

Flag Football Rules (Men's & Women's)

NEW RULE: ONSIDE KICKS

1. On all scoring plays in the final 10 minutes of the second half, after attempting a point after touchdown (PAT) (whether successful or unsuccessful) the scoring team can elect for an "onside kick".
2. If the team elects for the "onside kick" they will receive one attempt, similar to a conversion, from the opponent 30 yard line.
3. If the play results in the offense advancing the ball across the goal line, the offense will receive possession of the ball at their own 14 yard line to begin a series.
4. If the play does not result in the offense advancing the ball across the goal line, the defense will receive the ball at their own 34 yard line to begin a series.
5. All penalties will be enforced as if they occurred during a PAT.
6. The clock will also operate as if this play is a PAT.
7. Turnovers that occur during the "onside kick" will be blown dead.

Rule 1. The Field, The Players and Equipment

A. The Field

The field shall be 100 yards by 40 yards, including two 10 yard endzones. The width of the field shall be lined at 20 yards intervals from goal line to goal line. The 3 and 10 yard try for point lines shall be 1 yard wide.

B. The Players

1. Seven players constitute a men's or women's team. A team may play with 5 (i.e., teams must start if 5 players are present). If fewer than 5 players are present, the game will be a forfeit.
2. A player's name must appear on the scorecard before he/she may enter the game. A team may add roster members to the scorecard at anytime during the game.
3. A valid Mav Express I.D. must be presented to the official at game time.
NO I.D. – NO PLAY – NO EXCEPTIONS!!!!

C. Equipment/Apparel

1. Shoes shall be made of canvas, leather, or synthetic material which covers the foot attached to a firm sole of leather, rubber or composition material which may have cleats or be cleatless. Among the items which do not meet these

- requirements are gymnastic slippers, tennis shoes cut so protection is reduced, ski and logger boots, and other apparel not intended for football use. Cleats are limited to studs or projections which do not exceed 1/2 in length and are made with nonabrasive rubber or rubber-type synthetic material which does not chip or develop a cutting edge.
2. The use of headgear , **jewelry** , shoulder pads, body pads or any unyielding or dangerous equipment is prohibited . Players may wear a knit or stocking cap and use soft, pliable gloves if they desire. **No baseball style caps or bandanas.**
 3. Tape or bandage on the hand, wrist forearm, or any other part of the body is prohibited except to protect an injury. Under no circumstances will a player wearing a cast or splint be allowed to play. Braces with exposed metal parts must be covered.
 4. Any decision on the legality on any equipment on or being used by a player will be made by the supervisor on duty and his/her decision will be final.
 5. Each team must wear the same type of jersey or shirt. If not, jerseys will be provided. The jersey must be tucked in to allow for grabbing the flag.
 6. **Belt loops and shorts with pockets are illegal.**

RULE 2: START OF GAME

A. GAME TIME IS FORFEIT TIME

- 1. If a team does not have the minimum number of players to start a game the opposing team has two options.**
 - a. Wait 10 minutes for the other team to attain more players. No matter when the opposing teams' players arrive the team causing the delay will be down 14-0, and will be on defense to start the game and second half.**
 - b. Take the forfeit win**
- 2. A game that is delayed due to a team not having the minimum number of players will start in the 2nd Quarter no matter what time the opposing team has the minimum number of players to start a game.**

B. Pre-Game Captain Meeting/Coin Toss

Ten minutes prior to the start of the game, the referee shall conduct a captain's meeting the referee shall toss a coin and one captain shall call the toss. The captain winning the toss shall have a choice of options for the first half or shall defer his/her option to the second half. The options for each half shall be:

1. To choose whether his/her team will offense or defense first.
2. To choose the goal his/her team will defend. The captain, not having first choice of option for a half, shall exercise the remaining option.

