

2014 7 ON 7 ELIGIBLE Adult Flag Football – Rules and Format

Rule 1: Fields, Players, and Equipment

Section 1: The Field

- Size:
- A. 80 yards from goal to goal
 - B. 40 yards in width
 - C. End zones will vary according to available site space (7-10 yards).

Section 2: The Players:

- A. **Line – Up is required five minutes before every game.**
- B. Roster player limit is 20
- C. Seven (7) players shall constitute a team. **A team must have SIX (6) players to start and at least five (5) to continue (injury).**
- D. **Ten minute forfeit period: A forfeit will be declared if you have less than six players 10 minutes after the scheduled game time. OFFICIALS DO NOT WORK FORFEITS! The game clock will start at the scheduled game time and run for ten minutes (forfeit) or until the deficient team has the minimal number of players to start the game (6). If the deficient team does get minimal number of players before the 10 minutes expire, the opposing team will automatically be awarded 7 points (6 plus extra point) and be awarded with winning the coin toss. The clock will continue to run with no interruption until a normal stoppage of the clock occurs during the game (timeout, 1-minute warning, or injury).**
- E. All players must:
 1. Wear tennis shoes, soccer or solid rubber molded cleats (plastic cleats).
 2. Tuck shirts, pinnies, etc., into pants. Jerseys must be all the same color.
 3. Wear belts provided. Flags must be worn on the sides.
 4. Remove all types of jewelry during play.

Section 3: The Equipment:

- A. The ball shall be an official ball (leather/collegiate). **Teams must provide their own game balls.** Both team captains and game officials must approve balls used for game play.
- B. The official or supervisor shall not allow dangerous or confusing equipment. This will include: 1) projecting metal or other hard substances, 2) finger rings, 3) knee, elbow, or wrist guards of a hard substance (the traditional knee brace, if properly padded with no metal shown, will be allowed), 4) forearm or arm pads, 5) tape or bandage on the hand or forearm unless approved by the official, 6) excessively large shirts, 7) any other pads normally associated with tackle football, 8) **team members cannot wear red or yellow colored shorts or pants or similar colors such as maroon or gold, etc., to camouflage their flags; failure to abide by this rule will result in player/players not being allowed to participate.** 9) **each team is required to wear jerseys that are of the same color.** Officials and supervisors have the final decisions concerning the allow-ability of questionable protective equipment.

Rule 2: The Game:

Section 1: Regular Play

- A. In the presence of the two team captains, the official shall toss a coin. The winner has choice of offense or defense.
- B. Teams will switch goals at half and 1st half team that started on defense will now start on offense or vice-versa.
- C. Teams on offense have 4 downs to advance to the next first down line or a touchdown.
- D. **An announcement of punts on fourth down is necessary.** No rushing is permitted on punts (no motion until after punt). In cases of announced punts. A blocked quick kick belongs to the team blocking the kick at the spot where the ball first touches the ground following the blocked kick.
- E. Punts that go out of bounds shall be brought in bounds and centered on the field at the point it crosses the sideline.
- F. **“Game Time is Start Time”! See RULE 1:2:D Be ready to play at your scheduled time. NO CANCELLATIONS!** Report to the site!

Section 2: The Kick Off

- A. **No kickoffs**, ball starts at the 20-yard line.

Section 3: Timing

- A. The game consists of two halves, **each 20 minutes in length.** Half time shall be 3 minutes in length.
- B. **Time runs continuous for each half except for legal time outs during the last one minute of both halves when the clock will stop on all dead ball situations.** The clock will restart as soon as the ball is hiked.
- C. Approximately one minute before the end of each half, the official shall call time and notify the captains of the time remaining.
- D. If time for any period expires during a down, play shall continue until the end of the down.
- E. The attempt for extra point shall be allowed should time expire. During the last one minute of the halves the clock will not run during the attempt for extra point.
- F. Each team is allowed **three time outs per game.** Each time out will be one minute in length, **maximum two per half.**

Section 4: Scoring

- A. A touchdown shall count as six points (a touchdown will be scored if the ball breaks the plane of the goal line)
- B. A try for a point after is awarded after a touchdown is scored. A two point conversion from the 10 yard or a 1 point form the 3-yard line may be attempted. A team is given one scrimmage play from the 10-yard or 3-yard line to complete a pass or run the ball over the goal line. **Defensive team can not score on an extra point.**
- C. A safety shall count as two points. A safety is scored when the ball is legally in possession of a player becomes dead behind their own goal line, provided the impetus which sent the ball across was given by a member of their own team. Points are awarded to the opposing team and the team that scored the safety will get possession of the ball at their own 20 yard line.

