

Prime Time Flag Football League Rule Book

Revised 11/27/2011

THE BASICS

- A coin toss determines first possession.
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 10-yard line and has four plays to cross the first down line. Once a team crosses this line, it has four more plays to get another first down line and then four to score a touchdown.
- There are three 20-yard zones. The first down or end zone lines are located at the 20-yard marker for each zone, which is designated by a cone.
- On fourth down teams may go for a conversion or may decide to punt the ball which automatically brings the ball to the opposing team's 10 yard line. If fourth down conversion fails, the opposing team receives possession of the ball at the line of scrimmage. The offensive team has 10 seconds to decide to punt or go for a 4th down conversion. Once the decision is made (by 10 seconds) the offensive team may not change their mind; even after a time out is called. If 10 seconds runs off the play clock it will be an assumed punt if no declaration was made.
- A coin toss determines choice. Teams whom elect to defer to the second half will have the choice of receiving or defending the opening possession in the second half

PLAYERS

- Teams must field a minimum of five players at all times.
- Teams consist of 7 or 8 players (Scouts, Juniors, Seniors, Varsity, Vets, Girls) and 10 players (Pro) – Six on the field at a time.
- After game 1 Pro rosters must be set. No player will be allowed to participate unless they are on the final roster.
- For all youth games (Scouts, Juniors, Seniors, Varsity), opposing coach must agree to a team bringing in a player to substitute for a player who is not on the roster. Teams that have at least 6 players cannot pick up any player. No player may be picked up for a playoff game.
- No player who is on a team may substitute for a missing player on another team within the same league.
- All High School players must be in the Vets league if they are also playing in the Pro League
- If a player has 2 games going on at once (2 leagues), they may only participate in 1 of the games.
- Players must wear their jersey (Scouts, Juniors, Seniors, Varsity). A timeout (per player without jersey) will be taken away from a team if a player on that team does not bring his/ her jersey, unless the unavailability of the jersey was as a result of the league not providing the jersey.

TIMING

- Games are played to 20-minute halves. The clock will stop in the last two minutes of each half on incomplete passes, out-of-bounds play, time-outs, first downs, and change of possession and scores. Clock will start on first down once the "ready to play" whistle. This does not include the opening play of each half in which the clock will start on the snap of the ball.

- The clock will stop on all scores throughout the game and will resume on the first down **snap**. The clock will not run on extra points.
- If the score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, teams move directly into overtime. The official system for overtime is the Kansas Tie Breaker. Coin toss determines first possession. Team receives the ball on the 20-yard line and has four plays to score. Opponent has four plays to match score. After one overtime period (2 in the playoffs), the game will proceed to the “longest play” format where each team will have 1 play from scrimmage. The team that gains the most yards on one play, will win. Interceptions are dead in overtime. There will be 1 time out awarded to each team in overtime. Time outs not used in the second half will not carry over to overtime.
- 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 (unless under two minutes of each half). A 10-second play clock will be in effect after the delay of game warning is issued.
- Each team has two 60-second time outs per half.
- Clock will stop for injury time-outs on referee discretion.
- Officials can stop the clock at their discretion. Clock will stop on discussions among officials.
- If a team in the Vets, Pros and/or Girls leagues has a 16-point lead within the last 2 minutes of the game, the clock will continue to run, unless time outs are used. (Youth leagues, pro clock regardless of score).
- The game clock will start after 5 minutes of waiting for a team or players after the schedule game start time. 2 points for every 3 minutes waiting will be awarded to the team that is waiting.

SCORING

- Touchdown:
6 points
- Extra point:
1 point (played from 5-yard line) or
2 points (played from 12-yard line)
- Safety:
2 points
- If an interception is returned for a touchdown on a conversion, it is considered a safety and two points will be rewarded to the scoring team.

SUBSTITUTIONS

- Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- All players in the Youth Leagues (1st-9th grade) must play at least 1 half of uninterrupted offense and defense per game. The only exception to this rule is if a player missed practice that particular week.

- Each child on the team **MUST** play equally, regardless of skill set. It is up to each coach to plan his rotation accordingly.
- Coaches must confirm the “line-up” card prior to the game with the game officials and confirm that all kids are wearing their correct jersey number. Once you confirm your line-up, no changes will be allowed.
- **COACHING ON THE FIELD**
 - For Scouts, only one coach is allowed on the field for each team.
 - For Juniors and Seniors, only one coach is allowed on offense for each team. A defensive coach is not permitted on the field.
 - No coach is allowed on the field for the Varsity division.
 - If a defensive coach causes the interference, there will be an automatic first down. If an offensive coach causes the interference, it's a 15-yard penalty and the loss of a down.
- There will be a 15-yard penalty on the coach if the coach gets involved in the play accidental or not.
- Play is ruled “dead” 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
 - Hand touching the ground without ball is a live ball

Note: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground.

OFFENSE

- In the Scouts and Juniors leagues only, the QB can run with the ball only if the QB is rushed
- Scouts QB can run without being rushed only once per drive (including extra points).
- The quarterback cannot run with the ball (Unless Scouts league, see above).
- Offense may use multiple handoffs, laterals or pitches.
- The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage. All players are eligible to receive passes including the original quarterback if the ball has been handed off 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 initiate contact. No diving.
- If a player's flag falls off during a play, the defenders must touch the ball carrier to make the play dead.
- Teams may use a variety of formations. Players may line up anywhere on their side of the line of scrimmage.
- All offensive players with the exception of the ball carrier must stand still or not be involved in the play once a reception has occurred. Players must remain in that position until the play is whistled dead. Running with the ball carrier can be construed as screening if obstructing a defensive player's path to the ball carrier.

