



## 8x 8 Flag Football Rules

### EQUIPMENT

1. The IM program will supply all flag belts, balls, & officials necessary.
2. All players must wear appropriate clothing and footwear. No metal or metal tipped cleats are allowed.
3. MOUTH PIECES ARE REQUIRED and must be worn at all times. Players without them will not be allowed to participate under any circumstances!

### GAMES, PLAYERS, & FIELD

1. Games will consist of two halves of 20 minutes each. During the first half, the clock will run at all times with the exception of a team (2 per half) or officials time-out. During the second half, the first 18 minutes will be running clock and the remaining 2 minutes of each half will see the clock stopped in all dead ball situations. A half may not end on a defensive penalty.
2. Forfeit time is 5 minutes after scheduled game time.
3. The field will measure 80 yards long by 35 yards wide and will have a 10-yard end zone at each end. It will be divided into 3 equal sections of 20 yards each. The offensive team shall have 4 downs to score or move into the next zone to get a first down.
4. Play will begin at the 10-yard line to begin each half or after a score or a safety.
5. A team will consist of 8 players with at least 7 needed to start and continue play
6. All players on the field must have a complete flag belt with 3 full-length flags. Any player caught with their flag belts tied or deliberately shortened will be penalized for Unsportsmanlike Conduct and may be ejected.
7. Only Team Captains may confer with the game officials!!!!
8. Scoring shall be: Touchdown = 6 pts; PAT (6 yard line) = 2 pts; Safety = 2 pts.

### SPECIAL RULES

- 1) No direct snaps. The ball must be snapped in the shotgun formation.
- 2) No direct handoffs are allowed.
- 3) If a runner's flag inadvertently comes off when running, the ball will be placed down at the spot where they came off.
- 4) If an eligible receiver's flags come off while running a route, the ball will be placed at the spot of the reception.
- 5) Only 1 player may be in motion at the snap of the ball and must be moving parallel or away from the line of scrimmage.
- 6) Both teams must have exactly 4 players on the line of scrimmage and they must line up within 5 yards to either side of the ball. Players on the line must line up with their hands on their knees. No 3 or 4-point stances!
- 7) No defender may cross the line of scrimmage, other than the four defensive linemen, unless the ball is pitched or passed first by the quarterback to another offensive player.
- 8) BLOCKING RULES:
  - a) Blockers may not leave their feet in for any reason.
  - b) Blockers may extend their arms but must keep their hands inside the shoulders of the opponent and may not use their hands to hold or grab the opponent.
  - c) Absolutely no blocking below the waist. Any player guilty of this rule will be ejected.
  - d) Use of the shoulder to "shoulder block" will be not permitted and may result in an ejection.
  - e) Offensive linemen may block a defender in the back as long as they maintain contact with them at the snap. Once the defender breaks contact, the blocker may no longer use this tactic or it will result in an illegal block in the back penalty.
- 9) Ball carriers may not stiff-arm, slap, strike, or push away a defender's hand from reaching for their flag belt. The ball carrier may not leave their feet to hurdle or run over a player intentionally.
- 10) Defensive rushers may not make contact with the passer. They may jump to block a pass but may not leave their feet to hurdle a blocker or tackle an opponent. If while going for the pass block the rusher makes contact with the passer it shall be the officials' decision as to whether the contact might have been avoided and which penalty to call.
- 11) Defenders may not hold a runner or push a runner out of bounds in order to stop their advance. They must go for the flags at all times!
- 12) Fumbled balls or muffed snaps will be dead at the spot in which they hit the ground.
- 13) Interceptions will be declared dead at the spot of the interception.

- 14) When a team reaches a lead of 25 points or more any time after the 10-minute mark of the second half, the game will be stopped.
- 15) Receivers must have 1 foot in bounds in order to make a legal catch. The defensive player may not force a receiver out-of-bounds while they are in the air attempting to make a catch. If in the officials judgment the receiver would have come down in bounds without being pushed, the catch will be allowed.
- 16) Punts must be declared prior to the snap. No rush will be allowed on any punt and the ball will be dead upon hitting the ground or being touched by a member of the receiving team. No run backs are allowed on punts.
- 17) All tie league games will remain a tie. Playoff tiebreaker: Each team will be allowed 4 downs starting from the 20-yard line in which to score a touchdown. The winner of the coin flip has the choice of offense or defense to start. The same order will be followed throughout all subsequent overtime series. For each new overtime period, the line of scrimmage will be moved five yards closer to the goal line.
- 18) Celebrations after a score are allowed as long as they do not delay the game or “taunt” or demean an opponent.