RULE 3. PERIODS, TIME FACTORS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

A. PLAYING TIME AND INTERMISSIONS

1. Playing time shall be of a forty minute duration, divided into four quarters of 10 minutes each. (Teams will change direction between the 1st and 2nd and 3rd and 4th quarters). Half-time shall be 3 minutes long. In case of overtime, there will be a one minute intermission between the end of the game and the overtime. In the first half, the clock will stop only for a team timeout or a referee timeout. During the last minute of the first half, the clock will stop for penalty enforcement. In final 2 minutes of the second half the clock will stop according to rule. The referee shall have discretion on reducing the length of half-time if conditions deem it necessary.
2. **MERCY RULE:** If a team is 19 or more points ahead when the referee announces the 2-minute warning for the second half (or at any point after), the game shall be over. If a team is ahead by 37 points to begin the fourth quarter or anytime within the fourth quarter, the game shall be over. See co-rec modifications for co-rec mercy rule.
3. Each team will be permitted **two** time-outs per game, each lasting **30 seconds** in length. Each team will be permitted one time-out during overtime.
4. The referee may start or stop the game clock whenever, in his/her judgment, either team is trying to conserve or consume playing time by using illegal or unfair tactics.
5. Consuming more than 25 seconds in putting the ball in play after it's ready for play is a delay of game. **Penalty – 5 yards**
6. After a safety, the ball shall be snapped by the scoring team at their own 14 yardline, unless moved by penalty.
7. **Kicking the Ball-** The kicker must be at least 2 yards behind the line of scrimmage when receiving the snap. After receiving the snap, the kicker must kick the ball immediately and in a continuous motion. **Penalty-5 yards.** If the kicker drops the ball it is considered a fumble and becomes dead.

8. Kick Recovery In-bounds -- A rolling ball may be advanced by the receiving team provided that no one has touched the ball first. If the ball touches someone and then hits the ground, the ball is declared dead.
9. While any punt is in flight beyond K's scrimmage line, K shall not touch the ball or R, nor obstruct R's path to the ball, unless the kick has been touched by R. K may catch, touch, muff, or bat a punt in flight beyond K's scrimmage line if no R player is in position to catch the ball.
10. Fair Catch- All fair catch rules have been eliminated. Should a player "call for a fair catch" the fair catch call is null and the play shall continue.
11. Players can enter and leave the game as many times as they want to, but substitutions must be made during a dead ball.
12. Every offensive player must be within 15 yards of the ball at some point between the time that the ball is marked ready for play and when the ball is snapped. There is no infraction of this rule if the offending player is covered by a defensive player.

RULE 4. SNAPPING AND PASSING THE BALL

A. SNAPPING THE BALL

1. The player who receives the snap from the center must be at least 2 yards behind his/her scrimmage line.
2. The offensive team must have a minimum of 1 player on the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap. See co-rec rules for modification of this rule.
3. If on the snap, scrimmage kick or any other circumstances the ball is fumbled, it is immediately dead upon hitting the ground. No advancement can be made by either team. A fumble going out of bounds without hitting the ground remains in possession of the fumbling team at the spot where fumbled (if fumbled forward) or wherever the ball went out of bounds (if fumbled backward). INTERPRETATION:
A team may not fumble the ball forward to gain yardage.

B. PASSING THE BALL

1. All players are eligible to touch a forward pass after it is thrown. The passer may catch his/her own forward pass after it is touched by another player.

2. If a legal forward pass is caught simultaneously by members of opposing teams, the ball becomes dead and belongs to the offensive team.
3. A forward pass is a live-ball thrown towards the opponent's goal line. A backward pass is a live-ball thrown parallel or towards the passer's goal line. Initial direction determines whether a pass is backward or forward. A backward pass hitting the ground is ruled the same as a fumble.
4. It is illegal to attempt to steal a ball in any player's possession. Once a player has obtained possession of the ball, his/her opponent must play for the flag, not the ball.
5. Defensive players must not contact the passer at any time during or after the play. They may only go for the flag. Rushers may try and deflect the ball, but they may not contact the passer even if the ball is deflected. If the defender contacts the passer's arm, it is considered roughing the passer. **(10 yard penalty-Automatic First down)**
6. Offensive pass interference is where the receiver makes contact with a defensive player beyond the line of scrimmage while the ball is in flight. **(10 yard penalty)**
7. Defensive pass interference is where the defender makes contact with a receiver beyond the line of scrimmage while the ball is in flight. **(10 yard penalty)**
8. Removal of the flag belt- When the flag is clearly removed from the ball carrier the play is dead. If the flag inadvertently falls to the ground, a one hand touch between the shoulders and knees constitutes capture. The runner is also down if any parts of his/her body touches the ground other than his/her feet or hands.
9. If a player is purposely deflagged before the ball is thrown, it is pass interference.

