



## Adult Flag Football Rules

**TIME:** Each half is 25 minutes (running clock) with a five (5) minute half and teams will remain on the field. **A half cannot end on a defensive off sides or a replay of the down will occur.**

**PLAYERS ON FIELD:** Games are played with 6 players from each team. If a team has only 4 or fewer players on the field at the scheduled game time, they must forfeit the game. A team may play with only 5 players, but their opponent may choose to play with a full 6. A team may not recruit players from another team. An offense may have 7 players in the huddle, as long as the 7th individual exits the huddle prior to it breaking, raises his/her hand while leaving the field, and clears the field to his/her team's sideline before the play begins. If this fails to happen, this will result in a penalty for having too many players on the field.

**EQUIPMENT:** **NO JOKE NO CLEATS OF ANY TYPE** No studs of any type this means molded and screw in cleats. Failure to comply will result in a game suspension. All players **MUST** wear flags at all times.

**CONTACT:** All efforts must be made to reduce heavy contact. Tackling a player involves a motion to de-flag ONLY. Any other motion to obstruct a player's motion is ILLEGAL. ANY CONTACT other than de-flagging against a passer in passing motion is a penalty. Charging on offense or defense is illegal. Charging is running through an opposing player who has position on the field.

**DIVING:** "Diving" qualifies as a body motion in any direction where a player's advance results in the ball carrier landing on the ground and not on their feet. Remaining upright and leaping into the air to advance the ball is legal provided no contact is made with a defending player who had position prior to the leap. Contact will result in an offensive charging penalty. A player may not dive forward to advance the ball in any instance. You may not dive on or towards the ground to advance the ball. Diving to catch or de-flag is legal provided normal contact rules apply. Diving into a player to de-flag is roughing. Illegal diving is a 10 yards penalty.

**DE-FLAGGING:** De-flagging occurs when the clasp of the flag being worn by the ball carrier is judged by the Referee to have been unclipped by a defensive player. If a flag falls off inadvertently, play is still live until the player with the ball whose flag fell off inadvertently (or was de-flagged prior to possession) is "tackled" by one hand touch from an opposing player. De-flagging prior to possession is a defensive unnecessary roughness penalty.

**RUSH:** A defensive rush is allowed but must occur with a player that is 5 yards off the line of scrimmage. Once a defensive player located 5 yards off the line of scrimmage crosses the line of scrimmage, any defensive player can rush.

**FUMBLE:** All fumbles are dead at the spot. If a ball is fumbled in mid-air, the defender may recover the ball before it touches the ground. Center snap missed by the QB is a dead ball at the spot of the first touch of the ground.

**ILLEGAL MOTION OR OFFSIDES BY THE OFFENSE:** Illegal motion or off sides by the offense results in a dead ball. The play will be immediately blown dead by the referee and the appropriate penalty assessed.

**INADVERTENT WHISTLE:** In the event of an inadvertent whistle, the possessing team can select to take the ball at the spot of the ball at the time of the whistle, or simply replay the down.

**BALL SPOTTING:** The position of the ball marks the line of scrimmage. (A player's body is NOT where the ball is spotted, nor is the spot where the opposing player is standing when the de-flagging is made). The referee calls the ball spot and cannot be challenged.

**HUDDLE CLOCK:** 30 seconds. This will not be further extended to allow exchanging for a selected football.

**PASS INTERFERENCE:** Pass interference is when a defensive or offensive player is purposefully obstructed from catching a "thrown ball." Pass interference is not assessed when both players are making a play for the ball and have inadvertent incidental contact. If feet get tangled inadvertently while running a route there is no illegal contact or interference. Ball catch-ability negates pass interference.

Defensive pass interference in the end zone will be penalized specially: the ball will be placed on the one-yard line with an automatic first down.

Illegal contact is when contact is made on pass routes by either player prior to a ball being thrown which obstructs the running of a route or the allowance of coverage of that route. Ball catch-ability is irrelevant to illegal contact.

**KNEE/FALL DOWN:** If a player's knee touches the ground or falls down while his flags are still on, he may get up and advance the ball until he is de-flagged. If the ball carrier, while still on the ground, is touched by an opposing player, the ball carrier is considered de-flagged and the play will be blown dead. If the referee determines that the ball carrier is in an unsafe position, he or she may whistle dead without an actual "touch" by an opposing player.

**FUMBLE:** All fumbles are dead at the spot. In the event a QB drops the snap, the ball is considered fumbled and will be spotted from the location of the drop. If a ball is fumbled mid-air, any player may recover the ball before it touches the ground and advance the ball. If a ball carrier uses his ball carrying hand to keep his body from contacting the ground, and the ball touches the ground but the carrier remains in control of the ball, the carrier is not down and the play continues.

**PASSING:** A legal forward pass requires that both feet of the throwing player are behind the line of scrimmage. Any individual down may not have more than one forward pass in its execution. The walls and glass are live. The net and ceiling are dead ball.

