

# 5on5 Flag Football Rules

The following 5 on 5 flag football rules are Next Level and customized in a way that we feel promotes the best experience for the players. Check with your local league or tournament organizer to verify their rules, as many use custom variations to match their preferred play style.

## Basics

No contact allowed.

A coin toss determines first possession. Team can elect to have offense, defense, defer, or direction. Choice in the 2nd half will be awarded to the team that did not have 1st half election.

The offensive team takes possession of the ball at their 5-yard line and has three plays to cross mid-field. Once a team crosses mid-field they have three plays to score. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession.

If the offensive team fails to cross mid-field, the ball changes possession. All drives start from the 5-yard line except interceptions.

## Game Clock Format

**League Play** – Each game is 40 minutes long. Two 16-minute halves and a 1-minute halftime, the clock will not stop unless a time out has been called or by an official timeout.

**Tournament Play** – each game is 30 minutes long. Two 12 minute halves and a 1-minute halftime.

Each time the ball is spotted the offensive team has 20 seconds to snap the ball. (Officials will warn the offense when there are 10 seconds left to snap the ball).

Teams must wait until the referees are set or a referee acknowledges they are prepared to start the play. Only one official needs to acknowledge prior to start of play.

If the score difference is 8 or less at the end of regulation there will be an additional 4 un-timed plays added to the end of the game.

## Time Outs

Each team has one time out per game.

Time outs will only stop the game clock for 30 seconds. The play clock will begin at the completion of the time out.

If a time out is called after a touchdown the clock will not run until the change of possession and the offense snaps their ball.

## **Attire**

Shirts must be tucked in.

Flags must be worn on each side of the players' hips.

No pockets are allowed on shorts or pants.

## **Scoring**

TD = 6 points

Extra point- 5 yards out = 1 point, 12 yards out = 2 points.

Safety = 2 points

## **Rushing the Quarterback**

Players that rush the quarterback must be a minimum of 7 yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped.

Players that are not 7 yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped may not enter into the backfield until there has been a hand-off or throw-back.

The official will mark 7 yards from the line of scrimmage.

The rusher is allowed a direct line to the quarterback as long as he rushes from either side of the field and not up the middle. The offense must avoid interfering with the rusher. Rush must start 1 yard outside of the center or 1 yard outside the outermost player in a bunch formation with no lanes.

## **Running**

The quarterback may not run unless the ball has been thrown back, handed or pitched to him in the backfield..

The player who receives the pitch or handoff may throw the ball as long as he is not beyond the line of scrimmage.

Multiple handoffs are allowed behind the line of scrimmage but only one pitch or throwback is allowed before a forward pass. Once the ball has been thrown or pitched more than once in the backfield that player must run the ball past the line of scrimmage.

If the ball is placed on the “Back” of ANY Player on or off the line of scrimmage, the player MUST run the ball, no give and go to the QB.

No run zones are located 5 yards before mid-field and 5-yards before the end zone. You may not run the ball in the no run zone. You must throw the ball to advance if the line of scrimmage is in the no run zone.

The ball is spotted where the flag is pulled.

The leading flag must break the plane of the midfield or goal line to be considered a first down or touchdown. The ball does not have to cross.

Players may screen block behind the line of scrimmage. Players may not block down field.

Jumping is legal as long as it doesn't cause any contact.

## **Passing**

The quarterback has 5 seconds to pass the ball if there is no rush. If the ball is not thrown, the play is dead, resulting in a loss of down. The ball returns to the line of scrimmage. (Once the ball has been handed off or pitched there is no 5-second count).

Intentional grounding is not a penalty.

If the defensive team rushes the quarterback there is no 5-second count. Interceptions may be returned. The rusher may not hit the quarterbacks' arm, or knock the ball out of the quarterbacks' hand. The rusher must play the flags.

## **Receiving**

All players are eligible to receive a pass, including the quarterback, if the ball has been pitched back or handed off behind the line of scrimmage.

Players must have at least one foot in bounds when making a catch.

Players that run out of bounds during a play cannot be the first player to touch a ball when attempting to make a catch.

## **Start of a Play**

One official must acknowledge the offense prior to the start of play.

Players may not be moving forward when the ball is snapped.

The ball must be snapped between the legs with the center facing the line of scrimmage to start the play.

## **Play is ruled dead when:**

The offensive player's flag is pulled. Note if a defensive player pulls the offensive player's flag before they receive the ball, the offensive player must be touched to end the play.

Ball carrier steps out of bounds.

Touchdown is scored.

Ball carrier's knee touches the ground.

Incomplete pass.

Ball hits or touches the ground, even if the ball is in hand.

If a player loses a flag unintentionally, the defense only has to touch the ball carrier, not pull the flag.

## **Defensive Penalties:**

Offside-Illegal Rush.

Pass interference. Face guarding is allowed if no contact is made.

Illegal contact (holding, bump and run, blocking) \* Note the officials will determine incidental contact which may result from normal run of play.

Roughing the quarterback – the rusher may not knock the ball out of the quarterback's hand or bump into them in a way that affects the quarterback's throwing motion.

Excessive contact – even if the defender is making a play on the ball. If the official feels it was intentional or with intent to harm the player will be ejected from the game and may be removed from the tournament.

All defensive penalties are five yards from the line of scrimmage and automatic first down except holding which is added on to the end of the play.

## **Offensive Penalties:**

Illegal motion /False Start. Not a loss of down.

Pass interference (illegal pick, pushing off defender).

Impeding the rush (the offensive players must avoid the rusher).

Flag guarding (players must keep their hands above their waist).

Charging (the offensive player must avoid the defender if they are set).

Delay of game (all delay of game penalties stop the clock).

Blocking -All Offensive players must be still if a player is running the ball. There is no screen blocking past the line of scrimmage.

Excessive contact – If the official feels it was intentional or with intent to harm the player will be ejected from the game.

All offensive penalties are five yards from the line of scrimmage and loss of down except flag guarding which is from the point of infraction and illegal motion and false start which does not carry a loss of down.

## **Sportsmanship / Roughing**

Trash talking will not be tolerated. The official has the right to determine language that is offensive. (Trash talking is language that may be considered offensive to the official, opposing team, or spectators). The official may eject players from the game for trash talking with a warning.

If the official witnesses any act of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, or any other sportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game.

## **UNSPORTSMAN-LIKE CONDUCT IS A 15 YD PENALTY**

The league director will eject the player from the league if necessary. FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!

## **Overtime Extra Point Shoot Out**

A coin flip determines first possession.

Each team has one possession in overtime.

They may elect to go for one or two points.

If the score is tied at the end of the first overtime teams will go into a second overtime.

If score is still tied going into a 3rd overtime, both teams will have one play from the 5 yard line facing the length of the field to gain as much yardage as possible. Team with the most yardage will win.

The winning team in overtime is awarded one additional point .