



Flag Football Rules

These rules were derived from the National Flag Football Rules of the United States Flag Football Association and revised as needed for FIS indoor play.

The Game, Field, Players & Equipment

Section One – General

1-The game shall be played between **two teams of 5 players each** on the turf field with an official football of the appropriate size for the participating players.

2-Goal lines shall be established at both ends of the field.

3-The **winning team** shall be the team with the most points at the end of the game, unless there is a forfeit.

4-The game shall be played under the supervision of **one or more officials**.

5-Team captains shall be designated before the game and announced to the referee. Only the team captain can approach an official in request of an explanation of interpretation of the rules. Any penalty that calls for a decision by the captain will be made promptly by the captain and considered final.

6-All players, substitutes, coaches, trainers, and other authorized personnel on the bench area are subject to the rules and shall be **governed by the decisions of the officials**.

7- NO DIVING OF ANY KIND

Section One – The Field

1-The white line around the perimeter of the field marks the **out-of-bounds**. Contact with the line or the turf beyond the line constitutes out-of-bounds. Any player going out-of-bounds is not considered in-bounds again until they establish both feet down in the field of play while not having contact with the wall.

2-Team area/Team bench is the bench area designated for the team as home team or visitor. Only players and other authorized personnel are permitted in the Team area. Players and team personnel cannot cross over into the other team's area.

3-NO Down marker will be used. The referee or linesman will indicated verbally and with extended fingers which down is in play after spotting the ball and before the whistle to start play.

4-The field is approximately **60x30 yards**.

Section Three - Players and Equipment

1-The teams shall wear **matching color jerseys or shirts**. Conflicts in jersey colors can be corrected by the players wearing pennies. Home team is required to change.

2-**Suitable footwear** designated by Frisco Indoor Sports will be the only footwear acceptable. (NO METAL or LARGE FOOTBALL cleats are permitted, REFEREE MAKES DECISION)

3- **All players must wear flags**. Each player on the field shall wear **a belt at the waistline with 2 flags** attached, with one flag on each side of his body. Each flag should hang down from the waist. Wrapping, tying, or in any way securing the flags to the belt or uniform other than prescribed by rule is illegal. No player shall intentionally remove their own flag or that of another player that is not the ball carrier. Penalty = 10 yards and possible disqualification at the discretion of the referee.

4-**Illegal equipment** consists of helmets, padded uniforms, or any unyielding substance on the hands, wrist, forearms or elbows, any projection of a hard substance from the body, loose fitting clothing that might be used for concealing the ball, any head covering with a hard visor or any equipment in the opinion of the official that might confuse or endanger players, the field or the facility.

If illegal equipment is discovered by an official 1- it may be replaced between downs, 2- the player must leave the game if correction of the equipment will cause delay, 3- the team with illegal equipment will be charged a time-out. Any equipment that becomes illegal through use will call for an official's time-out to allow for prompt repair.

Definitions

1-A **live ball** is a ball that is in play while a down is in progress. (hitting the side nets will result in a dead ball)

2-A **dead ball** is a ball that has hit the ground during play (fumble or incomplete pass) or is in between downs.

3-A **catch** is when a player receives possession of a live ball in flight. An **interception** is when a defensive player catches a live ball. Both may be advanced.

4-**Blocking** is legally obstructing an opponent by occupying the space without 1st contacting the opponent.

5-There are no **punts or "kick-offs"** Instead, the offensive team can choose the THROW OFF OPTION on 4th down .

6-There are **NO field goal and extra point** No kicking attempts.

7-**Touchdowns** are scored when a team member in possession of the ball legally crosses the opposing team's goal line or receives a pass while in the opponent's end zone. Touchdowns are worth six points.

8-**Points after Touchdown** are attempted by the team scoring the touchdown. The attempting team must choose either a 2 point or 1 point try. A 1-point is awarded for a successful run and 2-points is awarded for successful passing attempt from the spot. If the defense gains possession of the ball on either attempt the play is immediately blown dead.

9-A Safety is worth two points and is awarded to the defensive team when the offensive team ends the play with possession in their own end zone. After a safety the team that allowed the safety regains possession of the ball at their own 5-yard line.