RULE 5: SCORING

A. POINT VALUE

- | | | |
|----|--------------|--------------------------------|
| a. | Touchdown | 6points |
| b. | Safety | 2 points |
| c. | Extra points | 1 point from the 3 yard line |
| | | 2 points from the 10 yard line |
| | | 3 points from the 20 yard line |

Touchdowns will be verified by any official deflagging a player. If the flag does not

come off, and the official determines the flag belt has been secured illegally, the touchdown is disallowed. The player is disqualified, **(10 yard penalty from the previous spot and loss of down.)**

RULE 6: SCREENING , RUSHING, CONTACT, AND PLAYER CONDUCT

A. SCREENING AND RUSHING

1. Contact shall not be allowed except for incidental contact which does not obstruct the advance of the rusher or knock down the screener.
2. An offensive player may screen a defensive player by maintaining a position in the path of the defensive player. The offensive player in maintaining position may not move in such a manner as to initiate contact with the defensive player nor may the defensive player contact the offensive player with an extended arm, shoulder, hip, or knee.
3. A defensive player may not contact an offensive player but must go around an offensive player maintaining position in the path of the defensive player. The concept of screening and rushing is similar to the block and charge scenario in basketball in most but not all cases.
4. Team A Players are responsible for retrieving the ball after a down has ended. Officials are not responsible for retrieving the ball.
5. Defensive players must not contact the passer at anytime during or after a play. They may go only for the flag. Rushers may try to deflect the ball but not make contact with the passer. **(10 yard penalty-Automatic first down)**
6. Any player may hand the ball forward or back at any time.

RULE 7: TIE GAME (OVERTIME)

The two captains will determine the options by a coin flip. The options are the same as the start of the game. the home captain will call the toss. Teams will alternate choices if additional overtime periods are played. Both teams will go in the same direction. Each team will be given 4 downs from the same 10 yard line. If the first team scores a touchdown, the second team still receives 4 downs to win the game. Extra points will be attempted and scored as previously stated. If the defense intercepts the ball it will be blown dead and the series will be over. Each team is entitled to one time-out per over time.

RULE 8 : MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

- A. There can only be protest over a players eligibility or a rules interpretation. An officials judgment call cannot be protested. All protest must be filed no later than 24 hours after the game in question.
- B. The field supervisor has the final say on protests during a game. The only player allowed to protest is the team captain. They are also the ones allowed to talk to the officials or supervisor. The team wishing to protest must do so before the next snap of the ball. The captains will meet with the referee and supervisor to discuss the protests. If a team still wishes to protest they must complete a Protest Form and return it to the supervisor. A final decision will be made by the Coordinator or Assistant Director.
- C. Any team forfeiting will have to pay a \$25 dollar forfeit fee. Teams are allowed one forfeit. On the second forfeit they will automatically miss the playoffs.
- D. **All teams advance to the playoffs if they meet previous standards.**

SUMMARY OF CORRECREATION FOOTBALL RULES

The Game: The game shall be played between 2 teams of 8 players, 4 men and 4 women. A team may start with 6 players. A team that is playing shorthanded must have a minimum of either 2 men or 2 women on the field. At no point may a team have more than 4 men or 4 women on the field at one time

The Ball: The regular, intermediate, youth, or junior size ball shall be used

Minimum Line Players: The offensive team must have at least 1 player on their scrimmage line at the snap. Penalty: Illegal Procedure- 5 yards

Male Runner: A Team-A runner cannot advance the ball through Team-A's scrimmage line. There are no restrictions: During a run by a male runner once the ball is beyond the Team-A's scrimmage line; during a run by a female runner; and after a change of possession. Penalty: Illegal Procedure, 5 yards from the previous spot.

Male to Male Completion: During the offensive team's possession, there may not be 2 consecutive legal forward pass completions from a male passer to a male receiver. This rule applies to the try. If a male passer completes a legal forward pass to a male receiver, the next forward pass completion must involve either a female passer or a female receiver for positive yardage. The spot where the ball becomes dead by rule must be beyond the Team-A's scrimmage line. There are no restrictions concerning a male passer completing a legal forward pass to a female receiver, or female to female, or female to male . Penalty: Illegal Forward Pass, 5 yards from the spot where the second consecutive male to male completed a legal male forward pass is released, and a loss of down. Any foul, whether accepted or declined, shall have no effect on whether the next legal forward pass is "open" or "closed".

