NFL FLAG

RULE BOOK

3/22/2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

NFL FLAG RULES:

I. Game 3
II. Terminology 4
III. Equipment 5
IV. Field 6
VI. Timing and Overtime 7
VII. Scoring 8
VIII. Coaches 8
IX. Live Ball/Dead Ball 9
X. Running 10
XI. Passing 11
XII. Receiving 11
XIII. Rushing the Passer 12
XIV. Flag Pulling 13
XV. Formations 14
XVI. Unsportsmanlike Conduct 14
XVII. Penalties 15
- i. General
- ii. Spot Fouls
- iii. Defensive Penalties
- iv. Offensive Penalties

XVIII. 8U, 7U & 6U Guidelines 16

TOURNAMENT GUIDELINES:

Tournament Guidelines 18-19
I. Format 20
II. Coach and Spectator Conduct 20
III. Check In and Registration 21
IV. Rosters 21
V. Pool Play 22
Regional & Super Regional Information 23-25

mp03222022

Rule Book

I. Game

1. At the start of each game, captains from both teams meet at midfield for the coin toss to determine who starts with the ball. The visiting team calls the toss.

2. The winner of the coin toss has the choice of offense or defense. The loser of the coin toss has the choice of direction. Possession changes to start the second half to the team that started the game on defense.

3. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has four (4) downs to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has three (3) downs to score a touchdown.

    a. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, on 3 downs, and elect to "punt" on 4th down, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its own 5-yard line. If the offensive team goes for it on 4th down and does not cross field, the opposing team will start its possession from the spot.

    b. Offensive Teams MUST declare 4th down intent; “Play or Punt”, when asked by the referee and prior to the ‘Ready for Play’.

    c. Teams may use a timeout only to change the declaration of “Play” at any time prior to the expiration of the play clock.

    d. If the declaration is “Punt” the ball changes possession and will be placed at the opposing Team’s 5-yard line, 1st down, with ***NO*** option to change the declaration.

    e. If the offense fails to score, after crossing midfield the ball changes possession and the new offensive Team starts at its 5-yard line

4. Teams change sides after the first half. Possession changes to the team that started the game on defense.

mp03222022

II. Terminology

Boundary Lines	The outer perimeter lines around the field. They include the sidelines and back of the end zone lines.
Line of Scrimmage	(LOS) an imaginary line running through the point of the football and across the width of the field.
Line-to-Gain	The line the offense must pass to get a first down or score.
Rush Line	An imaginary line running across the width of the field seven yards (into the defensive side) from the line of scrimmage.
Offense	The team with possession of the ball.
Defense	The team opposing the offense to prevent it from advancing the ball.
Passer	The offensive player that throws the ball and may or may not be the quarterback.
Rusher	The defensive player assigned to rush the quarterback to prevent him/ her from passing the ball by pulling his/her flags or by blocking the pass.
Live Ball	Refers to the period of time that the play is in action. Generally used in regard to penalties. Live ball penalties are considered part of the play and must be enforced before the down is considered complete.
Dead Ball	Refers to the period of time immediately before or after a play.
Whistle	Sound made by an official using a whistle that signifies the end of the play or a stop in the action for a timeout, halftime or the end of the game.
Inadvertent Whistle	Official's whistle that is performed in error.
Charging	An illegal movement of the ball-carrier directly at a defensive player who has established position on the field. This includes lowering the head or initiating contact with a shoulder, forearm or the chest.
Flag Guarding	An illegal act by the ball-carrier to prevent a defender from pulling the ball-carrier's flags by stiff arm, lowering elbow or head or by blocking access to the runner's flags with a hand, arm or ball.
Shovel Pass	A legal forward pass across the LOS underhand, backhand or by pushing the ball forward.
Lateral	A backward or sideway toss of the ball by the ball-carrier.
Unsportsmanlike Conduct	A rude, confrontational or offensive behavior or language.