Section 5: Tie Game (Tie-Breaker)

- A. A team must score in fewer downs than the previous team did. If both teams end with the same amount of downs, they each get another set of downs. There will be no extra point attempts. No points scored on the interceptions. **Four downs from the 20-yard line, both teams utilize the same end zone.** Defense can not score in overtime, it just ends the offensive series. One time out per team. Unused timeouts do not carry over from regulation play.
- B. A coin flip will determine the choice of offense / defense or end of field choice.

Section 6: Substitution

- A. Any number of substitutions may enter the game for either team when the ball is dead.

Rule 3: Team Play

Section 1: Dead Ball: (Time will stop during the last one minute of both halves)

- A. The ball is dead and the play is ended under the following conditions:
 1. Following a touchdown, point after, safety, or touchback.
 2. After an incomplete pass.
 3. When the ball carrier goes out of bounds.
 4. During a time out
 5. Upon change of possession
 6. When a penalty has been called
 7. NOTE: **CLOCK DOES NOT STOP ON 1ST DOWNS, OR ON A BAD SNAP.**
- B. A snap becoming dead in the end zone, on the end zone, or beyond the end zone shall be declared a safety.

Section 2: The Scrimmage & Offense

- A. The offense must hike the ball into play within 25 seconds of the time the official places the ball on the line of scrimmage.
- B. **All players of the offensive team must remain stationary for one second** before the ball is snapped. **One person may start in motion**, but this person cannot be on the line of scrimmage and their motion must be away from the line of scrimmage.
- C. The person hiking the ball must:
 1. **Hike under the legs** to a teammate behind the line of scrimmage.
 2. Not pick up the ball and replace it on the ground before hiking.
 3. Not make a deliberate movement to draw the defense offsides.
- D. **The offense and defense cannot enter or break the plane of the neutral zone (the area 3-ft in front of the ball) until the ball is hiked. An infraction of this rule is offsides. Any player breaking or lining-up in the neutral zone, will be flagged with an immediate whistle (play is called dead for ANY offsides infraction). This penalty can not be declined.**
- E. At least three offensive players must be on the line of scrimmage.
- F. Lateral (backward) passes (overhand or underhand) may be made anywhere on the field and there is no limit to the number that may be attempted in a play or down.
- G. A "double pass" is illegal (loss of down). (A double pass means two forward passes.)
- H. Incomplete forward passes behind the goal line will not be considered touchbacks.
- I. No player may hand the ball off forward of their position on the field to another teammate unless both players are behind the line of scrimmage and before the ball goes forward of the line of scrimmage.
- J. **In running, the ball carrier must attempt to avoid tacklers". Deliberate charging into a defensive player, with or without head down, will result in a penalty of CHARGING (15 YARDS). "Brushing" or other unavoidable contact is not willful charging.**
- K. **Ball carriers may not stiff arm while running or guard their flag in any manner.**
- L. The ball is down at the spot where a flag is pulled.
- M. No player of the offensive team shall make a false start (faking a charge or play). The ball need not be snapped and the penalty for any contact foul by an opponent shall be cancelled. Officials shall stop play immediately for this violation.
- N. **One foot down** inside the field of play constitutes a **legal pass catch**.
- O. The ball carrier must return the ball to the closest official after the play is blown dead. Repeated failure to do so may result in a delay of game penalty.
- P. "Quarterback sneaks" are illegal. A quarterback may not be underneath the center **but must be at least three yards behind the center (MUST USE SHOTGUN)**. A **quarterback may not run forward with the ball from this legal position** behind the center.
- Q. Huddles are not required.

