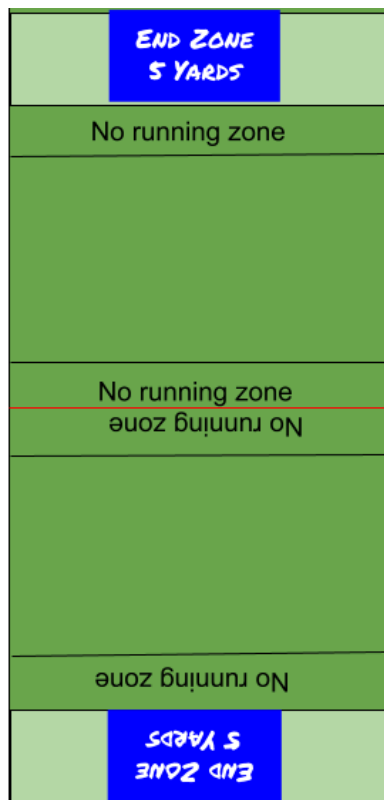




Flag Football Rules (Revised 10/03/2023)



FIELD DIAGRAM AND RULES

- The offensive team is awarded a first down when it crosses the midfield line.
- The lines 5 yards from each end zone and on both sides of the midfield line are no-run zones.
- The offensive team begins the game and second half by taking possession of the ball at its 5-yard line.
- Field size: 90x190 feet
- End zones will be 5 yards
- **Games will be played on Saturday mornings for all divisions. Teams from all 3 divisions will have two weeks of weekday games that will take the place of practice.**

DOWN FORMAT

- The offensive team has four plays to gain a first down by crossing midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has four plays

to score a touchdown.

- On fourth down, a team has two options.
 - A team may attempt to gain a first down or a touchdown. If a team fails to convert on fourth down, either by scoring or picking up a first down, the ball changes possession at the line of scrimmage
 - A team may "punt" as its fourth-down play by notifying the referee. In this case, the ball will be placed on the opposing team's 5-yard line, and there will be a change of possession.

GAME FORMAT

- **Coaches lead both teams in prayer at midfield before every game.**
- Play begins after a coin toss. The visiting team calls the coin toss. The winner can pick to kick, receive, or defer to the second half.

- Because the end of a quarter does not signal a change of possession, the team with possession at the end of the first and third quarter will retain possession after substitutions take place.
- Teams will NOT switch ends of the field at the half.
- **Standings are not kept in any division.**
- Each team will have seven players on the field at a time. This equips the offense with an appropriate amount of players without crowding the field.
- In case of injuries teams may play with 6 players to avoid a forfeit. Anything less than 6 players will result in a forfeiture.
- **In the K5-2nd grade division, each team can put one coach in the huddle throughout the season. In the 3rd & 4th & 5th-6th grade divisions, each team can put one coach in the huddle for the first two games of the season. No Coaches are allowed in the huddle for the 7th-8th grade division at any point during the season.**
- All players must play at least half of each game. Players should alternate positions throughout the game and alternate what side of the ball they play on each quarter. Example: A player should play offense in the first quarter, defense in the 2nd quarter, offense in the 3rd quarter, and defense in the 4th quarter.

CLOCK FORMAT

- Games consist of four 10-minute quarters with a 3-5 minute halftime for all divisions.
- The game clock stops briefly at the end of every quarter for predetermined substitutions.
- The game clock will stop for scoring and punt transitions.
- Each team has one 30-second timeout per half. Unused timeouts do not carry over to the second half. The clock will stop during the timeout.
- A 30-second play clock begins after the referee spots the ball as ready for play.
- **The clock will stop in the final minute of the first half and in the final minute of the game for the following situations:**
 - **After an incomplete pass**
 - **After the ball carrier goes out of bounds**
 - **After a touchdown**
 - **During an extra-point attempt**
 - **For an official's timeout**
 - **During a called timeout until the ball is snapped**
 - **On a change of possession**

SCORING

- Touchdown: 6 points
- Extra point: Ball is played from the 5-yard line. Teams can choose a running (1 point) or passing (2 point) play.

- Safety: 2 points. The scoring team will also receive possession on its own 5-yard line. No physical kicks will occur in SOAR Flag Football.

OFFENSIVE BASICS

- A minimum of three offensive players must be on the line of scrimmage at every snap.
- Only one player can be in motion when the ball is snapped. In the 2nd-3rd & 4th-6th grade division, the ball must be snapped between the legs to begin play. K5-1st players may use a side snap.
- **If the team is in the no run zone they must pass the ball.**
- Players are not allowed to block a defender by getting in between them and the ball-carrier and especially not by physically putting their hands on a defender. Any player that is without possession of the football cannot screen a defender from getting to the ball-carrier on any play.