III. Equipment

1. All players must wear official NFL FLAG belts and flags. All players MUST wear mouth guards at all times while on the field. Game balls should be age specific.
2. Players must wear shoes. Cleats may not be allowed at certain locations. This will be specified by your league organizer or site director. However, cleats with exposed metal are never allowed and must be removed.
3. Players may tape their forearms, hands and fingers. Players may wear gloves, elbow pads and knee pads. Braces with exposed metals are not allowed.
4. Players must remove all jewelry, hats and do-rags. Winter beanies are allowed.
5. Players may wear soft shell helmets but they must ne secured at ALL times while on the playing field
6. Players' jerseys must be tucked into shorts or pants if they hang below the belt line.
7. We recommend players wear shorts or pants that do not have pockets. Shorts or pants with belt loops or pockets must be taped. Games will not be delayed for a player to tape up pockets.
8. Participants must bring their own official NFL FLAG belts and mouth guards to the field. Extra belts and mouth guards may be available for purchase.
9. NFL FLAG footballs will be provided.
    a. ***Flag belts and flags cannot be the same color as the shorts or pants.***

TOURNAMENT PLAY

1. NFL FLAG belts and flags will be issued to ALL Teams at check in. Teams ***MUST*** wear the equipment they are issued at check in for every game played. ***NO EXCEPTIONS***. Mouth guards will be available for purchase. Game balls will be provided by NFL FLAG and maintained by the Officials for each game.
2. Teams not prepared to play at Game Time due to noncompliance for equipment will have their game timeouts taken up to ***ALL*** (3) for the time taken to get compliant.

IV. Field

1. There are two recommended field dimensions.

    a. 25 yards wide by 70 yards with two 10-yard endzones

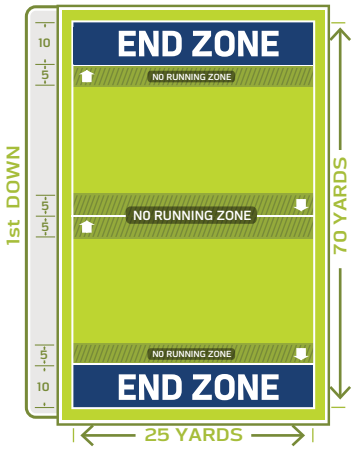
    b. 25 yards wide by 64 yards long with two seven-yard endzones.

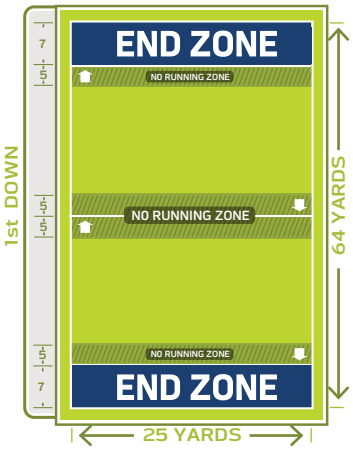
    Both with a midfield line to gain. No Run zones are located five yards prior to the line to gain and five yards prior to the endzone in the offense's direction.

2. 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.

3. Stepping on the boundary line is considered out of bounds.

4. Each offensive team approaches only TWO no-run zones in each drive (one zone 5 yards from midfield to gain the first down, and one zone 5 yards from the goal line to score a TD).





V. Timing and Overtime

1. Regular Season Games are played on a 48-minute continuous clock with two 24-minute halves, unless one team gains a 35-point advantage which will end the game. The clock stops for halftime, injuries and the Officials' discretion.
2. Halftime is two minutes.
3. Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 40 seconds to snap the ball.
4. Each team has one 60-second timeout per half. They do not carry over.
5. Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
6. In the event of an injury, the clock will stop then restart when the injured player is removed from the field of play.
7. If the score is tied at the end of regulation play, an overtime period will be used to determine a winner. ***Overtime format*** is as follows:
   a. Home team calls the toss to determine the team that chooses to be on offense or defense first.

      If a second round of overtime must be played, the team that lost the coin toss will get to choose offense or defense for the start of the second round of overtime. This process continues with teams alternating who gets to choose to be on offense or defense to start out during every round of overtime.

      i. The referee will determine which end of the field the overtime will take place on.

   b. Each team will take turns getting one (1) play from the defense's 5-yard line for one point or the defense's 10-yard line for two points. Whether to go for one or two points is up to the offensive team. Whether or not the team that begins on offense converts the team that started on defense gets a chance on offense to win or tie by converting a one- or two-point play of their own.

      i. ***Example:*** Team A starts on offense and chooses to go for one point from the 5-yard line and is successful. Team B is then on offense and can choose to either go for one point from the 5-yard line to tie and force a second round of overtime or to go for two points from the 10-yard line for the win.

      ii. If the second team on offense in an overtime round fails to beat or match the team that went first, the team that went first wins.

