



Recreational Flag Football League Rulebook

Recreational Flag Football League Rulebook.....	1
1. Divisions, Eligibility & Rosters	2
2. Court & Equipment	2
3. Match Timing & Structure	3
4. Basic Playing Rules	5
5. Team Composition & Specific Rules.....	6
6. Substitutions & Timeouts	8
7. Standings, Scoring & Tiebreakers	9
8. Uniforms & Equipment Requirements	9
9. Officiating & Match Management	9
10. Sportsmanship & Conduct	10
11. Forfeits	10

Applies to: Recreational/High School Flag Football Division

Assumption: 7-on-7 or 5-on-5 format on a 60 x 25 yd field



1. Divisions, Eligibility & Rosters

1.1 Division

- **Youth Recreational Division**
 - Ages 8-12
 - 10U & 12U
 - Coed Division
- **Girls Recreational Division**
 - Ages 13-18
 - 1 division
- **Adult Recreational Division**
 - Ages 18+
 - 1 division
 - Coed Division

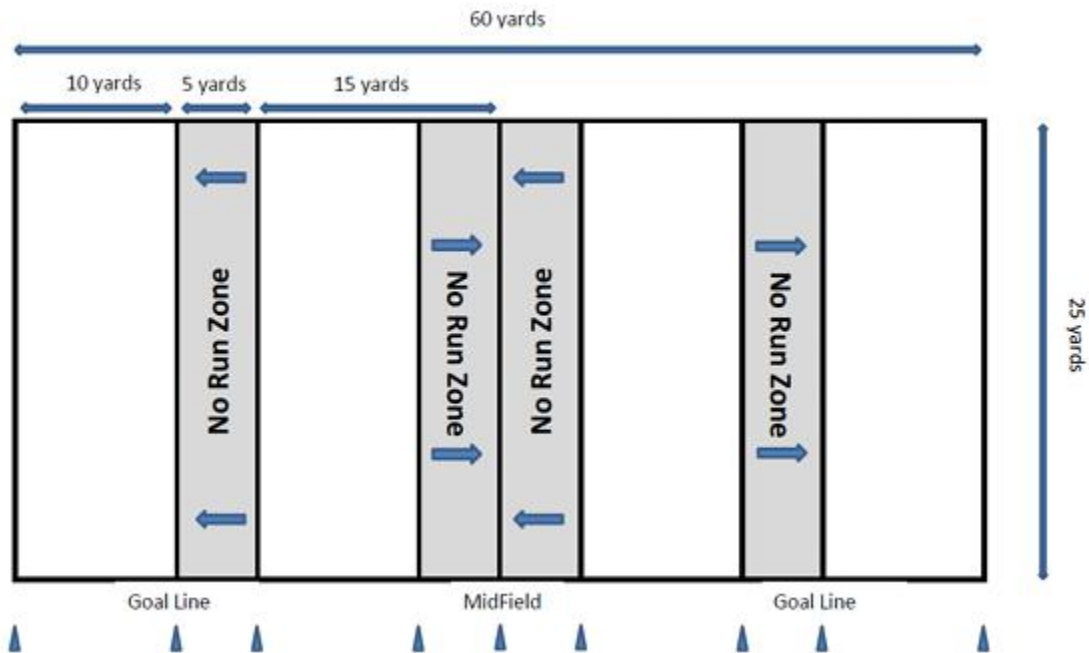
1.2 Rosters

- Only rostered players may participate in league matches.
- All players must complete any required waivers and provide current contact information.
- Rosters are locked after a league-defined deadline unless approved by the league director.
- **Minimum:** 5 players
- **Max:** 10 players

2. Court & Equipment

2.1 Field Dimensions

- The playing field is 60 yards long (including the end zones) and 25 yards wide. If insufficient space is available, a slightly smaller space can be used. A space of at least 5 yards around the field must be free and clear of obstructions. The field can be marked with chalk, paint, and/or traffic cones.
- **No-Run Zones** are in place to prevent teams from conducting power run plays. While in the No-Run Zones (a 5-yard imaginary zone before midfield and before the end zone), teams cannot run the ball in any fashion. All plays must be pass plays, even with a handoff.
- Stepping on a boundary line is considered out of bounds
- Each offensive team approaches only **TWO (2) No-Run Zones** in each drive (a 5 yard zone before midfield to gain the first down and before the end zone, 5 yards from the goal line to score a TD).



2.2 Ball & Game Equipment

- Ball: Regulation flag football (11-12 oz for youth, 12–14 oz for girls, 14–15 oz for men's, with specific circumference and axis dimensions per NFHS standards).
- 10 Goal-line (8 to mark both endzones; *front & back*. 2 to mark midfield/first down marker).
- A down indicator and game clock shall be provided by game management.

