

MYFL Flag Football Rules

Spring 2009 Revision

Rules for the 5-8 age groups

Section 1 - Division and Team Organization

1. Game play is 5 players vs. 5 players.
2. Player must provide a colored mouthpiece and a pair of rubber sole or plastic screw on type cleats. No metal baseball type cleats will be permitted.
3. **Mandatory Play Policy**
 - a. Each player must have a starting position on offense or defense.
 - b. Substitutions are allowed to speak with players, however a player must not sit out more than three consecutive plays during a series unless the player is injured or sick.
 - c. The mandatory play rule does not apply to players that arrive at the game after the first half expires. While coaches are encouraged to have the player participate, playing time will be up to a coach's discretion.
 - d. The mandatory play policy is to ensure that all players that signed up are treated in a fair manner, regardless of their ability and are given a chance to learn and participate in organized team sports. However, parent and players are encouraged not to abuse this rule and to attend practice on a regular basis and to communicate with a coach if a player is not going to attend a practice. However, if a coach feels that a player is abusing the league's mandatory play policy, the coach may petition the league, in writing, requesting that the rule be waived on a per player basis for one week. If the league grants the waiver to the participation rule, the coach must contact the player's parent and explain the reason for the one week waiver. The league will not participate in communication between coaches, players, and parents on the request to waive the participation rule on a per player basis
 - e. **Referees will not enforce this rule.** This rule will be enforced by league officials based on complaints from parents, players, spectators, and other coaches. A formal complaint must be filed with a league official no later than Tuesday following the game in question and there must be substantial and undisputable evidence. The burden of proof will fall on the party filing the protest.
 - f. If the facts of a protest prove that a coach is found deliberately in violation of the participation rule that coach will forfeit the game.
4. Due to the Mandatory play policy, teams cannot consist of more than 10 players.
5. The ball size for the 5-6 and 7-8 division is a "Pee-Wee" sized ball or equivalent to a "Wilson K2" football.
6. Teams are not allowed more than three days of activity per week. This would mean that a team is allowed two practices and one game per 7 day period.
 - a. Practice sessions are at the discretion of each head coach.
7. Each team can have up to 3 coaches on the sideline during a game.

Section 2 - Code of Conduct

1. Each player, parent, and coach is required to sign a code of conduct. Bad conduct will not be tolerated at all. If a player or a coach is ejected from the game, he or she will be restricted from playing the following week. If a player or coach is ejected a second time, they will not be allowed to return for the rest of the season.
2. There is a 4 play “cool down” period a referee can use to allow a player to calm down and return to play.
3. Examples of bad conduct are:
 - i. Arguing with a Referee or League Official
 - ii. Foul language or any obscene gesture
 - iii. Trash Talking (Trash talk is talk that may be offensive to officials, opposing players, teams or spectators), Taunting, and Showboating
 - iv. Fighting
 - v. Tackling
 - vi. Elbowing
 - vii. Cheap shots
 - viii. Intentional Blocking
 - ix. Clothes lining, kicking, or intentionally grabbing a players shirt
4. If a parent or spectator becomes disruptive, enters the coaching area, or enters the playing area a referee, coach, or league official will immediately talk to that person. If that person refuses to cooperate, they will be asked to leave the field. If they further refuse, Prince William County Park Police and Prince William County Police will be notified and that person will be removed and forbidden to return to Mayhew Football Fields for the rest of the season.

Section 3 - Game Play

General

1. The 5-6 and 7-8 play on a reduced size playing field. The dimension of the field is 60 x 30 yards.
2. **One** coach is permitted on the field at all times in the 5-6 and 7-8 divisions.
3. First possession is determined by a coin toss.
4. **Possession does NOT change after halftime. Play resumes exactly where it left off.**
5. A team must field 5 players at all times.
 - a. If a team cannot field a 5 player team at game time, they may petition the opposing coach and league commissioner to play with no less than 4 players. However, the opposing team may still play with 5 players. If the opposing coach refuses to play, the matter is dead and the team will forfeit the game.
6. Each player must have a set of flags.
 - a. Flags should be simple pull off flags that are made up of two flags.
 - b. Flags may not be black or the same color as the teams uniform

- c. Flags are to be worn on the outside of the hips. *Example, if a player stands straight and puts their arms at their sides, the flags should be in line with their arms*
7. Players must tuck in their shirts so that the flags are visible.
8. If a player is injured before the game:
 - a. The cut or abrasion must be covered with appropriate dressing.
 - b. If a player has a cast, it must be covered with appropriate padding and has to be cleared by a referee for safe playing. If a referee does not approve the padding, the player will not be allowed to participate.
9. If a player gets injured during the game causing an open wound they will be asked to leave the game until the wound or abrasion is attended to and properly covered up.
10. If a player wears eyewear:
 - a. Eyewear must be secured by a strap.
 - b. No sunglasses are allowed, unless they are for prescription and then they must be secured by a strap.
11. Knee pads and elbow pad are allowed. However, a referee may inspect them at anytime during the game and asked they be removed.
12. Gloves may be worn but must be regulation football type gloves and made of a soft, pliable, and non-abrasive material
13. Hats, headbands, and wristbands are permitted as long as there is no message, except for sports logo, on the item. A referee or league official can asked that they be removed.
14. No jewelry of any type can be worn during the game.