   c. Starting with the 2nd overtime, both teams must "go for two" from the 10-yard line

   d. Starting with the 3rd overtime, each team will get 1 play from the 5 yard line going out from the endzone. The team with the most yards will be the winner. The team with the most yards will be awarded 1 point added to their final score.

   e. Final Score will be recorded to include all points scored for each team

   f. All regulation period rules and penalties are in effect.

   g. There are no timeouts.

   h. Interceptions are returnable in OT, and worth 2 points

      i. Interceptions returned for a score in the first or second overtime period .

      ii. Interceptions advanced from the possession point in the third overtime period

   h. Each team has one rules challenge for the entire overtime session

TOURNAMENT PLAY: Games are played on a 24-minute continuous clock with two 12-minute halves, 25-second play clock and three 30-second timeouts per game.

VI. Scoring

1. ***Touchdown:*** 6 points

2. ***PAT*** (point after touchdown) ***1 point*** (5-yard line) or ***2 points*** (10-yard line)

   a. Note: 1 point PAT is pass only; 2 point PAT can be run or pass.

3. Interceptions returned for scores during regular game play are worth six points, conversions or overtime are worth two points

3. ***Safety:*** 2 points

   a. A safety occurs when the ball-carrier is declared down in his/her own end zone. Runners can be called down when their flags are pulled by a defensive player, a flag falls out, they step out of bounds, their knee or arm touches the ground, a fumble occurs in the end zone or if a snapped ball lands in or beyond the end zone.

5. A team that scores a touchdown must declare whether it wishes to attempt a 1-point conversion (from the 5-yard line) or a 2-point conversion (from the 10-yard line). Any change, once a decision is made to try for the extra point, requires a charged timeout. A decision cannot be changed after a penalty.

6. After one team is winning by 35 points or more, the game is over. Once a 35 or more point advantage is gained, no PAT will be attempted.

7. ***Forfeits are scored 35-0 for the winning team.***

8. The coaches, officials and scorekeeper must sign the score sheet. If a coach does not sign the score sheet before leaving the field, the scorekeeper will note on that score sheet and the score will be FINAL.

TOURNAMENT PLAY: Once point differential reaches or breaches 28 points, the game is over

VII. Coaches

1. Coaches are expected to adhere to NFL FLAG philosophies, coaching guidelines and code of conduct.

2. Coaches are permitted to Coach on the sideline.

   a. All team photographers, managers, position coaches, team moms, fans, etc. are required and must remain a minimum of 10 yards off the field in a designated viewing area.

   b. Coaches, this is your responsibility to keep your fans and any other team associated members in the designated areas.

TOURNAMENT PLAY

1. Only two coaches are permitted on the sidelines to coach.
2. Coaches must remain on the sideline except to attend to an injured player.
3. Teams may huddle on the sideline with their coach to get the play but the play clock will not stop once the ball is signaled 'Ready for Play'.

IX. Live Ball/Dead Ball

1. The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead.
2. The official will indicate the neutral zone and line of scrimmage.
    a. It is an automatic dead ball foul if any player on defense or offense enters the neutral zone. In regard to the neutral zone, the official may give both teams a "courtesy" neutral zone notification to allow their players to move back behind the line of scrimmage.
3. A player who gains possession of the ball in the air is considered in bounds as long as the first foot or other body part contacts the ground in the field of play.
4. The defense may not mimic the offensive team signals by trying to confuse the offensive players, while the quarterback is calling out signals to start the play. This will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.
5. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
6. Any official can whistle the play dead.
7. Play is ruled "dead" when:
    a. The ball hits the ground.
        i. If the ball hits the ground as a result of a bad snap, the ball is then placed where the ball hit the ground.
    b. The ball-carrier's flag is pulled.
    c. The ball-carrier steps out of bounds.
    d. A touchdown, PAT or safety is scored.
    e. The ball-carrier's knee or arm hits the ground.
    f. The ball-carrier's flag falls out.
    g. The receiver catches the ball while in possession of one or no flag(s).
    h. The 7 second pass clock expires.
    i. Inadvertent whistle
    j. Ball-carrier leaves their feet other than jump cuts, spinning or to avoid a downed player on the field of play.

NOTE: There are no fumbles. The ball becomes a dead ball. (If the ball is fumbled forwards then it will be spotted where the ball carrier lost possession.

8. If inadvertent whistle occurs the offense has two options:
    A) take the ball where the whistle blew and the down is consumed
    B) replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.