10-The neutral zone is the area extending from the line of scrimmage to one yard beyond the line of scrimmage toward the defense from sideline to sideline. **Encroachment** will be called on any player in the neutral zone at the snap of the ball.

11-When a flag has been cleanly removed from the ball carrier the down shall end and the ball shall be placed at the spot of the **deflagging**. The player that removed the flag should immediately hold the flag above their head or drop the flag to the ground to assist the official in spotting the ball. Intentionally placing the flag on the ground away from the spot of the deflagging will warrant a delay of game penalty.

12-All players on both sides of the line of scrimmage may take any football **stance** they choose.

13-The backfield line is a line from sideline to sideline exactly one yard behind the line of scrimmage on the offensive side. **Three offensive players must be on the line** of scrimmage while the other three offensive players must be behind the backfield line.

14-Snapping the ball must be done from the ground at the line of scrimmage facing the opponent. The snap must be directed to a player in the backfield.

15-The center shall **not be contacted** by an opponent while his head is down during the snap. Intentional contact with a non-engaging player, such as the center during the snap, shall be penalized for **running into opponent**.

16-A linesman is any player on their line of scrimmage at the snap of the ball. A **backfieldsman** is any player not on the line of scrimmage at the snap of the ball.

17-NO Spinning is allowed by the ball carrier, but he may not leave his feet to avoid a deflagging.

18- RUSH By Defense.will use a 3 Mississippi count by the Referee. **Each team is allowed 1 Blitz per series.**

Periods, Time Factors, Substitutes

1-Each half will consist of 22 minutes entirely with a running clock except for the 2 time-outs. The entire game should take approximately 50 minutes.

2-Halftime will be two minutes in duration. Halftime length may be shortened as necessary to get the games back on schedule. Teams will switch sides on the field at halftime but remain on the same bench.

3-The offensive team will have a 25 second **play clock**. From the time that the official signals that the ball is ready for play the offensive team has 25 seconds to snap the ball. In youth divisions a coach may attend the huddle then step out of play and stay silent.

4-At the buzzer: Plays continue until a dead ball situation occurs.

Then at the end of regulation there are 5 plays, of which extra points don't count. Exception; If in the 2nd half there is more than a 25 point difference.

5-Each team has two 30-second time-outs per game.

6-Unnecessary delays in the game will be penalized. Teams must be ready for play with their flags in the appropriate positions at the start of the game. The ball must be put in play promptly and legally and any action by either team preventing this will constitute delay of game, such as:

- a) Consuming more than 25 seconds to put the ball in play after it is ready for play.
- b) Failing to remove an injured player from the field.
- c) Deliberately advancing the ball after it has been declared dead.
- d) Delaying the retrieval of the ball by the official. The offensive team is responsible for assisting in the retrieval of the ball after blown dead.

7-The referee may order the clock started or stopped whenever, in his opinion, either team is using **unfair tactics** to conserve or consume playing time.

8-No substitute may enter play during a down. Between downs any number of substitutes may replace players on the field, provided all exiting players are off the field before the snap of the ball. No player may, however, exit and re-enter, and re-exit. Each substitute must be ready for play in uniform with flags in appropriate positions.

Overtime

An overtime period will be played when the game ends in a tie. A coin flip determines which team starts with possession. The team winning the coin flip will have choice to receive or kick off. The period will be played as a sudden death format with the first team who scores wins. The period will be played for a maximum of 6 minutes. If after the 6 minutes and the game is still tied, the game will be declared a tie, except playoff games...play will continue until a winner is determined.

Live Ball, Dead Ball

1-A ball becomes "live" when it has been declared ready for play by the official and is then snapped into play by the center.

2-A live ball becomes "dead" when:

- a) the ball carrier is declared out-of-bounds.
- b) any part of the ball carrier touches the ground other than a hand or foot.
- c) a touchdown, successful PAT, successful Field Goal, or safety has been scored.
- d) a PAT is declared unsuccessful.
- e) a forward pass touches the ground, wall, ceiling or netting.
- f) a backwards pass or fumble touches the ground.
- g) a pass is completed in the opponent's end zone.
- h) the ball carrier has a flag removed legally by a defensive player.
- l) the ball is dropped by anyone other than the Quarterback who is at the time behind the line of scrimmage.