Illegal Forward Pass: If a female passer completes a forward pass to a male receiver behind the Team-A scrimmage line and runs beyond this scrimmage line, it is illegal forward pass. Penalty: Illegal Forward Pass, 5 yards from the spot of the pass and loss of down.

Mercy Rule: If a team is 25 or more points ahead when the referee announces the 2-minute warning for the second half (or at any point after), the game shall be over. If a team is ahead by 49 points to begin the fourth quarter or anytime within the fourth quarter, the game shall be over.

Touchdown Value: If a female player scores a touchdown, the point value is 9. If a female player throws a legal forward pass and a touchdown is scored by any Team-A player, the point value is 9.

Flag Football Definitions

Section 1. Ball – Live, Dead, Loose, Possession

Live Ball – A live ball is a ball in play and a dead ball is a ball not in play. A pass or fumble which has not yet touched the ground is alive ball in flight and can be caught and advanced by either team.

Loose Ball – A loose ball is a live ball not in player possession, i.e., any punt, pass or fumble.

In Possession – A player is in possession of a live ball when he/she is holding or controlling the ball. A team is in possession:

- A. When one of its players is in possession.
- B. While a punt is being attempted.
- C. While a forward pass thrown by one of its players is in flight.
- D. When it was last in possession during a loose ball.

When the Ball is Ready for Play – A dead ball is ready for play when the Referee:

- A. If the clock is running, sounds the whistle and signals “ready for play”.
- B. If the clock is stopped, sounds the whistle and signals either “start the clock” or “ball ready for play”.

Section 2. Bat

Bat – A bat is intentionally slapping or striking the ball with the hand or arm.

Section 3. Catch, Interception, Simultaneous Catch, Touching

Catch – A catch is the act of establishing player possession of a live ball which is in flight, and first contacting the ground inbounds or being contacted by an opponent in such a way that he/she is prevented from returning to the ground inbounds while maintaining possession of the ball.

- A. If one foot first lands inbound and the receiver has possession and control of the ball, it is a catch or interception even though a subsequent step or fall takes the receiver out-of-bounds.
- B. A catch by any kneeling or prone inbounds players is a completion or interception.
- C. A loss of the ball simultaneously with returning to the ground is not a catch or interception. NOTE: If in doubt, it is a catch.

Interception – An interception is the catch of an opponent’s fumble or pass.

Simultaneous Catch or Recovery – A simultaneous catch or recovery is a catch or recovery in which there is joint possession of a live ball by opposing players who are inbounds.

Touching – Catching is always preceded by touching the ball; thus, if touching causes the ball to become dead, securing possession of the ball has no significance. Touching refers to any contact with the ball.

Section 4. Down and Between Downs

A down is a unit of the game which starts, after the ball is ready for play, with a legal snap and ends when the ball next becomes dead. Between downs is the interval during which the ball is dead.

Section 5. Encroachment

Encroachment is a term to indicate a player is illegally in the neutral zone. An entering substitute is not considered to be a player for encroachment restrictions until he/she is on his/her team's side of the neutral zone.

Section 6. Fighting

Fighting is any attempt by a player or nonplayer to strike or engage an opponent in a combative manner unrelated to football. Such acts include, but are not limited to, attempts to strike an opponent(s) with the arm(s), hand(s), leg(s) or foot (feet), whether or not there is contact.

Section 7. Foul

A foul is a rule infraction for which a penalty is prescribed. NOTE: If in doubt, it is not a foul.

Section 8. Fumble

A fumble is a loss of player possession other than by handing, passing, or punting the ball.

Section 9. Goal Lines

Each goal line is a vertical plane separating the end zone from the field of play. The plane of the goal extends beyond the sideline.

Section 10. Handing the Ball

Handing the ball is transferring player possession from one teammate to another without throwing or punting it.

Section 11. Huddle

A huddle is two or more offensive players grouped together after the ball is ready for play and before assuming scrimmage formation prior to the snap.

Section 12. Hurdling

Hurdling is an attempt by a player to jump with one or both feet or knees foremost over an opponent who is contacting the ground with no part of his/her body, except one or both feet.

Section 13. Kicks

Kicker – Any player who punts. The kicker is a runner until he/she actually punts the ball. Players of his/her team are known as kickers and any opponent is a receiver.