    If it occurs on the last play of the half or game, the offense will be awarded one untimed down and given those two options.
9. A team is allowed to use a timeout to question an official's rule interpretation. If the official's ruling is correct, the team will be charged a timeout. If the rule is interpreted incorrectly, the timeout will not be charged and the proper ruling will be enforced. Officials should all agree upon any controversial call in order to give each team the full benefit of each call.
10. Officials should all agree in order to change a call on the field that is in dispute

X. Running

1. The ball is spotted where the ball is when the flag is pulled.

2. The quarterback cannot directly run with the ball. The quarterback is the offensive player who receives the snap.

3. Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Handoffs may be in front, behind or to the side of the offensive player but must be behind the line of scrimmage. The offense may use multiple handoffs.

    a. ***"Center sneak" play is no longer allowed. The QB is not allowed to handoff to the center on the first handoff of the play.***

    b. ***Any player who receives a handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.***

    c. ***Once the ball has been handed off, in front, behind or to the side of the quarterback, the seven-second passing clock is eliminated and all defensive players are eligible to rush.***

4. Absolutely NO pitches or laterals of any kind.

5. No-run Zones are located 5 yards before each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield are designed to avoid short-yardage power-running situations. Teams are not allowed to run in these zones if the subsequent line is LIVE. (Reminder: Each offensive team approaches only TWO no-run zones in each drive – one 5 yards from midfield to gain the first down and one 5 yards from the goal line to score a TD).

6. Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. Diving, leaping or jumping to avoid a flag pull is considered flag guarding.

7. Spinning/Jump Cuts are allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a flag pull.

    a. Players spinning out of control will be called for flag guarding.

8. Ballcarriers may leave their feet and the play will continue for spinning, jump cuts, QB's passing progression or if there is a clear indication that he/she has done so to avoid a collision with another player and the play will continue without stoppage.

9. No blocking or "screening" is allowed at any time.

10. Offensive players in close proximity of the ball-carrier must stop their motion once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage. No running with the ball-carrier.

11. Flag obstruction – All jerseys MUST be tucked in before play begins. The flags must be on the player's hips and free from obstruction. Deliberately obstructed flags will be considered flag guarding.

12. Any player who receives a handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.

13. Once the ball has been handed off in front, behind or to the side of the quarterback, all defensive players are eligible to rush.

XI. Passing

1. All passes must be thrown with one hand from behind the line of scrimmage, thrown forward and ball out of hand prior to breaching the line of scrimmage.

    a. There is no intentional grounding

    b. All passes that do not cross the line of scrimmage, whether received or not, are illegal forward passes, unless touched by a defender.

    c. The quarterback may throw the ball away to avoid a sack. Pass must go beyond the line of scrimmage.

2. Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.

3. The quarterback has a seven-second "pass clock." If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, the play is dead, the down is consumed and the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off, the 7-second rule is no longer in effect.

    a. If the QB is standing in the end zone at the end of the 7-second clock, the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage (LOS).

    b. If the quarterback throws the ball and then catches it, the play is dead and treated like an incomplete pass.

XII. Receiving

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

2. Only one player is allowed in motion at a time. All motion must be parallel to the line of scrimmage and no motion is permitted toward the line of scrimmage.

3. A player must have at least one foot or other body part in bounds, contacting the ground first with possession.

4. In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.

5. Interceptions are returnable. If returned for a score during regular game play, the score will be worth six points, two points if returned during conversions and/or overtime.

XIII. Rushing the Passer

1. 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. Players not rushing the quarterback can defend on the line of scrimmage.

2. 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.

3. A special marker, or the referee, will designate a rush line seven yards from the line of scrimmage. Defensive players should verify they are in the correct position with the official on every play.

    a. A legal rush is:
        i. Any rush from a point 7-yards from the defensive line of scrimmage.
        ii. A rush from anywhere on the field AFTER the ball has been handed off by the quarterback.

    b. A penalty may be called if:
        i. The rusher leaves the rush line before the snap and crosses the line of scrimmage before a handoff or pass – illegal rush (5-yards from the line of scrimmage and first down).

        ii. Any defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped – offsides (5-yards from line of scrimmage and first down).

        iii. Any defensive player not lined up at the rush line crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is passed or handed off – illegal rush (5-yards from the line of scrimmage and first down).

        iv. If the offense draws the rusher(s) to jump the seven-yard marker prior to the snap of the ball, that rusher(s) CANNOT rush during that play. However, any other defender that is seven yards back may rush instead. Jumping the rush is not a penalty until the rusher crosses the line of scrimmage prior to the handoff or passed ball.

    c. Special circumstances:
        i. Teams are not required to rush the quarterback with the seven second clock in effect.
        ii. Teams are not required to identify their rusher before the play.

