

Field Sports Youth Flag Football Rules

General

- A coin toss determines first possession.
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at their 5-yard line and has (4) plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has (4) plays to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on their 5-yard line.
- If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts their drive from their 5-yard line.
- All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line.
- Teams change sides after the first half of play.

Players/Game Schedules

- 6U, 9U Divisions: Teams will consist of 6 players on the field. All players are guaranteed a starting position.
- 12U, 14U Divisions: Teams will consist of 5 players on the field. All players are guaranteed a starting position.

Timing/Overtime

- Games consist of two 22 minute halves, with a two minute halftime.
- If the score is tied at the end of 44 minutes the game will be considered a tie.
- Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced.
- Each team has one 30-second time out per half. All time outs will stop the clock
- Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.

Scoring

- Touchdown: 6 points
- Field Goal: 3 points (uncontested kick, must be a snap and hold)
- Extra point: 1 point (played from 5-yard line or kicking) (uncontested kick, must be a snap and hold),
2 points (played from 12-yard line)
- Safety: 2 points

Running

- The quarterback cannot run with the ball.
- Laterals and pitches are permitted. Offense may use multiple handoffs.
- "No-running zones," located 5 yards from each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield, are designed to avoid short-yardage, power-running situations.
- 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 (no diving, no hurdling).
- The offense may use a screen block. During the screen block no player can initiate contact. The offense must establish position and cannot make contact with the defense. The defense must avoid the screen block without

contact. The block is similar to a basketball pick or screen.

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.
- 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 own. Once the ball is handed off, the seven-second rule no longer is in effect.
- Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception. Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start on the 5-yard line. Interceptions returns are permitted in the 12U and 14U year old divisions. *Dead Balls*
- The ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to one side, to start play.
- Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- Play is ruled “dead” when:
 - Ball carrier’s flag is pulled.
 - Ball carrier steps out of bounds.
 - Touchdown or safety is scored.
 - At the point of an interception. (except the 12U and 14U year old divisions)
 - Ball carrier’s knee hits the ground.
 - Ball carrier’s flag falls off.

Note: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground.

Rushing the Quarterback

- 6U, 9U Divisions: All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of 10 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.
- 12U, 14U Divisions: All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of 10 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, the ten-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 ten yards from the line of scrimmage. Remember, no blocking or tackling is allowed.

Sportsmanship/Roughing

- If the coach or referee witnesses any acts of 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. 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.

Penalties

All penalties will be called by the referee.

- Unsportsmanlike 10 yards and automatic first down

Defense:

- Offsides 5 yards
- Interference 10 yards and automatic first down
- Illegal contact (holding, blocking, etc.) 10 yards and automatic first down
- Illegal flag pull (before receiver has ball) 10 yards and automatic first down
- Illegal rushing (starting rush from inside 7-yard marker) 10 yards

Offense:

- Illegal motion (more than one person moving, false start, etc.) 5 yards
- Illegal forward pass (pass received behind line of scrimmage) 5 yards and loss of down
- Illegal contact (holding, blocking, etc.) 10 yards and automatic first down
- Offensive pass interference (Illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender) 10 yards and loss of down
- Flag guarding 5 yards (from spot)
- Delay of game 5 yards, Clock stops under 2 minutes in half

In General:

- Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.
- 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 it.
- Attire: Players must wear a protective mouthpiece; there are no exceptions. Jerseys must be worn during play and be tucked in to shorts or sweatpants.

Note: There are no kickoffs, and no blocking is allowed.