the ball at the spot of the infraction. (Interference will be called if contact between the defender and the receiver happens before the ball arrives, if the defender is not making a play on the ball, and if the contact is more than incidental, resulting in the receiver being unable to catch a ball that could have been caught).
- C. Illegal contact (holding, blocking, etc.) - 5 yards and automatic first down
- D. Illegal flag pull (before receiver has the ball) - 5 yards and automatic first down
- E. Roughing the quarterback will result in a 10 yard penalty and automatic first down
- F. Illegal rushing (starting rush from inside 7 yards) - 5 yards and automatic first down
- G. Too Many Men- play continues and depending on the result of the play, 5yd penalty and replay the down.

Offensive Penalties:

- A. Illegal motion (more than one person moving, false start, etc.) - 5 yards, loss of down
- B. Illegal forward pass (pass received behind line of scrimmage) - 5 yards, loss of down

- C. Offensive pass interference (illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender) - 5 yards, loss of down
- D. Illegal Flags (not possessing flags to begin play) - 5 yards, loss of down
- E. Shirt un-tucked covering flags - 5 yards, loss of down
- F. Flag guarding - 5 yards (from line of scrimmage), loss of down (if a defender is reaching for a flag and would have been able to pull it but the ball-carrier deliberately prevents him, the penalty will be called).
- G. Delay of game/Too Many Men - 5 yards and loss of down
- H. Referees determine if contact is incidental. All penalties enforced from the line of scrimmage.
- I. Only the team captain may ask the referee questions about rule clarification. **Players cannot question judgment calls.**
- J. Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.

ATTIRE

- A. Cleats are not allowed.**
- B. Only regular indoor athletic shoes can be worn.
- C. Colored pullover mesh jerseys will be provided unless teams have their own single color jerseys.
- D. Shirts will be tucked in at all times to alleviate obstruction of flags.
- E. Shorts or athletic pants must be worn. Any shorts or pants with belt loops will not be allowed.

League tie-breakers are as follows: Head to head, Point differential, Points against