4. Players rushing the quarterback may attempt to block a pass; however, contact to the QB, unless ruled incidental by the official, would result in a roughing the passer penalty.

5. The offense cannot impede the rusher in any way. The rusher has the right to a clear path to the quarterback, regardless of where they line up prior to the snap. The PATH is set pre-snap from the rusher or rushers directly to the QB. PATH does not move once the quarterback moves. If the "path or line" is occupied by a moving offensive player, then it is the offense's responsibility to avoid the rusher. Any disruption to the rusher's path and/or contact will result in an impeding the rusher penalty. **If the offensive player does not move after the snap, then it is the rusher's responsibility to go around the offensive player and to avoid contact.**

6. A sack occurs if the quarterback's flags are pulled behind the line of scrimmage. The ball will be spotted where possesion of the ball is once the flag is pulled.

    a. A Safety is awarded if the sack takes place in the offensive team's end zone.

TOURNAMENT PLAY: 8U Division: May rush the passer at the snap from seven yards, and 'No Run' zones are active.

XIV. Flag Pulling

1. A legal flag pull takes place when the ball-carrier is in full possession of the ball.
2. Defenders can dive to pull flags but cannot tackle, hold or run through the ball-carrier when pulling flags.
3. It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball-carrier's possession at any time.
4. If a player's flag inadvertently falls off during a play while that player has possession, the player is down immediately and the play ends. The ball is placed where the flag lands.
5. If a player who has one or no flags in their belt takes possession of the ball, the play is dead at that spot on the field.
6. A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off of a player who is not in possession of the ball.
7. Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball-carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping the head, hand, ball, arm or shoulder or intentionally covering the flags with the football jersey.

XV. Formations

1. Offenses must have a minimum of one player on the line of scrimmage (the center) and up to four players on the line of scrimmage. The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.

   a. Teams may shift formations prior to the snap as long as they are set for at least 1 second before the ball is snapped.
   b. One player at a time may go in motion at least 1 yard behind the line of scrimmage.

2. Movement by a player who is set or a player who runs toward the line of scrimmage while in motion is considered a false start.

3. The center must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion between his/her legs to a player in the backfield, and the ball must completely leave his/her hands.

XVI. Unsportsmanlike Conduct

1. If the field monitor or referee witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. The decision is made at the referee's discretion. No appeals will be considered. ***FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!***

2. Offensive or confrontational language is ***NOT*** allowed. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If offensive or confrontational language occurs, the officials will determine if a warning or immediate ejection is warranted.

3. Players may not physically or verbally abuse any opponent, coach or official.

4. Ball-carriers MUST make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position.

5. Defenders must give free releases off the line of scrimmage to offensive players and are not allowed to run through the ball-carrier when pulling flags. ***ROUGH PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED***

6. Fans must also adhere to good sportsmanship as well:

   a. Yell to cheer on your players, not to harass officials or other teams.
   b. Keep comments clean and profanity free.
   c. Compliment ALL players, not just one child or team.

7. Fans are required to keep fields safe and kids friendly:

   a. Keep younger kids and equipment such as coolers, chairs and tents a minimum of 10 yards off the field in the end zone area.
   b. Stay in the end zone area, not between fields.
   c. Dispose of ALL trash in designated trash cans.

8. Unsportsmanlike conduct penalties:

   a. Defense + 10 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
   b. Offense - 10 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down

XVII. Penalties

i. General

1. The referee will call all penalties.
2. Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.
3. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, except as noted. (Spot fouls)
4. Only the team captain or head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players may not question calls.
5. Games or halves may not end on a defensive penalty unless the offense declines it.
6. Penalties are assessed live ball then dead ball. Live ball penalties must be assessed before play is considered complete.
7. Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.
8. Spot fouls in end zone: Defensive (Ball on one-yard line, first down)/Offensive (Safety)

ii. Defensive spot fouls

Defensive pass interference	Automatic first down
Holding	+5 yards and automatic first down
Stripping	+10 yards and automatic first down

iii. Offensive spot fouls

Screening, blocking or running with the ball	-10 yards and loss of down
Charging	-10 yards and loss of down
Flag guarding	-10 yards and loss of down