3-If there is an inadvertent whistle:

- a) while the ball is in play behind the line of scrimmage the down is replayed.
- b) after the ball crosses the line of scrimmage or changes possession the ball will be

- spotted at the location of the ball at the time of the whistle.
- c) when a player is in possession the team may choose to accept the spot or replay the down.

Series Of Downs & Zone To Gain

1-A down is a unit of the game that starts with the snap of the ball and ends with the ball being declared dead.

2-A team in possession of the ball shall have **Four consecutive downs** to advance the ball across the center line and another series of four downs to score a touchdown after crossing the center line. Leftover downs do not carry over.

3-Penalties that cause the new line of scrimmage to cross beyond the centerline shall award the offensive team a **first down**. Penalties and loss of yards on a play that cause the ball to go backwards across the centerline will not award a new set of downs or the potential to gain a first down.

4- Offsetting penalties during a down shall cause the down to be repeated. Exception: a team causing a penalty after gaining possession will retain possession before the offsetting of the penalties.

Kicks

1-There are no kickoffs. Instead of a kickoff will be a throw off from their own end zone line.

2-There are no punts. Instead, the offensive team on 4th down may choose the punt option. If the ball is spotted on the offensive team's side of the field the punt option will cause the opposing team to start their possession at their own 10-yard line. If the ball is spotted on the defensive team's side of the field the punt option will cause the spot to be at the 5-yard line.

Scrimmage, Snapping, Handing & Passing The Ball

1-All plays must be started by a legal snap from the center. Any infraction of the following is a penalty:

Before the ball is snapped:

- a) The snapper, after assuming the position for the snap and adjusting the ball, may neither move nor change the position of the ball in a manner simulating the start of the play until it is snapped. Penalty is false start and any ensuing encroachment by the defense will be ignored as the play is blown dead immediately.
- b) After the ball has been declared ready for play no player on defense may touch the ball, enter the neutral zone, or interfere with opponents.
- c) No offensive player may make a false start by feigning a charge or start of play. False start is penalized whether or not the ball is later snapped and the play ends immediately.
- d) All offensive players must come to a complete stop and remain stationary in a legal position for at least one full second before the snap of the ball. The only exception is a man in motion as described below.

When the ball is snapped:

- a) A minimum of Two offensive players must be on the line of scrimmage .
- b) All players must be out of the neutral zone except the center's hand or head.
- c) All players must be inbounds.
- d) One offensive player may be in motion but not towards the line of scrimmage.
- e) Any player receiving the snap must be behind the backfield line.

2-No player may hand the ball forward unless behind the line of scrimmage. Backward **hand-offs** and passes may be made at anytime.

3-Any player may catch a backward pass in flight. A hand-off, pitch or fumble that hits the ground is immediately blown dead and the ball is **spotted where the ball hit the ground**.

4-All players are eligible to receive a **forward pass**. Forward passes are only legal when the passer is behind the line of scrimmage and possession has not changed during the down. Intentionally throwing the ball to the ground or out-of-bounds to avoid a loss on the play is illegal.

5- 2 Forward Passes Rule – Legal if first pass is done behind the line of scrimmage.

6-A player **intentionally going out-of-bounds** is ineligible to receive a pass until another player touches it.

7-A pass **caught simultaneously** by opposing players is awarded to the offensive team.

8-Players that are **air-born** when making a catch must land with both feet inbounds before any part contacts out-of-bounds for the pass to be complete.

9-Pass Interference is called when contact or face guarding by a player interferes with an eligible receiver who is beyond the line of scrimmage during a legal pass, unless the contact occurs after a tip of the ball by another player.

10-If a ball carrier inadvertently **loses a flag** the play shall be blown dead where the flag is dropped. If a receiver loses one flag he is still eligible to receive a pass, if he catches the pass, the opponent must touch the player down. If a receiver loses two flags he is still eligible to receive a pass but will be considered down at the spot of the completed pass.

Conduct Of Players

1-Deliberate Flagrant Fouls will result in ejection from the game. These fouls include: using fists, kicking, kneeling, tackling or any other deliberate flagrant act in the judgement of the official. A \$25 fine will be imposed on the ejected player, see Page #1 for ruling.