Legal and Illegal Kicks – A legal kick is a punt by a player of the team in possession when such a kick is permitted by Rule. Any punt continues to be a punt until it is caught by a player or becomes dead. Kicking the ball in any other manner is illegal.

Punt – A punt is made by Team A under restrictions which prohibits either team from advancing beyond their scrimmage lines until the ball is punted. A punt is kicking the ball by the player who drops it and punts it before it strikes the ground.

Section 14. Loss of a Down

“Loss of a down” means loss of the right to repeat the down.

Section 15. Muff

Muff – an unsuccessful attempt to catch a ball, the ball being touched in the attempt.

Section 16. Neutral Zone

Neutral Zone – is from the forward point of the football one yard to the Team B scrimmage line and extended to each sideline. It is established when the ball is marked ready for play.

Section 17. Passer

Passer – the player who has thrown a legal forward pass. He/she remains the passer while the ball is in flight or until he/she moves to participate in the play.

Section 18. Passes

Passing. Passing the ball is throwing it. In a pass, the ball travels in flight. A pass continues to be a pass until caught, intercepted, or the ball becomes dead. The initial direction determines whether a pass is forward or backward.

Forward and Backward Pass. A forward pass is a pass thrown with its initial direction toward the opponent's end line. A backward pass is a pass thrown with its initial direction parallel with or toward the passer's end line. A pass continues to be a pass until it is caught or strikes the ground. A backward pass or fumble that hits the ground is ruled dead at that spot.

Section 19. Penalty

A penalty is a result imposed by Rule against a team or team member that has committed a foul.

Section 20. Removing the Flag Belt

Flag Belt Removal. When the flag belt is clearly taken from the runner in possession of the ball, the ball is declared dead and the down shall end. An opponent who removes the flag belt from the runner should immediately hold the flag belt above his/her head to assist the official in locating the spot where the capture occurred. If a flag belt inadvertently falls to the ground, a one hand tag between the shoulders and knees constitutes capture. A player may leave his/her feet to remove the flag belt.

Contact. In an attempt to remove the flag belt from a runner, an opponent may contact the body and shoulders, but not the face, neck or any part of the head of the runner with their hands. An opponent may not hold, push, or knock the down in an attempt to remove the flag belt.

Section 21. Screen Blocking

Screen blocking is legally obstructing an opponent without using any part of the body to initiate contact.

Section 22. Scrimmage

Scrimmage Line. The scrimmage line for Team A is the yard line and its vertical plane which passes through the forward point of the ball. The scrimmage line for Team B is the yard line and its vertical plane which passes one yard from the point of the ball nearest its own goal line. Team B's scrimmage line may extend into their end zone. A Team A player is on his/her scrimmage line when facing his/her opponent's goal line with his/her head or foot breaking the plane of the imaginary line drawn through the waistline of the snapper and parallel to the scrimmage line. The snapper is a line player.

Backfield Line. To be legally in the backfield a Team A player's head or foot must not break the plane of the line drawn through the waistline of the nearest Team A players, except the snapper, on the scrimmage line.

Section 23. Shift

Shift – the action of one or more offensive players who, after a huddle or after taking set positions, move to a new position before the ensuing snap.

Section 24. Tagging

Tagging – placing one hand anywhere between the shoulders and knees of an opponent with the ball. The tagger may leave his/her feet to make the tag. Pushing, striking, slapping, and holding are not permitted. If the player trips the runner in his/her attempt to make a diving tag, it is a foul.

Section 25. Team and Player Designations

Disqualified Player. A disqualified player is one who becomes ineligible for further participation in the game.

Line Players and Backfield Player. A line player is any person on his/her scrimmage line when the ball is snapped. A backfield player is any person who is legally behind that line when the ball is snapped.

Offensive and Defensive Team. The offensive team is the team in possession or the team to which the ball belongs. The defensive team is the opposing team.

Player. A player is any one of the participants in the game.

Runner. The runner is the player in possession of a live ball or simulating possession of a live ball. Once a player catches or intercepts a pass, he/she becomes a runner.

Snapper. The snapper is the player who snaps the ball. He/she is a line player.

Substitute. A substitute is a team member who may replace a player.

Team A and B. Team A is the team which snaps the ball. The opponent of Team A is Team B. A player of Team A is A1 and teammates are A2 and A3. Other abbreviations are B1 for a player of Team B, K1 for a player of the kickers and R1 for one of the receivers.