iv. Defensive penalties

Defensive unnecessary roughness	+10 yards and automatic first down
Defensive unsportsmanlike conduct	+10 yards and automatic first down
Offside	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Illegal rush (Starting rush from inside 7-yard marker)	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Illegal flag pull (Before the receiver has the ball)	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Roughing the passer	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Taunting	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down

v. Offensive penalties

Offensive unnecessary roughness	-10 yards and loss of down
Offensive unsportsmanlike conduct	-10 yards and loss of down
Offside / false start	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal forward pass (Any pass received or lands behind the line of scrimmage or throwing a pass after crossing the line of scrimmage)	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Offensive pass interference	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal motion (More than one person moving)	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Delay of game	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Impeding the rusher	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal Procedure	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Taunting	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down

XVIII. 8U, 7U & 6U Guidelines

These are NFL FLAG recommended and adopted adjustments to the rules that have been proven successful among RCX NFL FLAG Leagues and NFL Leagues throughout the country their direct input to assist with teaching the Game in the younger age groups.

a. 8U

i. 'No Run' zones are eliminated. Teams may run anywhere on the field.
ii. Defenders may ***NOT*** rush the passer unless there is a legal handoff executed in the backfield.
iii. One Coach for each team is permitted on the field pre-snap to help their players, but ***MUST*** be off the field prior to the snap of the ball.

b. 7U & 6U

i. 'No Run' zones are eliminated. Teams may run the ball anywhere on the field.
ii. Defenders may ***NOT*** rush the passer unless there is a legal handoff executed in the backfield.
iii. One Coach for each team is permitted on the field pre-snap to help their players, but ***MUST*** be off the field prior to the snap of the ball.
iv. If the ball falls to, or touches the ground during the initial center to quarterback exchange, the play is ruled a 'Do Over' with no loss of down, once per down. On a second consecutive occurence, the down is consumed.
v. Defenders ***MUST*** line up at least five yards from the line of scrimmage prior to the snap.

NFL FLAG RULE BOOK

Tournament Guidelines/Regulations

3/22/2022

Tournament Guidelines/Regulations

2022 Overview

2022 will feature 16 total tournaments feeding into the NFL FLAG CHAMPIONSHIPS AT PRO BOWL. (13 Regionals and three (3) Super Regionals).

NFL FLAG Tournaments are for athletes who participate in an NFL FLAG league ONLY and will kickoff at the NFL DRAFT, April 30-May 1. Tournaments will consist of NFL FLAG Super Regionals and NFL FLAG Regionals. Super Regionals will have OPEN Borders for any official NFL FLAG League across the country to participate. NFL FLAG League Guidelines apply. The first Super Regional of 2022 will be in the spring at the NFL DRAFT (Las Vegas), followed by a summer Super Regional (Atlanta) in July and a fall Super Regional (New Orleans) in October. NFL FLAG Regionals will take place across the country throughout the year. All NFL FLAG Regionals will be for Official NFL FLAG Leagues and adhere to the regional border restrictions.

**NFL FLAG will no longer have Open Tournaments, Sanctioned Tournaments or Flag Bowl.

NFL FLAG National Rankings: NFL FLAG will implement a Ranking System for teams competing in the NFL FLAG Tournament circuit. Teams will qualify for NFL FLAG National Ranking points by participating in NFL FLAG Championship Tournament Series. Team Rankings will be posted weekly on the NFL FLAG website and social media. Team Rankings are used for fun and if a team for whatever reason backs out of the event.

I. Format

1. January 1st of the current calendar year is the date used to determine eligibility for age divisions.

2. Teams and player rosters must be ***CONFIRMED*** the Monday prior to each tournament.

3. Only one head coach and one assistant coach are allowed on the sidelines during games. All team photographers, managers, position coaches, team moms, fans, etc., must remain a minimum of 10 yards off the field in a designated Spectator Viewing Area. This will be strictly enforced.

4. Teams must be standing near the end zone of the field for their games and be ready to play 10 minutes before the scheduled game time.

5. NFL FLAG reserves the right to cancel or change the location of a Tournament. If a tournament is changed or canceled, RCX will not reimburse any team, players, or spectators for any expenses incurred including but not limited to airfare, ground transportation, lodging, and food.Teams may request a refund of the tournament registration fee.