Section 3: Running Plays

- A. The ball carrier may run in any direction, hand off, or lateral anywhere on the field. All handoffs or laterals must be to the rear of the passer beyond the line of scrimmage. If dropped, **the ball is dead at that spot (fumble)**.
- B. Blocking: Any player blocking, **MUST BLOCK WITH OPEN HANDS (NO ELBOWS) and keep them in the frame of their body. DROPPING THE SHOULDER AND ELBOW/FOREARM BLOCKING IS ILLEGAL (SAFETY**

REASONS) AND WILL BE PENALIZED 10 YARDS (FROM POINT OF INFRACTION). Officials may increase the penalty to unnecessary roughness (15 yds, and possibly ejection). "Flippers" or "Winging" shall be illegal and penalized as unnecessary roughness. Both feet must be in contact with the ground when blocking.

- C. To eliminate some of the physical nature of the game. No runs will be allowed between the guard / center area in their normal starting positions (pulling sweeps are allowed). Penalty: Spot of infraction and loss of down.

Section 4: Passing Plays

- A. If a pass goes out of bounds or is not caught, the ball is dead and returns to the previous line of scrimmage.
- B. **If a simultaneous catch takes place, the ball is dead and belongs to the offensive team.**
- C. A ball which falls from the passer's hand shall be judged accordingly to the following:
1. If there is any forward motion by the arm, the ball is ruled an incomplete forward pass and returned to the line of scrimmage.
 2. If there is not forward motion, the ball is ruled a fumble and dead at the spot the ball touches the ground.
- D. It is intentional grounding when there is no receiver in the vicinity of a thrown ball. The penalty is 5 yards from the line of scrimmage and loss of down.
- E. Pass Blocking: Any player blocking for the passer, **MUST BLOCK WITH OPEN HANDS (NO ELBOWS) and keep them in the frame of their body. DROPPING THE SHOULDER AND ELBOW/FOREARM BLOCKING IS ILLEGAL (SAFETY REASONS) AND WILL BE PENALIZED 10 YARDS "illegal block."** Officials may increase the penalty to unnecessary roughness (15 yds, and possibly ejection). Point of infraction if **BEYOND LINE OF SCRIMMAGE.** "Flippers" or "Winging" shall be illegal and penalized as unnecessary roughness. Any contact which results between blockers and the official's judgement of which player has their path or position established. Both feet must be in contact with the ground when blocking.

Section 5: The Punt

- A. Will be a "free punt" with 2 receivers back.
- B. If the offensive team desires to announce a punt, the captain should indicate it to the official who then announces the punt to all players. On an announced punt, neither team may cross the line of scrimmage until the ball has been punted. **Ball must be punted IMMEDIATELY, 5 second count by officials.** (Pen: #1).
- D. The punted ball can be caught on the fly or off the bounce and would be down where the receiver gains control.
- E. If a punt on the fly hits in the end zone and goes through the end zone, the ball is dead and is placed on the 20 yard line.
- F. If the ball goes out of bounds it is put in play in the middle of the field adjacent to the spot it goes out.
- G. If on the hike, the ball touches the ground, the ball is dead and the down advances.

Section 6: "Tackling" (legally pulled flags should be held high in the air.)

- A. A ball carrier is considered tackled when an opponent pulls a flag from their belt. A tackler may not put his arm around or in front of the runner or hold the runner in any manner. Only the flags may be grabbed. Stopping the ball carrier in any manner is to be considered unnecessary roughness and **WILL BE ENFORCED!** No tackling is permitted. The penalty is 15 yards from the point of infraction and automatic 1st down, unless the officials judge the ball carrier would have scored if there had been no tackle.
- B. "Pushing" along the sideline if NOT a legal tackle (at any time). PENALTY: Illegal Tackle
- C. **If a player makes contact with the ground (hand or knee), he will be considered down at point of contact.** This is not a deadball situation.