## **PENALTIES**

**\*\* All 5-yard penalties will be marked from the line of scrimmage\*\***

### **Loss of 5 yards**

- Delay of Game
- Offside
- False Start / Illegal Motion / Illegal Shift
- Illegal Forward Pass
- Illegal snap or handoff
- Too many players on the field
- Less than 4 players on the line of scrimmage

**\*\* All 10-yard penalties will be marked from the spot of the foul unless specified below\*\***

### **Loss of 10 yards**

- Pass interference: Defensive - auto first down, if in the end zone the ball is placed on the 3-yard line. Offensive - loss of down, marked from the original line of scrimmage
- Tackling, Tripping, Charging - loss of down or auto first down
- Helping the runner/ Pushing the pile - loss of down
- Runner leaving their feet to gain yardage or cross the goal line - loss of down
- Roughing the passer - auto first down, marked from the original line of scrimmage
- Illegally stripping the flags - auto first down
- Flag guarding - loss of down
- Blocking Penalties: loss of down
  - Holding/Block in the back/Clipping
  - Blocking below the waist or leaving their feet to block
  - Use of the shoulder or other part of their body, other than their open hands inside the shoulders of their opponent, to block

### **Major Penalties:** 15 yards & may include an ejection:

1. Unsportsmanlike Conduct - includes loss of down or auto first down. Any player receiving a 2<sup>nd</sup> Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalty will be automatically ejected.

### **Officials Duties:**

**Referee:** Positioned behind the quarterback on their throwing side, and is primarily responsible for penalties that occur in the offensive backfield and on the line of scrimmage. Will be the “Crew Chief” anytime a decision must be made among the crew.

**Umpire:** Stands on the defensive side of the ball, where the middle linebacker would normally play. The Umpire is primarily responsible for calls along the line of scrimmage and downfield in transition. The Umpire is also responsible for spotting the ball for all offensive plays as well as supervising the down-marker attendant and timer.

**Back Judge (2):** Should be positioned even with the deepest defender. The BJ is primarily responsible for pass interference and plays in transition. The BJ is responsible for all sideline calls and in or out-of-bounds calls the entire length of the field. The Referee may overrule them if necessary.

### **Penalty Descriptions:**

**Delay of Game:** Even though there is no play-clock, the Referee needs to get the players out of the huddle and to the line of scrimmage in a consistent manner. If the Referee thinks a team is taking too long, first warn them and then throw the flag. Teams should run a play every 30 seconds.

**Illegal Forward Pass:** There may be only one forward pass on each offensive play, including shovel passes.

**Illegal Handoff:** Remember, the person receiving the snap must “pitch or pass” and a legal pitch must travel at least three feet in the air.

**Tackling:** When a defender grabs the person with the ball while trying to strip them of their flags. Remember, we are playing “Flag Football” and not tackle football!

**Charging:** When a runner deliberately attempts to “bowl over” the defender. The runner must try to avoid the defender at all times and may not run them over in an attempt to get around the defender.

**Runner Leaving Their Feet:** Runners may not dive to gain yardage or stick the ball over the first down line or goal line. Remember, in Flag FB it is where the flag belt is and not the ball or person.

**Roughing the Passer:** When a rusher creates contact with the QB while they are in the act of throwing. It does not matter if the ball is tipped or blocked - they may not make contact with the QB under any circumstances! If the Referee feels as if the contact was intentional, an “Unsportsmanlike Conduct” penalty & ejection will be assessed.

**Illegally Stripping the Flags:** When a defender prematurely pulls an offensive player’s flag belt.

**Flag Guarding:** When a runner attempts to block his flag belt from the defender by running with the arms covering the flags. Runners may not slap or push a defenders arm or hand away as they try to grab the flags.