



# Flag Football Rules



An Experience Beyond The Game!



## i9Sports 5 vs. 5 Flag Football Official Rules

i9 Sports Flag Football is a five-on-five game filled with fun and fast action. In this game, the offensive team plays for a first down at midfield and a touchdown in the end zone. Running and passing plays are allowed, although there are “no-running zones” at midfield and near each goal line. The offensive team can not run a running play when the line of scrimmage is in a “no-running zone. The defensive team covers receivers, rushes the passer and grabs flags to make “tackles.”

**I9 SPORTS FLAG FOOTBALL IS NON-CONTACT; BLOCKING AND TACKLING IS NOT ALLOWED.**

### The Basics

- A coin toss determines first possession.
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has three plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has three 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. An automatic first down by penalty will overrule the other requirements regarding three plays to make either a first down or score.
- 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. Interception may be run back.
- Teams play four 10 min quarters and change sides after half-time.

Field dimensions are: 50 yards long X 30 yards wide with 10 yard end zones or 40 yards long X 25 yards wide with 7 yard end zones (youngest division).

### Players/Game Schedules

- Teams must field a minimum of four players at all times.
- Teams consist of 7 to 10 players – five players on the field.

### Timing/Overtime

- Games are played in four 10 minute quarters with a running clock. Clock will stop in the last one minute of each half for normal football stoppages.
- 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 has one 60-second and one 30-second time-out per half.
- Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
- *There is no over time in the regular season.*

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## Scoring

Touchdown:	6 points
Extra point: (played from 12-yard line)	1 point (played from 5-yard line) or 2 points
Extra Point Interception Runback:	2 points
Safety:	2 points
Forfeit:	Any game forfeited will be scored as 6 – 0

*Please remember that scoring is part of the game but not the main focus; always place the kids before the win!*

## Dead Balls

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
- Ball carrier’s knee hits the ground
- Ball carrier’s flag falls out. Open Field Exception: If the runner is in the open field and his flag falls out he must be touched with at least one hand by a defensive player to be “down”. Open field is at the discretion of the referee.
- Receivers flag falls out (play is dead at the point of the reception).

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

Note: There are no kickoffs, and no blocking is allowed.

## Running

- The ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to one side, to start play. (Co-Ed Divisions may modify this rule with male/female exchanges)
- The quarterback cannot run with the ball past the line of scrimmage.
- An offence may use multiple handoffs behind the line of scrimmage.
- The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
- NO tosses, laterals, or pitching allowed. Downfield laterals are not permitted.
- **“No-running zones”** located five yards from each end zone and five yards on either side of midfield are designed to avoid short-yardage, power-running situations. Players cannot run in the No-Running Zone preceding a Line-to-Gain. A Line-To-Gain is the midfield line or Goal line.
- 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 flags are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.
- The ball carrier’s flags and ball must break the plane for a 1st down and

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touchdown.

- No blocking or screening is allowed at any time. Running with the ball carrier can be construed as screening if obstructing a defensive player's path to the ball carrier.
- It is up to the ball carrier to avoid contact with the defender. Good defensive position should be rewarded by the officials.

### **Receiving**

- All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
- As in the NFL, only one player is allowed in motion at a time.
- A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

### **Passing**

- All passes must be forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage. Only one forward pass per play.
- No bumping/chucking or obstructing receiver.
- Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- 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 the seven-second rule no longer is in effect.
- Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the end of the run back. Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start on the 5-yard line.
- Once a player catches the ball he/she is not allowed to lateral the ball. (once a receiver catches the ball, he and he alone is only allowed to advance it).

### **Rushing the Quarterback**

- 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 when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the quarterback.
- Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.
- Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.
- Once the ball is handed off or thrown, 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.
- Defenders blitzing the Quarterback cannot raise their hands to block a pass or obstruct the QB's attempt to throw. Defenders must Go For The Flag!

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## **Flag Pulling**

- A legal Flag Pull takes place when the ball carrier is in full possession of the ball.
- Defenders can dive to pull flags, but cannot tackle or run through ball carrier when pulling flags
- It is illegal to attempt to strip the ball or pull from the ball carrier's possession at any time.
- 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.

## **Sportsmanship/Roughing**

If the site coordinator or referee witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, stiff arms, manipulation of the flag belt to hinder its release, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be penalized or 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.

Over celebration will not be tolerated and an unsportsmanlike behavior penalty will be assessed. If the team's coaches do not take corrective action, they can be ejected from the game.

Once a flag is pulled, the defensive player should hold the flag above his/her head so that the referee can spot the location of the flag pull. The pulled flag should be handed to the player who lost the flag or to a teammate. Intentionally throwing the flag onto the ground is considered poor sportsmanship.

**REMEMBER; BLOCKING, PICKING, OR TACKLING ARE NOT ALLOWED.**

## **Penalties**

- Any penalty can be called by any official. All penalty enforcement will be called by the referee.
- Dead ball and live ball fouls are enforced live ball first and in order of occurrence.
- Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.
- All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage with exception of downfield flag guarding and defensive pass interference.
- Only the team captain or head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players cannot question judgment calls.

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- Game and first half cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.