3. Match Timing & Structure

3.1 Game time

- The following options are available to the tournament director and will be identified prior to State/Provincial/National competitions based on program needs, time, and number of teams attending. Only one option may be used during the competition.
 - Option 1: The game shall consist of two (2) 15-minute halves (running time).
 - Option 2: The game shall consist of two (2) 15-minute halves (running time) until the last minute of each half at which the clock will stop on all dead ball whistles (i.e. incomplete pass, out of bands, change of possession).
- Officials can stop the clock at their discretion (injuries, delays).



- The clock will stop on all time-outs.
- There shall be a 5-minute break at halftime.
- The ball must be put in play promptly and legally and any action or lack of action by either team that tends to prevent this is considered a delay of game.
 - This includes:
 - Interrupting the 30-second count for any reason except for a granted time out,
 - Consuming more than 30-seconds to snap the ball after it is ready for play
 - Failing to remove an injured player for whose benefit an excess time-out has been granted, or
 - Deliberately advancing the ball after it has been declared dead.

3.2 Dead Ball & Flag Pulling

- The ball is dead when the ball carrier's flag is pulled, they step out of bounds, or a score occurs.
- A loose ball is a pass, fumble, or kick. A grounded loose ball immediately becomes dead.

3.3 Overtime

- If the score is tied at the end of regulation play:
 - A coin toss is held to determine first possession.
 - Each team receives two (2) plays from midfield, and the team gaining the most points or gaining a yardage advantage is awarded one (1) extra point and wins the game.
 - Exceptions to this rule are as follows:
 - Interception: The team that intercepts the pass automatically wins the game.
- If the team with the first attempt in overtime scores on the first play, the opposing team must score on its first play also. If both teams score a touchdown, or gain the same yardage, the procedure is repeated until one (1) team wins.

3.4 Warm-Up & Start Time

- Teams should be ready to take the field at least 5 minutes before the posted match time.
- A brief pre-match meeting with captains and officials will cover key rules and league expectations.



4. Basic Playing Rules

The league uses modified NFHS flag football.

4.1 The Game & Downs

- The object is to carry or pass the ball across the opponent's goal line.
- The team in possession has a series of four downs to advance the ball to the zone to gain (aka first down marker; usually the 25-yard line or midfield).

4.2 Snapping

- The ball must be legally snapped to start a down (snapped between center's leg).
- Forward passes are legal from behind the line of scrimmage. Illegal forward passes result in a 5-yard penalty and loss of down.

○

4.3 Running & Blocking

- **The Quarterback (first player gaining possession of the snap) cannot advance the ball across the line of scrimmage.**
- **Only direct hand-offs behind the line of scrimmage are legal. Laterals or pitches (legally known as backward passes) of any kind are not allowed.**
- **The player who takes a hand-off can pass the ball, as long as he/she does not pass the line of scrimmage.**
- **"No Running Zones" are located 5-yards before the mid-field line and goal line.**
- **Any ball snapped from these zones must be passed.**
 - **The purpose of "No Running Zones" is to avoid short yardage power running situations.**
- **The ball carrier may not spin, dive, hurdle, stiff arm, or use either arm to shield a defender from grasping his/her flag.**
- **The ball is marked at the spot where the position of the ball is when the player is declared down (carrier's flag belt is pulled or hand/knee touches ground).**

4.4 Passing

- **Passing and Receiving by the offense.**
- **All passes must be forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage.**
- **Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.**
- **All players are eligible to receive a forward pass, including the Quarterback, if he/she has legally handed-off.**



- Only one (1) player is allowed in motion at the snap and he/she may not be moving toward the line of scrimmage at the snap.
- A player must have at least one (1) foot in bounds when making a catch.
- Interceptions change possession of the ball at the point of the interception.
 - Exception: A ball intercepted in the end zone is spotted at the 5-yard line.
- Diving
 - A defensive or offensive player may dive to catch a pass.
 - Diving is illegal when used to down a player or advance a ball.
 - A player cannot dive in an attempt to gain extra yardage.
 - The team will be penalized accordingly.
- Eligible Receiver
 - All offensive players are eligible to receive a pass

5. Team Composition & Specific Rules

5.1 Player Flags

- Players must wear a legal flag belt with flags that are easily removable. No modifications to the flag belt are allowed

5.2 Flag Guarding

- Flag guarding (using hands, arms, or the ball to prevent the defense from pulling the flag) is a 10-yard penalty.
- Illegal participation or substitution results in a 5-yard penalty.

