

Padded Flag Football Rules (Updated 9/4/2021)

THE GAME

1. Each game will consist of two 25 minute halves with a continuous running clock and a 5 minute half time.
 - a. The clock will stop for a significant injury at the official's discretion.
2. Once the ball is spotted by the official, the offense has 45 seconds to initiate a new play.
3. Two 30 second timeouts are allowed by each team per half. Unused timeouts in the 1st half do not carry over into the 2nd half.

*Timeouts called for rule interpretation where the official made a mistake may not be counted towards the Team's timeouts at the official's discretion.

4. No kicking, punting, or extra point/field goal kicking attempts allowed.
5. Scoring:
 - Six (6) points for a touchdown
 - One (1) point for an extra point from the 5 yard line
 - Two (2) points for an extra point from the 10 yard line
 - Three (3) points for an interception
 - *No points awarded if interception is on an extra point attempt*
6. Following an offensive score, interception, change of possession on downs, or to start a half, the ball is placed at the 40 yard line.
7. The offensive team will have 3 downs to advance the ball to the next zone and earn a new set of downs while in zone 1 and zone 2. Once inside zone 3 the offense will have 4 downs to score a touchdown.

THE PLAYING FIELD

1. The playing field is 40 yards long, 30 yards wide, with a 10 yard end zone. The offensive team always advances the ball in the same direction initiating the drive from the 40 yard line.
2. The playing field will be divided into 3 Zones:
 - Zone 1: 40-30 yard line
 - Zone 2: 30-20 yard line
 - Zone 3: 20-Goal Line

GENERAL GAME INFORMATION

1. All official's decisions are final.
2. One coach per team is allowed on the field of play. The offensive coach must remain behind the line of scrimmage. Coaches must make every effort not to obstruct any player or play.
3. All unnecessary physical contact MUST be avoided.
4. No use of tobacco/alcohol by any coach, official, or spectator during any practice, scrimmage or game.
5. Only approved coaches and the players are allowed on the team's sideline. Absolutely no parents or spectators are allowed on the sideline of the playing field that the teams are using.
6. Each team must have at least 2 certified coaches on the team's sideline during the game. All coaches and their assistants must be on their roster listing.
7. Rosters must be available at every game and must include each player's name, jersey number, date of birth and current school grade.

DEFENSE

1. The Defense will have 8 players; 2 lineman who must line up over the guards (no one can line up over the center); all other defenders must be 5 yards off the ball (minimum).

2. Defensive linemen are not allowed to attack through either A gap until the ball has been handed off. *(The purpose of this rule is to allow the offense an opportunity to receive a snap and handoff or fake a handoff before their flags are pulled.)*
3. Man to man defense must be used.
4. No blitzing is allowed.
5. Once the ball has been handed off in front, behind or to the side of the quarterback, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
6. Once the quarterback has broken outside of the tackle box, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
7. An offensive player in possession of the ball is ruled down when their flag is removed. Officials should spot the ball at the location the flag is removed, not where it lays on the ground.
8. All usual defensive infraction rules apply in pass coverage (holding, interference, etc.).
9. Unnecessary roughness (obvious avoidable contact) is an automatic first down at the start of the next zone or at the 5 yard line if inside the 20 and the player may be removed from play for the day. **IT IS THE DEFENSIVE PLAYER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO AVOID UNNECESSARY CONTACT WHEN ATTEMPTING TO PULL AN OFFENSIVE PLAYER'S FLAG.**
10. An interception is worth 3 points for the defense and that team takes possession of the ball at the 40 yard line – there is no advancing the ball on an interception as the ball is immediately dead.

OFFENSE

1. The offense will have 8 players. Offensive down linemen are not eligible receivers. Once the quarterback is under center, offensive linemen cannot shift positions.
2. Four (4) offensive players must be on the line of scrimmage. Three offensive linemen in a balanced formation (G - C - G) within the tackle box and one receiver.
3. Normal shifts and motion are allowed following NHS rules, however, 4 must remain on the line of scrimmage prior to the ball being snapped.
4. The ball must be snapped between the legs either under center or in shotgun formation.
5. The first player taking possession of the ball after the snap may not run with the ball beyond the line of scrimmage.
6. Any offensive player that is an eligible receiver can pass the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
7. A shotgun-snapped ball that touches the ground **BEFORE** the QB touches it will remain live for the QB (only) to pick up. The play will continue running so long as the official deems the play safe to continue. If the bad snap creates a potentially unsafe situation, the officials will blow it dead. Any other ball that is fumbled at any time is immediately dead once it hits the ground. The offense retains possession at the spot of the fumble, not the spot of the ball.
8. All blocking must be done above the waist and without taking the defensive player to the ground.
9. Ball Carrying:
 - a. Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball
 - *Diving, leaping, or jumping to avoid a flag pull is considered flag guarding
 - *Jumping in the air in a forward motion to advance the ball is considered flag guarding.
 - b. Runners may leave their feet without a flag guarding penalty being enforced **ONLY** if there is a clear indication that this has been done to avoid a collision with another player.
 - c. Spinning is allowed
 - d. Lateral moves to the left or right are allowed.
 - e. An offensive player may not lower their shoulder into a defensive player to avoid a flag pull.
 - f. Stiff arms are allowed.
 - g. Ball carriers must have their flags clearly exposed; jerseys should be tucked into pants

PENALTIES

5 Yard Penalties:

- Delay of Game
- Encroachment
- False Start
- Illegal Formation (including Defense not properly aligned)
- Illegal Blitz (linebacker or DB behind Line of scrimmage before handoff or QB is outside Tackle starting position)
- Illegal Shift or Motion
- Snap Infraction
- Ineligible receiver illegally downfield
- Failure to properly wear required equipment
- Illegal Forward Pass - and loss of down if by offense
- Illegal Touching - and loss of down
- Intentional Grounding - and loss of down

10 Yard Penalties:

- Holding
- Illegal Block – blocking in back, below the waist, chop block

15 Yard Penalties:

- Unsportsmanlike conduct – by a player or non-player - such as profanity, trash talk, derogatory remarks, taunting, kicking or swinging at a player or official, or spiking the ball.
- Face Mask– any and all infractions
- Late Hit
- Clipping
- Roughing – Passer
- Spearing
- Tripping
- Unnecessary Roughness
- Pass Interference and loss of down (if by offensive player).

Immediate Disqualification:

- Striking, kicking, or kneeling.
- Intentional physical contact with an official
- Any act unduly rough or flagrant.
- A second unsportsmanlike foul by a player.

Removal from premises:

- Unsportsmanlike conduct – by a non-player - such as profanity, trash talk, derogatory remarks, taunting, kicking or swinging at a player or official, or spiking the ball.