2-Unsportsmanlike Conduct will not be tolerated. Such conduct includes: abusive or insulting language, acts of unfair play, unauthorized personnel on the field during play, bench interference, deflagging an opponent without the ball, spiking the ball, taunting or other similar theatrics.

3-If a team **refuses to play** within two minutes of being ordered to do so by the official, or if play is interrupted by an obviously **unfair act** not specifically covered by the rules, or if a team repeatedly commits fouls which can only be penalized by halving the distance to the goal, the Referee may enforce any penalty he considers proper, including the awarding of a score. A continuation of such behavior shall result in forfeit of the game.

4-No player shall commit a **personal foul** before, during or after play, including intermissions. Actions not permitted that constitute a personal foul include: blocking using feet or legs, high-low blocking, tripping, clipping, contacting an opponent on the ground, hurdling, unnecessary roughness, tackling, pushing out-of-bounds, downfield blocking, diving (by ball carrier) or roughing the passer.

5-The ball carrier **shall not grasp** or be grasped, pulled or pushed by a teammate. Offensive players may not obstruct opponents with an extended hand or arm, including **stiff-arming** by the ball carrier. Ball carriers may **not protect the flags** by blocking access with hands or arms. **Defensive players may not hold**, grasp or obstruct forward progress of the **ball carrier** in attempt to pull a flag.

6-Players may use their hands to grasp, push or pull an opponent in an attempt to get at the ball carrier provided it is not unnecessary roughness. No striking of a blocker will be permitted.

Enforcement Of Penalties

1-When a foul occurs during a live ball, the referee shall, at the end of the down, notify the offended captain of his option. If the penalty is declined, or there are offsetting penalties, there is no loss of distance. A captain's choice of options may not be revoked. **When a foul occurs during a dead ball** the ball does not become alive. The referee shall notify the offended captain of his options. When a live ball foul is followed by a dead ball foul the penalties are administered separately and in order of occurrence.

2-The basic enforcement spot on a loose ball play (such as a pass) is the previous spot. The basic enforcement spot on a run play is the end of the run where the ball is declared dead. However, some penalties use the spot of the foul as the enforcement spot. These are listed in the Summary of penalties.

3-A measurement cannot take the spot of the ball more than half the distance to the goal line. If the offensive team commits a foul in their own end zone the offended team will be awarded a safety.

4-Defensive fouls on plays resulting in a touchdown will be penalized after the "kickoff."

Summary Of Penalties – All are at the discretion of the Referee

Loss Of 5 Yards:

- Offsides or encroachment (repeat the down)
- Illegal forward pass
- Excess time-out requested
- Illegal delay of game
- Putting the ball in play before it is declared ready
- Illegal snap (repeat the down)
- Infraction of a scrimmage formation (repeat the down)
- Interference with opponents or the ball
- Illegal motion (repeat the down)
- False start (repeat the down)
- Illegal handoff (repeat the down)
- Illegal shift (repeat the down)
- Helping the runner (penalized from spot of foul)
- Defensive holding (except on the ball carrier) (repeat the down)

Loss Of 10 Yards: & 5 MINUTE PLAYER PENALTY

- Team not ready for play at the start of the half
- Offensive pass interference (repeat the down)
- Striking, kicking, kneeling, elbowing, etc. (repeat the down)
- Stiffarming
- Hurdling (discretion of referee)
- Tripping
- Running into opponent (i.e. contact with center when his head is down)
- Roughing the passer (plus award first down)
- Clipping (penalized from spot of foul)
- Illegal block downfield (penalized from spot of foul)
- Illegal block (repeat the down)
- Protecting the flags (penalized from spot of foul)
- Illegal removal of flag
- Obstructing the ball carrier
- Unsportsmanlike conduct
- Persons illegally on the field

Spot Of Foul:

- Defensive Pass Interference
- Intentional Grounding

Ejections:

Ejected players are suspended from participation in the next game and must leave the building immediately.

See **Minimum \$25 Fine: Ejection** on Page 1.

FIGHTING WILL RESULT IN EJECTION FROM GAME & BUILDING & \$100 FINE. MAY RESULT IN REMOVAL FROM LEAGUE & FACILITY PERMANENTLY.