

NFL Flag Football

BASICS

- A coin toss determines first possession (AWAY TEAM CALLS)
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has 4 downs to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has 4 downs to score a touchdown
- The offensive team has the opportunity to go for it on 4th down or punt. Punting: can either physically punt the ball or take an auto punt; where the opposing team receives the ball on their own 5 yd line. During a punt: one player from the offensive team punts the ball from the line of scrimmage; wherever the ball comes to rest, goes out of bounds or is caught the opposing team will take possession. The receiving team may have two players to attempt to catch the ball. If they drop the ball it is then their ball where it comes to rest. Going for it: if the offensive team goes for it on 4th down and fails to cross midfield or score then the defensive team takes possession of the ball at the spot.
- After a score the ball will be spotted at the opposing team's 5-yard line where they will take possession.
- Teams change sides after the first half. Possession changes to loser of coin toss.

PLAYERS/GAME SCHEDULES

- Teams must field a minimum of five players at all times
- Teams consist of a maximum of 10 players – five on the field, 3-5 substitutes

SUBSTITUTION; SUB PLAYERS EVERY 4 PLAYS. MAKING SURE EVERYONE GETS EQUAL PLAYING TIME.

TIMING/OVERTIME

- Games are played to 50 minutes running time (2 twenty-five minute halves). If the score is tied at the end of 50 minutes, it will go in the books as a tie. There will not be any overtime.
- Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 45 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive **one warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced.**
- The only stoppage in the play clock will come when a timeout is called or during the 2-minute warning at the end of each half (on possession & penalties).
- Each team has two 30-second time-out per half.
- Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.

SCORING

- Touchdown: 6 points
- Extra point: **1 point = 5 yard-line 6-7 yr old can't run, 8-15 yr old can run/pass**
2 points = 12 yard-line can run/pass
- Safety: 2 points

EXPLAIN TO THE KIDS HOW YOU SCORE, BUT DO NOT EMPHASIZE ON WINNING OR LOSING.

RUNNING

- In the 6-7 age group the quarterback cannot run with the ball.
- In the 8-15 age groups the quarterback CAN RUN with the ball when being blitzed/rushed.**
- Direct handoffs and pitches behind the line of scrimmage are permitted.
- Offense may use multiple handoffs, as long as there behind the line of scrimmage.
- NO LATERALS ARE PERMITTED (a pass or pitch beyond the line of scrimmage).**
- The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.

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- 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 or jumping over a defensive player) you can juke.
- The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.
- In the 6-7 age group there are "No-Run Zones" located five yards from each end zone and five yards on either side of midfield are designed to avoid short-yardage, power-running situations.
- In the 8-9 & 10-15 age groups we eliminate the "No-Run Zones"**

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

- 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 down.** Once the ball is handed off, the seven-second rule no longer is in effect.
- In the 6-7 age group interceptions result in a change in possession at the point the defensive player possessed the ball.**
- In the 8-15 age groups interceptions CAN be returned, the play is live until the defensive player has his flag pulled, steps out of bounds or drops the ball.**
- Interceptions and failed 4th down attempts are the only changes of possession that do not start on the 5-yard line.

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 8-15 yr olds can return)
 - Ball carrier's knee hits the ground
 - Ball carrier's flag falls out

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

RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK

- In the 6-7 age group there will not be any rushing of the quarterback.
- In the 8-9 & 10-15 age group you may have 1 rusher per down. The player who rushes the passer must be a minimum of ten yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. **However the QB may run with the ball once a defensive player has blitzed/rushed (crossed the line of scrimmage).**
- Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.

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-Once the ball leaves the quarterbacks hands, the ten-yard rule no longer is in effect, and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage. A coach of the defensive team, a volunteer or the referee, will designate ten yards from the line of scrimmage. Remember, no blocking or tackling is allowed.

SPORTSMANSHIP/ROUGHING

-If the field monitors or referee witnesses any act 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, team 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.