5.3 Personal Fouls

- Restrictions. No player or nonplayer shall commit a personal foul during a period or an intermission. Any other act of unnecessary roughness is a personal foul. Any player or nonplayer commits a personal foul when they take any of the following actions:
 - Strips or attempts to strip the ball from a runner by punching, striking, or grabbing the ball.
 - NOTE: Any player who controls a pass with both feet off the ground becomes a runner when the 1st part of the player touches the ground.
 - Throws the runner to the ground
 - Hurdles an opponent
 - Contacts an opponent either before or after the ball is declared dead
 - Makes contact of any nature with an opponent that is deemed unnecessary including using fists, locked hands, elbows, or any part of the forearm or hand



- Drives or Positions themselves on the shoulders or body of a teammate or opponent to gain an advantage
- Tackles the runner by grasping or encircling with the hand(s) or arm(s) and taking the opponent toward the ground as in tackle football
- Fights an opponent (DQ)
 - NOTE: Each player who participates in the fight will be assessed 1 flagrant personal foul for fighting.
- Be in the restricted area (within 2 yards of the sideline) and cause unintentional contact with a game official (nonplayers only).
- Deliberately contacting a game official. (DQ)
- Penalty: Personal Foul, 10 yards, and if flagrant, the offender will be disqualified.

5.4 Flagrant Foul.

- **A flagrant foul is so severe or extreme that it places an opponent in danger of serious injury and/or involves violations that are extremely or persistently vulgar or abusive conduct.**



S 1 1 Ready for play	S 3 3 Stop the clock	S 5 5 Touchdown	S 6 6 Safety
S 8 8 First Down	S 9 9 Loss of down	S 10 10 Incomplete pass	S 14 14 End of period
S 18 18 Offside Defense Illegal Blitz	S 19 19 False start Illegal procedure	S 21 21 Delay of game Delay of pass	S 22 22 Illegal participation Illegal substitution
S 27 27 Unsportsmanlike conduct	S 33 33 Pass Interference	S 35 35 Illegal forward pass Illegal backward pass	S 38 38 Illegal contact
S 43 43 Illegal block	S 47 47 Disqualification	S 51 51 Jumping Diving	S 52 52 Flag guarding Illegal Flag pull

6. Substitutions & Timeouts

6.1 Substitutions

- Substitutions are allowed on any dead ball.
- Players entering must be legally equipped. If equipment is improper, the player must be replaced for at least one down unless promptly repaired.

6.2 Timeouts

- Each team receives one (1) 60-second time-out per half.
 - An unused time-out in the first half does not carry over to the second half.



- Timeouts may be requested only during a dead ball and must be clearly signaled to the official.

7. Standings, Scoring & Tiebreakers

7.1 Scoring

- Touchdown: 6 points.
- Extra Point: one (1) point from 5-yd line or two (2) points from the 10-yard line
- Safety: 2 points.

7.2 Tiebreakers for Standings

If two or more teams finish with the same number of league points, ties are broken in this order:

- Head-to-head match record among tied teams.
- Total point differential across all games played.
- Fewest total points allowed across all matches.
- Coin toss or random draw by the league director.

8. Uniforms & Equipment Requirements

8.1 Mandatory Equipment

- Jersey: Unaltered from manufacturer's design, tucked into the uniform bottom. Home and away colors must clearly contrast.
- Pants/Shorts: Must not have pockets, exposed drawstrings, belts, or belt loops.
- Footwear: Legal shoes with rubber, nylon, or non-metallic polymer cleats. Metal cleats or hard, unyielding items are prohibited.
- Mouthguard: Must include occlusal and labial portions, covering posterior teeth

8.2 Illegal Equipment

- Jewelry, hard casts without padding, shoulder pads, and slippery/sticky substances on the body or uniform are prohibited.
- Hard headwear is not allowed; soft headwear or religious head coverings are permitted if they do not pose a risk.

9. Officiating & Match Management

- Matches are officiated by league referees or assigned officials.
- The referee has the authority to rule promptly and in the spirit of good sportsmanship.



- Captains may calmly ask for rule clarifications during dead balls. The referee's decisions on judgment calls are final.
- Protests of NFHS rules are not recognized.

10. Sportsmanship & Conduct

10.1 Expectations

- Respect opponents, teammates, officials, and staff at all times.
- No profanity, taunting, harassment, or abusive behavior.
- Unsportsmanlike conduct results in a 10-yard penalty. A second unsportsmanlike foul by a player or nonplayer results in disqualification.
- Fighting or intentional attempts to injure result in immediate ejection and review by league management.

11. Forfeits

- A team is considered a forfeit if:
 - Fewer than the minimum number of players are present at the scheduled match time.
 - They are unable to meet mandatory equipment or safety requirements.
 - They refuse to continue playing.
 - They use ineligible or non-rostered players after a warning.
- Standard forfeit score may be recorded per league policy (e.g., a set point differential or 2-0).