



Flag Football Short Rules (2017)

Points of Emphasis

- No team shall repeatedly commit penalties that halve the distance to the goal line
- Neither team shall commit penalties to gain an advantage
- The referee will enforce any penalty they consider equitable, including the award of a score for an unfair act.

Equipment/Uniform

- A Protective Mouthpiece must be worn at all times
- Shirts must be Tucked in and have a number on the front and Back of the shirt
- Shorts may not have pockets
- No Blue Jeans Allowed
- No Jewelry
- Cleats must be Rubber cleated, or flat soled.

Start of the Game

- A Coin Toss determines first possession
 - o Winner of the coin toss will choose Offense, Defense, or end of the field to defend; they may defer its choice to the second half.
- All Possessions, except following an interception, start at the offenses 5-yard line.
 - o The offense has 4 plays to cross Mid-Field and an additional 4 once they cross mid-field to reach the Goal line.

Timing of the Game

- Games will be played consisting of (2) 15 minute halves with a 2 minute halftime
 - Clock is Running, except for last minute of the second half
 - In the last minute of second half, the clock will stop on all dead ball whistles.
 - o The Referee may choose to stop the clock at any time (ie. Injuries, Delays, etc.)
 - o All Teams are awarded (1) 60 second timeout each half (This does not carry over)
 - o Delay of Game will be called for any obstruction of the clock by a team, including interrupting the 30-Second Count, or failing to snap the ball in that allotted time.
 - This includes deliberately advancing the ball when it has been declared dead.
 - o Overtime shall award each team (2) plays from midfield, the team receiving the most points or gaining the most yardage advantage is awarded the outcome of the game.

Positions/Snap

- The Ball must be snapped between the centers legs to start each play
- No minimum Number of Players is required to line-up on the line of scrimmage
 - o No member of the offensive team may simulate the start of a play before the ball is snapped
 - One player may be in motion prior to the start of the play, but must be behind the line of scrimmage and may not make a forward motion toward the line of Scrimmage.

Running the Ball

- Handoffs may be in front, behind, or to the side of the offensive player, but must be behind the line of Scrimmage
 - o Laterals and pitches of any kind are not allowed
- The offense may use multiple handoffs
- “Center Sneak” – the ball must completely leave the centers hands on the snap and must step backwards off the line of scrimmage in order to obtain a handoff.
- The Player with the first possession after the snap may not advance the ball until it is first handed off and then returned to that player.

Passing the ball

- All passes must be forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage
- Shovel passes are allowed, but must be received beyond the line of Scrimmage
- All offensive Players are eligible to receive a pass
 - o **UNIFIED:** in the case that a partner is the thrower, only athletes may receive the pass
- Diving:
 - o A dive is only legal in the case that a Offensive or defensive player are diving to catch a pass
 - Diving is illegal when used to down a player or advance a ball

Rushing the QB

- Players rushing the QB must be a minimum of 7 yards from the Line of Scrimmage
 - o The referee will place a marker to designate 7 yards from the line of scrimmage
 - o Once the QB hands off the ball, the 7 yard zone no longer exists

Flag Guarding/Pulling

- Blocking
 - o Screen blocking, such as a Basketball Style (non-moving) screen is the only acceptable form of blocking
 - The blocker must give the opponent one step
 - The Screen Blocker must not initiate contact
 - The Screen blocker must not take a position so close to an opponent that this opponent cannot avoid contact by stopping
 - After the snap of the ball, a blocker may move laterally or backward two steps.
- Flag Pulling
 - o A legal flag pull takes place when the ball carrier is in full possession of the ball
 - o It is illegal to strip the ball from the carriers possession
 - o If a player’s flag belt inadvertently falls off during a play, the player is down immediately upon possession.
- Guarding
 - o Runners shall not shield by using their hands, arms, or the ball to deny to the opportunity for an opponent to pull or remove their belt.
 - The Ball Carrier may not spin, hurdle, dive, stiff arm, or use either arm to shield a defender from grasping his/her flag

Penalties

- All Penalties are automatically accepted (no declination)
- All penalties Offense/Defense are met with a loss of 10 yards from the line of scrimmage
 - o Offense: 10 Yards is accompanied with a loss of a down
 - o Defense: 10 Yards is accompanied with an automatic First down awarded to the Offensive team.