

# Youth Flag Football Rules

## **The Basics**

**Each team will be given 4 downs to either make a first down or make a touchdown (NEW Spring 2012)**

A coin toss determines first possession.

If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its 5-yard line.

All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line.

**Interceptions may be returned.**

The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has four plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has four plays to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on its 5-yard line.

Teams change sides after the first 20 minutes. Possession changes to loser of coin toss unless deferred and the clock does not stop.

There are no kickoffs, and no blocking is allowed.

**Team rankings: 1. Points for win and tie 2. Head to head. 3. Points against 4. Coin toss**

## **Players/Game Schedules**

**All age groups will be playing 6 on 6.** Teams must field a minimum of 5 players at all times- Ages 5-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, and 15-18

The Field House can combine ages if needed.

Players may play up in age divisions but not down into a lower age division

Teams should consist of 10 players or more. We recommend 10 to 12 players

## **Timing/Overtime**

Games are played to 40 minutes running time. If the score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, during the playoffs, teams move directly into overtime. The first team to score wins. **REGULAR season game can end in a tie.**

Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced.

**Each team will have two 30-second time-outs per half.**

Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.

The overtime possession will be determined by a coin toss.

**\*\*\*Regulation Clock during final (1) minute of the game (2nd half only).**

**\*\*\*During the regulation clock, the clock will stop only on dead balls. A dead ball only consists of incomplete passes, when a player steps out of bounds, a penalty or a change of possession. The clock will also stop when first downs are achieved (after the referee sets the ball for play - the clock will start). The clock will not stop if there is a 21 point lead even during time outs).**

## Scoring

Touchdown -6 points

Extra point: -1 point (played from 5-yard line is a RUN) or -2 points (played from 12-yard line is a PASS/RUN)

Safety: -2 points

\*\*\*If a team attempts to pass for a two point conversion and the defense intercepts the ball and runs it back for a touchdown, this will result in two points for the defensive team.

## Running

The quarterback cannot run with the ball over the line of scrimmage.

\*\*\*The quarterback is the designated player that lines up directly behind the center who is between the guard and the tackle (creating a "pocket").

\*\*\*Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted (**from the quarterback**). Offense may use multiple handoffs.

NO laterals or pitches of any kind are allowed.

The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.

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).

The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.

## Passing

**\*\* Only 1 forward pass allowed**

Shovel passes are allowed. Shovel pass is a forward pass.

Interceptions may be returned.

**There is no time limit on how long the QB has to throw the ball (NEW Spring 2012)**

All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).

Only one player is allowed in motion at a time.

## Starting and Ending a Play

Clock will stop under 1 min in game after a dead ball/possession.

The ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to one side, to start play.

Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.

\*\*\*A Play has "ended" when: — Ball carrier's flag is pulled — Ball carrier steps out of bounds — Touchdown or safety is scored — 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

All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Once the ball is handed off, the seven-yard rule no longer is in effect, and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage. A special marker, or the referee, will designate seven yards from the line of scrimmage. Remember, no blocking or tackling is allowed.

## Sportsmanship/Roughing

If the field monitor or referee witnesses any acts 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, teams 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.

## Attire

Cleats are allowed, except for metal spikes and screw ins. Inspections must be made.

## Penalties

All penalties will be called by the referee.

**Defense: Offside** Five yards and automatic first down **Interference** 10 yards and automatic first down **Illegal contact** (holding, blocking, etc.) 10 yards and automatic first down **Illegal FLAG pull** (before receiver has ball) 10 yards and automatic first down **Illegal rushing** (starting rush from inside 7-yard marker) 10 yards and automatic first down

Penalty Updates:

### Unsportsmanlike Conduct- 15yds

- Penalty will be assessed from the end of the run. If the penalty occurs to prevent a touchdown, then it is at the referee's discretion to award a touchdown.

**Offense: Illegal motion** (more than one person moving, false start, etc.) Five yards and loss of down **Illegal forward pass** (pass thrown beyond line of scrimmage) Five yards and loss of down

**Offensive pass interference** (illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender) 10 yards and loss of down **FLAG guarding** 10 yards (from line of scrimmage) and loss of down **Delay of game** 10 yards and loss of down.

The clock will not stop if there is a 21 point lead even during time outs).

Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage unless otherwise stated.

Players cannot question judgment calls.

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