Section 7: Blocking & Stance

- A. **3 and 4 point stances are not permitted**, except the center. No part of the blocker's body except his feet shall be in contact with the ground during the block and rough tactics such as attempting to run over or batter down an opponent must be penalized as unnecessary roughness. (Both feet must be in contact with the ground at all times). **Blocking below the waist, cross body, , and crab blocking are illegal and will result in a 15 yard penalty and immediate ejection! Repeated offense by a team will result in forfeiture and possible expulsion from the league.**
- B. The players on the defense **must use their open palms only** to push and shove to get to the ball carrier, but may not tackle or hold a player.
- C. Unnecessary Roughness – The official shall call unnecessary roughness when any player, whether offense or defense, uses rough tactics considered by the official unnecessary in the accomplishment of their legitimate purpose.
- D. Hand and arms must be kept within the frame of the blocker's body. **ONLY OPEN PALMS may be used, no shoulders or elbows!**

Section 8: Defensive Pass Interference

- A. **No contact with the receiver is allowed beyond the first five yards from the line of scrimmage**, unless it is a simultaneous effort by both players to get the ball.
- B. **Only one bump within the first 5 yards** is allowed. PENALTY: (Point of Infraction / Automatic first down)
OFFICIALS note: "defensive holding" if ball is not in the air.

Section 9: Defense (Use of the hands)

- A. While on defense, **holding an opponent will be penalized ten yards**. EXCEPTION: Use of the hands or arms to ward off an opponent is an actual attempt to get at the runner or the ball.
- B. There will be **NO striking with the fist, locked hands or elbows; kicking, kneeling or meeting with knee; or striking with the heel, backside of the hand on the head, face or neck of an opponent**. PENALTY 15 yards. Disqualified if flagrant.
- C. **No defensive player may touch the offensive center in any manner until he has passed the ball and moved both feet from his original position and becomes a blocker**. PENALTY: 15 yards and disqualified if flagrant.
- D. Neither a player, nor a non-player may interfere with the play by any act, which is not specifically provided for in these rules. PENALTY: The referee enforces any penalty he considers justified.

POINT OF EMPHASIS

1. Stiff arms or covering the flags in any manner: are illegal (considered guarding the flag).
2. Pushing along the sidelines IS NOT legal (ejection from game).
3. ALL Fumbles & MUFFS WILL BE CALLED DEAD. The ball will be marked at the point of occurrence. The team receiving / in possession will retain the ball.
4. A double pass is ILLEGAL.
5. Teams have 4 downs to reach the first down line.
6. All teams are required to appoint a team captain before each game. The captain is responsible for his team's conduct and actions in addition to penalty decisions.
7. Any number of players may line up on scrimmage defensively (no requirements).
8. If a receiver's flag unintentionally falls off before he catches a pass, it will be one hand touch.
9. Players should be conscious of wearing flags at the sides of the waist. Officials may whistle a ball carrier down immediately for deliberately placing flags in a non-legal position.
10. Intentionally pulling of an opponent's flag will be deemed Defensive pass interference.
11. All flags legally pulled from opponent's belt should be held high above their heads.
12. Defense must hand flag back to offensive player, first offense will be warned, second will be flagged for unsportsmanlike conduct.
13. No sideline players, fans or coaches, may go beyond the 20-yd line.
14. A player who is bleeding or has an excessive amount of blood on the uniform shall be considered an injured player and will not be allowed back into the game until the bleeding stops and a blood free jersey is worn.

TEAM/PLAYER CONDUCT & RESPONSIBILITIES

FORFEITS

- A. Two forfeits will result in removal from the league (No refund of entry or player fees)
- B. Officials have the right to stop play when situations get out of hand. In these instances one or both teams may be given a forfeit.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES / DRINKING

1. NO drinking of alcoholic beverages will be allowed by players during the game in any part of the play area (benches, bleachers, parking lot, etc.)
2. The above policy also applies to team managers, coaches, or any other persons associated with team play.
3. Persons discovered drinking, as outlined above, will be immediately EJECTED from the game and suspended from the next scheduled contest. Continued problems may lead to a one year suspension from all program participation.
4. Any players intoxicated while arriving at the game will be asked to leave.

