

Daily Family YMCA Flag Football Rules

Fall 2007

GENERAL RULES

A coin toss determines the first possession.

Scores and League standings will not be kept.

Jerseys must remain tucked in at all times.

The total length of the field will be forty yards (not including endzones – 10 yards each).

The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has four (4) plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has four (4) 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. 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. Divisions 2 and 3 will be allowed to return interceptions. Division will take over possession at the spot of the catch.

Divisions 1 and 3 will play 5 on 5. Division 2 will play 7 on 7.

Games are played to forty minutes. At the end of each half, the team with the ball will be allowed to finish its possession. Halftime lasts approximately 5 minutes. Two halves will be played at 20 minutes per half (running clock).

Each team has one 60-second and one 30-second time out per half.

Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball.

Cleats are allowed/recommended but not necessary. No metal spikes!

There will be one referee designated per field for Div. 2 and 3 (Div. 1 coaches will run their own games). His main duties will be to keep time/time outs, spot and set the ball, and be the final say on penalty calls on the field. Coaches should help watch for penalties. The goal is to teach the kids how to play, not necessarily give penalties. There will not always be a penalty every time something is done wrong. The coaches and referees are encouraged to explain to the kids what they were doing wrong and give a warning. If the instruction is not followed a second time, then a penalty is enforced. (i.e. holding, tackling, flag guarding, false start, etc.)

Minor infractions will be penalized 5 yards, while major infractions will result in a 10-yard penalty. (Penalties are at the discretion of the referee)

The whistle will be blown at the start and end of each play. If either team runs across the line of scrimmage prior to the ball being snapped, the whistle will be blown to stop the play. Players will then be warned, and then the play will resume with the sound of the whistle.

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

RUNNING

The quarterback cannot run with the ball. Direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Offense may use multiple handoffs. Laterals and pitches are allowed, but the ball is dead when it hits the ground. The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball, but only from behind the line of scrimmage.

When running with the ball, there is no “stiff-arming” or slapping away the defenders hands. (No Flag Guarding). The play will stop at the point where the flag guarding occurred. No extra penalty will be enforced unless that player had previously been warned.

“No-running zones,” located 5 yards from each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield, are designed to avoid short-yardage, power-running situations. In this situation a team may only run to the outside, such as a sweep. No running up the middle.

Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to jump into or over a defensive player (no diving). This is a safety precaution to avoid one player getting kicked or landed on by another player’s cleats. If your player wants to dive into the endzone, he may, as long as he is not around or diving over anyone.

For blocking, the offensive line must hold their shirts with their hands at all times. Elbows must be kept in. Extending the arms to push, or raising the elbows up is not allowed!

RECEIVING

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.

A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception. If the player’s flags have fallen off, or been pulled off prior to the ball being caught, than the player is down where the reception is made. A warning will be given to a player who prematurely pulls flags. After the warning, an extra five yards will be added to the catch. Pass Interference will be a ten-yard penalty from the line of scrimmage. (if committed a second time)

DEADBALLS

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

Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.

Play is ruled “dead” when:

- Ball carrier’s flag is pulled.
- Ball carrier steps out of bounds.
- Touchdown or safety is scored.
- At the point of an interception (for Division 1).
- Ball carrier’s knee hits the ground.
- Ball carrier’s flag falls out.
- __Ball hits the ground. (No fumble recoveries or dog piles)

RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK

All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of five yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Starting five yards back eliminates the need to count to 3 Mississippi, which is an arbitrary number anyways, and is subjective depending on who is counting. (One person might count fast, while others count slow) It also enables the defense to learn to watch when the ball is hiked, and react to that instead of a referee saying “Go”.

There must be three linemen on the line to start any play. (offense) There must be two “rushers” on the line to start the play. (defense) There may be more, but the play cannot start without the minimum #.

Once the ball is hiked, the five-yard rule is no longer in effect, and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage. A special marker will designate five-yards from the line of scrimmage, and will be counted off by the referee. Remember, tackling is not allowed.

There is no holding a player in order to grab his flag. (Impeding the Runner) There is no holding a receiver for any reason. (Pass Interference) (10 yards after a warning)