**BLOCKING:** The **offensive** player cannot use their hands to block but can move in front of the defender to impede the defender's movements (5 yard penalty). The **defender** cannot use their hands to gain position on the blocking offensive player (5 yard penalty) nor can the defender bull rush the offensive player (15 yard penalty).

**SCORING:** All touch downs are 7 points and safeties (this includes any offensive infraction in the end zone) are 2 points.

**PENALTIES:** (all penalties assessed from line of scrimmage; repeat down unless otherwise noted)

#### **LOSS OF 5 YARDS:**

- Illegal defensive rush (rushed ahead of 5 yard marker)
- Illegal forward pass (and loss of down) (play continues and defense has right to accept/decline penalty)

- Delay of game
- Offensive player illegally in motion at the snap or false start (**NO** player in motion allowed at time of snap) (Dead ball foul – penalty stops play and down is repeated)
- Intentionally grounding pass (and loss of down)
- Too many players on field
- Defensive encroachment (on the “bladder line” is off sides)
- Equipment violation (failure to wear flags or team jersey properly this includes shirts not being tucked in before the play.)
- Holding

#### **LOSS OF 10 YARDS:**

- Downfield holding (offensive or defensive)
- Offensive pass interference
- Illegal contact after 5 yards line of scrimmage (prior to completed pass or ball carrier not across line of scrimmage)
- Unsportsmanlike conduct (includes taunting and excessive end zone celebrations)
- Unnecessary roughness (including but not limited to): tripping, clipping, charging, ball stripping, pushing out of bounds and illegal blocking.

#### **LOSS OF 25 YARDS AND PLAYER SITS OUT FOR TWO SUCCESSIVE OFFENSIVE SERIES:**

- Excessive and repeated unsportsmanlike conduct (in the judgment of the referee)
- Excessive and obvious roughing of a passer

#### **SPOT OF FOUL:**

- Defensive pass interference
- If in end zone, offense takes ball on 1-yard line, with automatic first down
- Flag guarding
- Illegal diving
- Pass interference will be a spot foul + 10 yards and a replay of the down; when the defender illegally interferes with a TD pass) = the ball should be spotted at the 1 yard line.
- Defensive holding will be an automatic first down

**PENALTIES ASSESSED NEAR GOAL LINE:** If penalty length is sufficient to cause a TD, the penalty is assessed at half the distance to the goal line.

**FIRST DOWN DETERMINATIONS:** Penalties during a play are assessed before a first down determination is made. The only penalty associated with an automatic first down is defensive pass interference in the end zone.

#### **DEFINITIONS:**

**Roughing the Passer:** A defensive player rushing the QB may not contact any part of the QB’s body, including the ball while still in the QB’s hand, unless the contact is incidental in an attempt to de-flag the QB. While a defensive player may put his hands up in an attempt to block the line of sight of the QB, any subsequent contact of the QB is roughing the passer, even if the defensive player also get a piece of the ball.

**Intentional Grounding:** Illegal Intentional grounding exists when a quarterback under pressure throws the ball away to avoid a sack and the ball does not cross the line of scrimmage or is not thrown within the “vicinity” of an offensive player. “Vicinity” is the judgment of the referee as they must determine if there was a valid attempt to have a reception.

**Ejection:** Referees and league officers can eject players from individual games and suspend or otherwise eject players from the league for conduct deemed in gross violation of the mission of the league. This conduct includes, but is not limited to: excessive rough conduct on the field and abusive treatment of fellow players and referees. Any player ejected from a game is automatically suspended from that player’s next game, and may be subject to further action as addressed elsewhere in these rules.

**Sportsmanship:** The determination of sportsmanship violations is to be reserved for the judgment of the referees. Behavior not in keeping with the traditional notions of sportsmanship constitutes a violation of this rule. These include, but are not limited to, taunting, offensive language or conduct, physical violence or interfering with the referee’s ability to officiate. The referee or league officers may, depending on the severity of the infraction, select from the following penalty options, or, where needed, institute another equitable remedy. Penalties may include, but are not limited to: verbal warning to both the player and his captain/team, loss of 5, 10 or 25 yards, ejection from the game and referral of player conduct to the Director of Rules and Competition for more serious or chronic violations that may merit suspension.

**Pass Interference / Illegal Contact:** Pass interference is when a defensive or offensive player is purposefully obstructed from catching a “thrown ball.” Pass interference is not assessed when both players are making a play for the ball and have inadvertent incidental contact. If feet get tangled inadvertently while running a route there is no illegal contact or interference. Ball catch-ability negates pass interference.

Defensive pass interference in the end zone will be penalized specially: the ball will be placed on the one-yard line with an automatic first down.

**Illegal Contact:** Illegal Contact is when contact is made on pass routes by either player prior to a ball being thrown which obstructs the running of a route or the allowance of coverage of that route. Ball catch-ability is irrelevant to illegal contact.

An offensive player making contact with a defensive player past the line of scrimmage is illegal contact unless the offensive player is blocking after a ball is caught or after the ball carrier crosses the line of scrimmage. “Contact picking” or blocking a defender off coverage of another receiver is illegal contact on the offense.