LANGUAGE

1. There will be no swearing or foul language used to embarrass the officials, fans, other players, or any persons associated with the play area.
2. Foul language / swearing directed toward an official will not be tolerated. The person / persons / team involved will be ejected from the game and asked to leave the park. If ejected parties do not leave the park, the game will be stopped and officially ruled a forfeit. If both teams create problems the contest will be declared a double forfeit.
3. Person / Persons / Teams ejected from the game will automatically be suspended from PLAY IN THE NEXT SCHEDULED GAME.
 - OFFICIALS' DECISIONS ON ALL RULES ARE FINAL, NO APPEALS / PROTESTS ALLOWED

CONDUCT / FIGHTING

1. Any player who physically attacks or attempts to strike a game official will be barred from any further play (In City Park and Recreation Department) for a 3 to 5 year period from the time/date of the incident.
2. A team, player or players which persists to make a game a "Farce/Joke" through deliberate actions deemed inappropriate for adult play (some delays, pranks, lack of hustle, etc.) may be subject to 1-3 game suspension from play established by the Park and Recreation Department.
3. No fighting among participants will be tolerated. Any punch / swing deemed intentional will be considered fighting. Penalties for fighting will be as follows:
 - a. Person (s) cited as starting an actual fight will be ejected from the game at hand and will be declared ineligible from any further play during that designated season
 - b. Person (s) cited as fighting in "retaliation" after having been struck shall be suspended for a 3 game period.
 - c. IF GAME OFFICIALS CANNOT DETERMINE THE INDIVIDUALS (S) WHICH INITIATED THE FIGHT ...all persons involved in the actual fight will be suspended for a 3 game period.
 - d. Even IF AN INTENTIONAL swing / punch or act to injure is made, without making physical contact to another participant's person, the minimum penalty will be a 3 GAME SUSPENSION.
 - e. Any person(s) previously suspended will automatically become ineligible for the remainder of the season upon the next fight citation.
 - f. In all cases concerning persons removed from any further play due to rules 3A or 3E, the player(s) in question must submit a written request to the Park and Recreation Department before ANY eligibility can be reinstated (explain the problem).

ADULT FLAG FOOTBALL INFRACTION / PENALTY LIST**LOSS OF 5 YARDS**

1. Flag guarding	Down at point of infraction	(multiple spinning, Stiff arm, hurdling)
2. Illegal equipment during down (flags)	5 yards	Same Down
3. Delay of Game	5 yards	Same Down
4. Illegal Procedure/Shift/Formation	5 yards	Same Down
5. Illegal Substitution	5 yards	Same Down
6. Encroachment/Offsides	5 yards	Same Down (Called immediately by officials)
7. Ineligible receiver downfield	5 yards	Same Down
8. Illegally assisting runner	5 yards	Same Down
9. QB Illegal Position	5 yards	Same Down
10. Snap Infraction	5 yards	Same Down
11. Intentional Grounding	5 yards	Loss of Down
12. Illegal forward pass	5 yards	Loss of Down
13. Intentional grounding	5 yards	Loss of Down

LOSS OF 10 YARDS

14. Illegal Blocking/Holding	10 yards	Same Down
15. Illegal Use of Hands	10 yards	Same Down
16. Charging with ball (Spot Foul)	15 yards	Same Down

LOSS OF 15 YARDS

17. Blocking Foul cross –body, crab block, dropping shoulder, winging)	15 yards	Same Down, possible ejection (below waist, leaving feet,
18. Clipping/Tripping	15 yards	Same Down
19. Offensive Pass Interference	15 yards	Same Down

AUTOMATIC 1ST DOWN

20. Defensive Pass Interference	Point of infraction	Automatic 1 st down.
21. Illegal tackle and / or pushing	15 yards	From Point of infraction & automatic 1 st down, unless intentional or considered a touchdown

LOSS OF 15 YARDS, POSSIBLE DISQUALIFICATION

22. Offensive Unnecessary Roughness	15 yards	Loss of Down, possible ejection
23. Offensive Unsportsmanlike Conduct	15 yards	Loss of Down, possible ejection
	1. Out of Game 2. Out of League (If intentional –player causing the infraction will be ejected)	
24. Defensive Unnecessary Roughness	15 yards	Auto. 1 st down, possible ejection
25. Defensive Unsportsmanlike Conduct	15 yards	Auto. 1 st down, possible ejection
	1. Out of Game 2. Out of League (If intentional –player causing the infraction will be ejected)	