6. All decisions made by NFL FLAG are final.

II. Coach and Spectator Conduct/Responsibilities

1. Coaches, family members, parents, and spectators are required to observe the contest from designated areas.

2. Coaches are permitted to coach on the sideline at all Tournaments.

3. Coaches must agree to sign a coaches code of conduct and strictly adhere to our guidelines for coach conduct and attitude: https://indd.adobe.com/view/e97b937a-3339-4de8-b0b7-49ce13476940

    a. If a coach displays any type of negativity toward his or her players, coaches or staff, the coach will be removed from the field immediately and unable to coach for the remainder of the tournament. This will be explained in greater detail at the coaches meeting prior to the tournament. Coaches are responsible for their players and any spectators associated with their team.

4. All family members, parents and spectators will observe play from the designated areas. Participants, coaches, parents and family members must conduct themselves appropriately during tournaments.

5. Inappropriate, rude or confrontational behavior by any coach, team or parent(s) may lead to a team's disqualification from a tournament at the sole discretion of NFL FLAG.

6. Misconduct by any individual may lead to removal from the premises at the sole discretion of NFL FLAG. Officials, at their discretion, may enforce unsportsmanlike penalties on the TEAM/Coach for such behavior. Two (2) unsportsmanlike penalties on any Coach or player is disqualification from that game.

7. Filming and photography is permitted in the spectator area only

III. Tournament Check-In and Registration

1. Participation requirements and registration guidelines are provided to each head coach prior to the tournament by RCX Sports.

2. An NFL FLAG Tournament medical release form, signed by a parent or legal guardian, must be submitted by the participant. Participants will not be eligible to play without a medical release form submitted at registration.

3. All players are required to submit two forms* of identification and a current photo.
   *Acceptable forms of identification are the following:
   Birth Certificate, Passport, Report Card, Official State ID, Medical records, School ID.

4. ***No roster substitutions will be allowed after the final roster is submitted.***

5. ***NFL FLAG reserves the right to disqualify players and/or teams if individuals do not meet the Tournament Requirements set forth in the current calendar year.***

6. To register as an official NFL FLAG participant, go to ***www.my.nflflag.com/register.*** Make sure to select the league you play in. If you do not see your league contact your league organizer.

7. The tournament will be held rain or shine.

IV. Rosters

1. Home teams wear dark color jerseys. Visiting teams wear light color jerseys.

2. Team Rosters must consist of at least 5 players with a maximum of 10 players.

   a. Teams may play with no more than 5 players and no less than 4 players on the field.

   b. Teams will be granted a 5-minute grace period if they do not have at least 4 eligible players at the start of the game, to allow for the required players to report to the field.

   c. In the event of an injury, a team with insufficient substitute players may play with 4 players on the field but no fewer than 4.

3. All roster challenges will be addressed, by the Tournament Director, either prior or post game play.

   a. If a roster is ruled illegal, the team at fault will forfeit the game, awarding the other team a 28-0 victory

   b. If a roster is proven legal, the game will resume as scheduled or the score of the game will be recorded.

V. Pool Play

1. Teams will play a minimum of three games in pool play.

2. Teams must start a game with a minimum of five players. In the event of an injury, a team with insufficient substitute players may play with four players on the field but no fewer than four.

Divisional Tie Breakers

1. Two teams tied for one place.
   a. Head-to-head competition
   b. Total points allowed during tournament play
   c. Total points scored during tournament play
   d. Coin toss

2. Three or more teams tied for one place.
   a. Total points allowed during tournament play
   b. Total points scored during tournament play
   c. Coin toss if two teams are still tied. Drawing if three teams are still tied.

Playoffs and Championship

1. Playoff and championship games will be scheduled after pool play results are received and confirmed.

2. Playoff rounds are single elimination.

3. Divisional playoff seeds are determined by:
   a. Overall record
   b. Points allowed
   c. Points scored
   d. Coin toss

SUPER REGIONAL & REGIONAL TOURNAMENTS

2022 Super Regional Tournaments

April 30th	Las Vegas Raiders Regional	spring

- Open Region Borders
- Played NFL DRAFT weekend

July 15-16th	Atlanta Falcons Regional	summer

- Open Region Borders
- Played in Birmingham, Ala. in conjunction with World Games