RUNNING THE FOOTBALL

- **The quarterback cannot run the ball across the line of scrimmage.**
- The person who receives the snap from the center (under-center or shot-gun) is considered the quarterback.
- Direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are legal. Multiple handoffs may be used. After the ball crosses the line of scrimmage, only backward laterals are permitted. If the ball is dropped in a backward lateral pass it is considered dead. An intercepted backward pass is legal.
- A player receiving a handoff or immediate pitch can pass the ball (halfback pass) from behind the line of scrimmage. A ball carrier may not dive or attempt to hurdle another player. A dive/hurdle will result in a penalty.
- The ball carrier's feet determine the spot of the football when a flag is pulled.
- Players are encouraged to make a football move to go around defenders.

RECEIVING THE FOOTBALL

- All seven players are eligible to receive passes. (The quarterback becomes eligible after a handoff or immediate pitch.)
- A completion consists of a receiver gaining control of the football while having at least one foot in bounds.
- If a player catches a pass with his knee(s) on the ground, the play is dead and the ball is spotted at the point of the completion.

PASSING THE FOOTBALL

All forward passes can be completed behind or beyond the line of scrimmage. Only one forward pass can be completed per play. However, while in the no-run zones, all forward passes must be completed beyond the line of scrimmage. Once the ball leaves the quarterback's hand, the defender can make a play on the ball. The defender must avoid contact with the receiver.

DEAD BALLS

Play is ruled dead when one of the following occurs:

- The ball carrier's flag is pulled or falls out.
- The ball carrier steps out of bounds.
- The ball carrier's knee hits the ground.
- A touchdown or safety is scored.
- A pass falls incomplete.
- The ball hits the ground as a fumble when a receiver or running back drops the ball after making a football move. The ball will be spotted at the point of the fumble. The ball **will NOT BE DEAD in a center/quarterback exchange but it will be a dead ball in a quarterback/running back exchange.** The quarterback **cannot pick up the ball and run if they drop the ball on a snap** but they can hand it off or pass it.

DEFENSIVE BASICS

- Teams may run man-to-man, zone defenses or a combination of both.
- Interceptions may be returned.
- Interceptions made in the end zone can be run back or downed. If downed, will result in a touchback and the ball will be spotted at the 5-yard line.

RUSHING THE PASSER

- All players who are rushing the quarterback must begin 7 yards behind the line of scrimmage. Before each snap, the referee will designate the 7-yard rush line.
- Defenders not rushing the quarterback may line up on or off the line of scrimmage. **In the K5-2nd division defenders are NOT ALLOWED to rush the quarterback.** At least three defenders must line up 7 yards behind the line of scrimmage but only one of them can be a rusher.

- Defenders that are rushing the quarterback from 7 yards behind the line of scrimmage in the 3rd-4th Grade division must wait 5 seconds before rushing the quarterback. The rusher in the 5th-6th & 7th-8th Grade division can rush as soon as the ball is snapped.
- Once the ball is handed off or pitched, the 7-yard rule is no longer in effect, and all defenders may cross the line of scrimmage to pursue the ball carrier. This allows the defense to react quickly to a play behind the line of scrimmage.

PENALTIES

- Referees will call all penalties.
- If a penalty happens near the end zone, where the penalty yardage would place the ball in the end zone, then the penalty will be half the distance to the goal.
- Only the head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations.
- Players cannot question judgment calls.
- Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.

Defense:

1. Offsides 5 yards
2. Interference 10 yards and automatic first down
3. Illegal contact 10 yards and automatic first down (holding, blocking, pushing, etc.)
4. Illegal flag pull 10 yards and automatic first down (before receiver has ball)
5. Illegal rushing 10 yards and automatic first down (starting rush from inside 7-yard marker)
6. Roughing the Passer 15 yards and automatic first down (any unnecessary physical contact with the passer)

Offense:

1. Illegal motion 5 yards and loss of down (more than one person moving, false start, etc.)
2. Illegal forward pass 5 yards and loss of down (pass received behind line of scrimmage)
3. Offensive pass interference 10 yards and loss of down (illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender)
4. Flag guarding 10 yards (from line of scrimmage) and loss of down
5. Delay of game Clock stops, 10 yards and loss of down (BFC - 5 yards)
6. Blocking of any type 15 yards and loss of down
7. Straight Arm (extended to ward off an opponent) 5 yards from the spot of the point of the foul
8. Lowering Head 5 yards (ball carrier may not run over a defensive player)

EQUIPMENT & ATTIRE

- Rubber cleats are allowed. Metal cleats are not permitted.
- All players must wear a protective mouthpiece; there are no exceptions.
- No obstructing clothing may be worn that might harm members of the other team or cover the flags.
- Players must wear the uniform and flags provided by SOAR during play, no personalized jerseys will be accepted.
- All players must wear a set of flags. A tackle is made by removing a flag and holding it aloft.

SPORTSMANSHIP/ROUGHING

If the referee witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be forced to sit out for five minutes and the team plays a man down. A second event will result in being removed from the game. FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.