### **Defense**

- Off-sides – 5 yards LOS and automatic first down
- Pass Interference – Spot Foul and automatic first down
- Illegal contact (bumping, chucking, holding, blocking, etc.) – 10 yards LOS and automatic first down
- Illegal flag pull (before receiver has ball) - 10 yards LOS and automatic first down
- Rusher's hands in the face of the QB, not going for the flag during a pass attempt – 10 yard LOS and automatic first down
- If the rusher breaks the seven-yard area, player cannot break the line of scrimmage. The play still continues, but the rusher cannot rush the QB. However, the rusher can now defend. If the rusher crosses the line of scrimmage, it is off-sides – 5 yards LOS and automatic first down

### **Offense**

- Illegal motion (more than one person moving, false start, etc.) – 5 yards LOS and loss of down
- Illegal forward pass (pass received behind line of scrimmage) – 5 yards LOS and loss of down
- Illegal pitches beyond the line of scrimmage – 5 yard loss of down from the spot (once a receiver catches the ball, he and he alone is only allowed to advance it)
- Offensive pass interference (illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender) – 10 yards LOS and loss of down
- Flag guarding /straight arm – 10 yards LOS and loss of down
- If play originates on the offense side of midfield and flag guarding occurs beyond midfield - 10 yard loss (from spot of penalty) and loss of down (i.e. 2nd down)
- Delay of game – 5 yards LOS
- Blocking/screening – impeding the rusher or obstructing a defender while attempting to pull flags 10 yards LOS and loss of down
- Running in the no run zone - Loss of down & back to previous line of scrimmage

### **Attire**

- Cleats are allowed, except for metal spikes. Inspections must be made.
- All players must wear a protective mouthpiece; there are no exceptions.
- No pockets or hoops on shorts.
- No hats with brims or bills.
- Official i9 Sports jerseys must be worn during play.

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## Playing Field

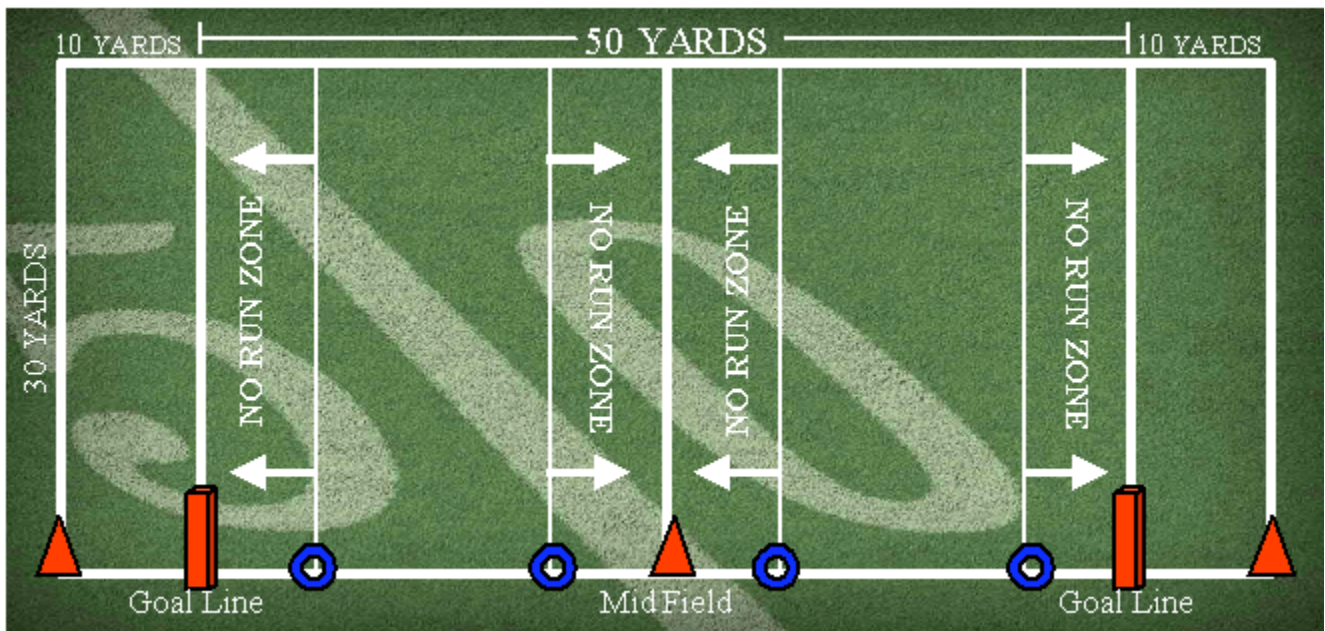
### Field Dimensions and Markings

Length: 70 (or 60) yards

Width: 30 (or 25) yards

End Zones: Maximum 10 yards deep, minimum 7 yards deep

No-running zones: Must be marked 5 yards from each end zone and 5 yards on both sides of mid field.



**The most important rule of all... HAVE FUN!!!**

Updated: 08/29/08

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## **Rules Addendum**

### **Violation of the league Substitution Policy**

#### **Defense**

- If the offense has possession of the ball prior to midfield, the ball is spotted at midfield and they receive an automatic first down. If the offense has possession of the ball beyond midfield, the ball is moved half the distance to the goal line and they receive an automatic first down.

#### **Offense**

- Loss of possession of the ball. Defense takes over on their 5 yard line.