- As in tackle football, only one player is allowed in motion at a time.
- Players must have at least one foot in bounds when making a catch
- The ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to one side, to start play.
- The center is not eligible to receive hand-offs under the legs. Handoffs must be placed on the back of the center or wrapped around into the belly.
- The quarterback has a seven-second “pass clock.” If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, play is dead, loss of down. Once the ball is handed off and/or the rusher broke the plane of the LOS, the seven-second rule no longer is in effect. The referee will call out 4...5...6 and then the whistle will be blown on #7.
- Only one forward pass is allowed per play.
- No stiff-arming allowed while running with the ball
- Flag guarding is the attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defender access to the flags by stiff-arming, dropping of hand, arm or shoulder, intentionally covering flags with football or jersey.
- The ball will be spotted where the flag is pulled.
- On fourth down teams may go for a conversion or may decide to punt the ball which automatically brings the ball to the opposing team’s 10 yard line. If fourth down conversion fails, the opposing team receives possession of the ball at the line of scrimmage. The offensive team has 10 seconds to decide to punt or go for a 4th down conversion. Once the decision is made (by 10 seconds) the offensive team may not change their mind; even after a time out is called. If 10 seconds runs off the play clock it will be an assumed punt if no declaration was made.

DEFENSE

- All players who rush the passer must have an unobstructed path to the passer and be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage (including goal line situations) 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.
- Interceptions may be returned from anywhere on the field of play, including the end zone (except extra points in overtime).
- The player(s) rushing the quarterback must make an attempt to pull the flag and not make a play on the ball.
- No bumping/chucking or obstructing receiver.
- A legal flag pull takes place when the ball carrier is in full possession of the ball, however, once the receiver touches the ball, his flag may be pulled. Once the receiver makes full possession of the ball, the ball will be spotted where the flag was originally pulled. This will avoid a player bobbling the ball down the field.
- It is illegal to attempt to strip the ball or pull from the ball carrier’s possession at any time.
- If the rusher breaks the seven-yard area before the snap of the ball, rusher cannot break the line of scrimmage. The play still continues, but the rusher cannot rush the QB. However, the rusher can now defend.

- If holding or illegal contact is called when a defensive player is the “last man” between the ball carrier and the end zone, a touchdown will be called. The hold must be intentional and that is a discretionary call from the official.
- If the ball carriers flag falls off accidentally during the run of play, that ball carrier must be touched anywhere (note: illegal flag pull is the pulling of a flag during run of play when player does not yet have possession of the ball)

SPORTSMANSHIP/ ROUGHING

- **FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.**
- Remember, no blocking, screening, or tackling is allowed.
- 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. Any player ejected for any reason will serve a minimum 1 game suspension.
- 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. Any player ejected for any reason will serve a minimum 1 game suspension.
- Fighting will result in immediate expulsion from the league.
- After each game, both teams **MUST** line-up at mid-field and shake hands while saying “Good Game”
- If a team is winning by 17 points or more in the second half, there will be an automatic punt after 3rd down regardless of the down and distance and ball location (REGULAR SEASON ONLY).
- If a team is winning by more than 21 points and there is under 10 minutes to go, the losing team will remain on offense until the score is under a 21 point differential. The 4 down rules will stay in effect however and the ball will be placed on the 10-yard line once the offensive drive stalls (REGULAR SEASON ONLY).
- In the youth leagues, if a team is up by 21 points in the second half, the winning team is prohibited from rushing the QB.

PENALTIES

General:

The referee will call all penalties.

Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.

All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, except as noted (spot fouls).

Only the team captain or 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.

Live Ball penalties must be assessed before play is considered completed.

Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.

Spot Fouls

If a first down is still gained AFTER the penalty is assessed, a first down will be granted.

Flag guarding: 10 yards & loss of down

Charging: 10 yards & loss of down

Defensive Pass Interference:	First down, ball is spotted where the interference occurred
Stripping:	10 yards & first down
Unnecessary Roughness:	10 yards & loss of down
Screening, Blocking or Running with the ball carrier:	5 yards & loss of down
Defensive Unnecessary Roughness:	10 yards & first down

Other Defensive Penalties

Offensive team may elect to decline any penalty and accept the result of the play

Offside:	5 yards from the LOS & automatic first down
Illegal contact (Holding, blocking, etc.):	10 yards from the LOS & automatic first down
Illegal flag pull (Before receiver has ball):	5 yards from the LOS & automatic first down
Illegal rushing (Starting rush from inside 7-yard marker and crossing line of scrimmage):	10 yards from the LOS & automatic first down
Roughing the passer:	10 yards from the LOS & first down

Other Offensive Penalties

Defensive team may elect to decline any penalty and accept the result of the play

Any offensive penalty on an EXTRA POINT: Loss of Down

Illegal motion (More than one person moving, false start, etc):	5 yards from the LOS and replay down
Illegal forward pass (Pass received behind line of scrimmage or throwing a pass beyond the line of scrimmage):	10 yards from the LOS & loss of down
Offensive pass interference (Illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender):	10 yards from the LOS & loss of down
Delay of game (1 warning):	5 yards from the LOS & loss of down
Offside:	5 yards from the LOS & replay down
Impeding the rusher:	10 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down

Sportsmanship

Any unsportsmanlike or roughing behavior: 15 yards from the LOS and loss of or automatic first down depending on offender.

First occurrence comes with warning and further occurrence results in player ejection from game. Any player ejected for any reason will serve a minimum 1 game suspension.

Taunting:	15 yards from the LOS & first down
-----------	------------------------------------

Live ball penalties will be assessed from the spot of the infraction once the play is over.