October 29-30th	New Orleans Saints Regional	fall

- Open Region Borders

2022 Regional Tournaments

June 11th	Tampa Bay Buccaneers Regional	spring
June 18-19th	New York Jets Regional	spring
June 25th	Green Bay Packers Regional	spring
June 25th	Denver Broncos Regional	spring
July 9th	Detroit Lions Regional	spring
July 17th	Baltimore Ravens Regional	spring

TBD	Los Angeles Rams Regional	fall
TBD	New England Patriots Regional	fall
TBD	Cleveland Browns Regional	fall
TBD	Washington Commanders Regional	fall
TBD	Philadelphia Eagles Regional	fall
TBD	Houston Texans Regional	fall
TBD	Arizona Cardinals Regional	fall

2022 Tournament Age Divisions

2022 NFL FLAG Approved Age Divisions at NFL FLAG National Championships at Pro Bowl

8u	Birth year 2013 or younger
8u REC	Birth year 2013 or younger
10u Girls	Birth year 2011 or younger
10u	Birth year 2011 or younger
10u REC	Birth year 2011 or younger

12u Girls	Birth year 2009 or younger
12u	Birth year 2009 or younger
12u REC	Birth year 2009 or younger
14u Girls	Birth year 2007 or younger
14u	Birth year 2007 or younger
17u Girls	Birth year 2004 or younger

2022 General Guidelines

1. The only way to qualify for NFL FLAG Championships at Pro Bowl is by winning a Regional or Super Regional Tournament.

2. All NFL FLAG Tournaments are Stay-to-Play for teams who reside 90 miles from event location.

3. Qualified teams will receive a Full Bid entry to NFL FLAG Championships at Pro Bowl.

4. NFL FLAG National Rankings will be used to fill spots for the NFL FLAG Championships if qualified teams decide not to redeem their Full Bid entry.

5. NFL FLAG Tournament Rulebook will be used.

6. All players MUST be registered in and participate in the same NFL FLAG League/Organization in 2022 to be eligible to participate in a NFL FLAG tournament.

7. Once a team qualifies, the entire roster and Head Coach is ***FINAL.*** Edits may not be made to the rosters for the NFL FLAG Championships at Pro Bowl.

8. A coach can only be rostered as "Head Coach" for one team in a tournament but can be rostered as an "Assistant Coach" for infinite teams in separate age divisions in the same tournament.

9. Qualified teams are not permitted to change age divisions for the NFL FLAG Championships at Pro Bowl.

10. Players may only be on one roster. They cannot play in two NFL FLAG Regional Divisions.

11. Qualified players are ineligible to attend any other Regional Tournament in any division.

12. Once qualified, the Head Coach is ineligible to coach in the SAME division at any other Regional Tournament.

13. ONLY participants from an ACTIVE* NFL FLAG League are permitted to compete in Regional and Super Regional Tournaments.
    *An Active League has placed a qualifying order for their League within the last 12 months. Contact info@nflflag.com for questions around an NFL FLAG League's active status.

14. NFL FLAG Regional teams will be provided with NFL FLAG jerseys, flags and footballs, for each event, unless otherwise noted.

15. REC Divisions - Boys & Girls Clubs, YMCA's, JCC's, PAL Programs, Park and Recreational Programs through the Parks System or NFL FLAG Leagues must use same exact team roster from their league games.

16. Rosters will be a MAX of 10 players.

2022 Regional Tournament Borders

1. Teams are only eligible to qualify in their Region, unless competing in a Super Regional.
2. Teams may attend more than one Regional Tournament within their Region to qualify.

.

2022 Age/Coach Verification

1. Participants must be age verified through the National Sports ID Platform (NSID) prior to the event. On site age verification will not take place under any circumstances.
2. All coaches must pass a background check by Players Health (PH) to be eligible to coach.

2022 Tournament Format

1. All teams will be put into a Pool Play Format.

2. Every team is guaranteed a minimum of three (3) pool play games.

3. The TOP 50% teams from Pool Play in each division will advance to a single elimination playoff bracket.

4. All teams will be reseeded according to the following criteria for bracket play:

    a. Least Games Lost
    b. Most Games Won
    c. Head-to-Head Record (Two teams only)
    d. Points Against
    e. Points For
    f. Coin Toss

2022 Tournament Registration

1. NFL FLAG Regional Tournaments registration opens eight weeks prior to the date of the event.

    a. $350 Team Registration Fee (Early) - First three weeks of registration.
    b. $450 Team Registration Fee (Late) - Last three weeks of registration.
    c. Registration will close two weeks prior to the event.