-All penalties can be accepted or declined, except for those called prior to the snap

Defense:

-Offsides = 5 yards and replay the down

-Pass interference = 5 yards and automatic first down

-Illegal contact (holding, blocking, etc...) = 5 yards and replay the down

-Illegal tackle (to intentionally take an opponent to the ground) = 5 yards from the spot of the foul or touchdown if on a break away (referees judgement)

-Illegal FLAG pull (before receiver has the ball) = 5 yards from the catch and replay the down

-Illegal rush (rusher starts w/in 10 yards or multiple rushers) = 5 yds and replay the down

Offense:

-Offsides (more than 1 person moving, false start, etc...) = 5 yards and replay the down PLAY IS BLOWN DEAD

-Illegal forward pass (pass thrown beyond line of scrimmage) = 5 yards and replay the down

-Pass interference = 5 yards and loss of down

-FLAG guarding = 5 yards from the spot of the foul

-Illegal blocking = 5 yards and replay the down

-Delay of game = Clock stops, 5 yards and replay the down

-Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.

-Only the coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations.

-Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.

ATTIRE

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-Flags- Each player on the field will wear a belt at the waistline with two flags attached, but not tied; one flag on each side of the body. The excess belt must be tucked into the players shorts/pants.

-Headgear- No headgear containing any hard, unyielding or still material including billed hats.

-Miscellaneous- No towels attached at the player's waist. No pads or braces worn above the waist. ALL POCKETS MUST BE TAPED SHUT.

-Cleats are allowed, except for metal spikes. Inspections must be made.

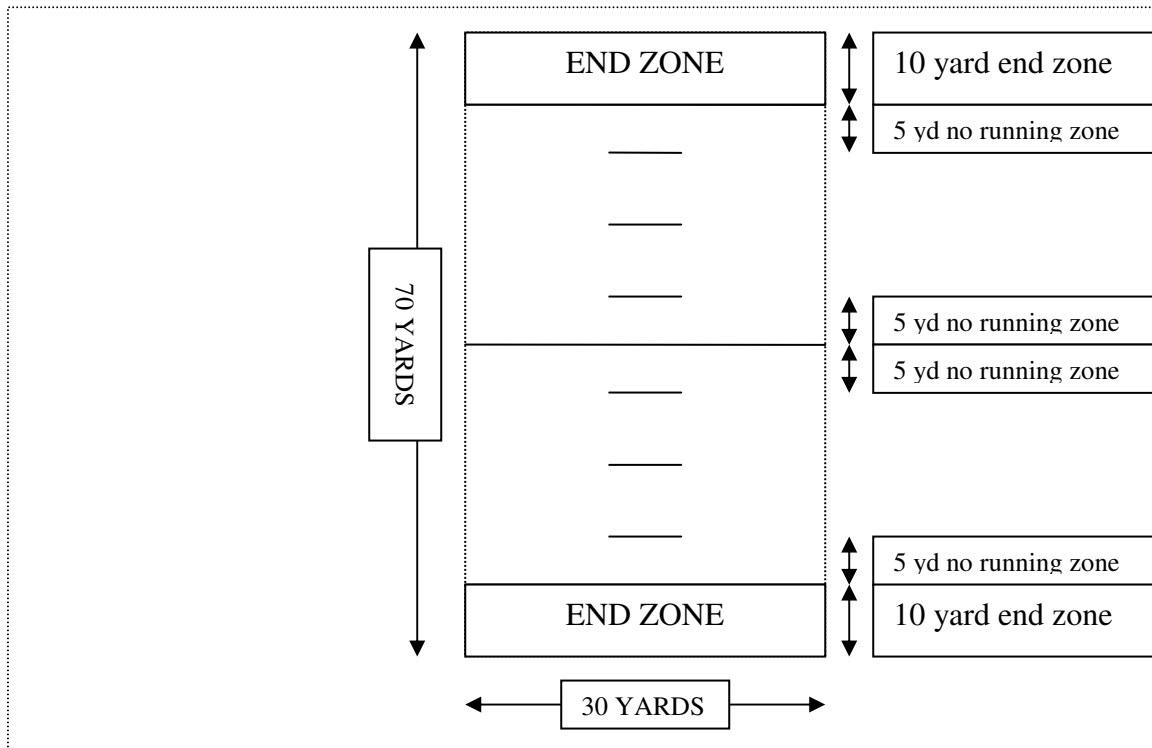
-All players must wear a protective mouthpiece; there are no exceptions.

Official NFL FLAG jerseys must be worn and tucked in during play.

NOTE

- There are no kickoffs, and **NO BLOCKING** allowed.
- **ALL PLAYERS MUST PLAY AN EQUAL AMOUNT OF TIME.**
- **ALL PLAYERS MUST BE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO PLAY EACH POSITION THROUGHOUT THE SEASON.**
- COACHES NEED TO GET OFF THE FIELD AFTER THE HUDDLE.

FIELD DIAGRAM



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