Offense

1. The offense will take the ball on the 5 yard line and has 3 downs to cross mid-field.
2. After the team crosses mid-field, they have three more plays to score.
3. If the team fails to score using, using 3 downs, the opposing team will take possession and start from their offensive series from the 5 yard line.
4. **In the 7-8 division, there is a “NO RUN” zone within 5 yards of mid-field and the goal line. There is not a “NO RUN” zone in the 5-6 division. This division may run the ball from any area on the field.**

*****No run zones are established to prevent “power running” the ball and for player safety*
5. The person with the ball may spin, but jumping or diving is not allowed and the ball will be spotted at the point where the ball carrier leaves their feet.
6. Flag Guarding is prohibited.
7. If a ball is fumbled, it is dead.
8. There is NO Blocking, “Screening” or intentional contact permitted.

9. There is NO kicking or punting is permitted.
10. Only one player is allowed in motion at a time and they must move parallel or away from the line of scrimmage.
11. Center must center the ball in a regular style between his/her legs.
12. The quarterback is NOT allowed to run the ball unless he or she hands the ball off to another player.
13. All players are eligible to catch a pass, including the Quarterback once the ball is handed off.
14. All passing must be beyond the line of scrimmage - NO screen passes allowed.
15. Shovel passes are allowed, as long as they are caught in front of the line of scrimmage.
16. **ABSOLUTELY NO PITCHES OR LATERALS OF ANY TYPE ARE ALLOWED**
17. Multiple hand-offs are permitted behind the line of scrimmage. However, once a player crosses the line of scrimmage, the ball cannot change possession to another player on the same team.
18. Once the ball is handed off, the ball carrier is eligible to run or pass the ball.
19. The quarterback has a 7 second "pass clock" to pass the ball or hand it off. Once the ball is handed off, the 7 second rule does not apply.

Scoring

Touchdown - 6 points

Extra point - From the 5 yard line 1 point (no run zone applies in 7-8 division)

Extra point - From the 12 yard line 2 points

Safety - 2 Points and the ball changes possession.

Defense

1. All players in the 5-6 division, that rush the quarterback, must be at least 5 yards from the line of scrimmage and the referees will mark the "Rush Line" with a marker before the ball is set.
2. All players in the 7-8 division, that rush the quarterback, must be at least 7 yards from the line of scrimmage and the referees will mark the "Rush Line" with a marker before the ball is set.
3. **In the 5-6 division, only two players may rush the quarterback.** In all other divisions any number of players may rush the quarterback.
4. **In the 5-6 Division, a ball may not be stripped from the Quarterback by a rusher. If the ball is stripped, the play will be blown dead and the down will be repeated.**
5. Players may not move past the "Rush Line" until the ball is snapped.
6. After the quarterback hands the ball off, all players are eligible to rush the runner.

7. Any player not rushing may defend the line of scrimmage but may not cross the line until the ball is handed off.
8. "Jamming" is not allowed and will result in a unsportsmanlike penalty.
9. If a ball is intercepted, it can be returned and will be spotted once where the flags are pulled.

Game Timing

1. Game Length in the 5-6 and 7-8 division is 40 minutes total. **This consists of two 17 minute halves and a 6 minute half-time.**
2. Games are played with a "Running Clock" except for the last 2 minutes of each half. Within those times, the "High School Clock" will apply.
3. Referees can stop the clock at their discretion.
4. Time out periods will be allotted as follows:
 - a. (1) 60 second time out per half
 - b. (2) 30 second time out per half
 - c. The game clock will stop during these periods.
 - d. Unused time outs do not carry over from the first half of play

Overtime

If a game requires an overtime period, the play will proceed as follows.

1. Coin toss determines first overtime possession.
2. Play will start at the defending team's 20 yard line.
3. A team has 3 plays to score. After a team scores, they will have a try at extra points.
 - a. If both teams score or neither team scores, the game goes into the next overtime period
 - b. If one team does not score during the period, the game is over.
 - c. If the game is still tied after 3 overtime periods, it will be called a tie, unless it is a tournament game, then the game will be played until there is a winner.

Penalties

All Penalties will be called by the referee.

Defense:

Offsides 5 yards

Interference 10 yards and automatic first down

Illegal contact (holding, blocking, etc.) 10 yards and automatic first down

Illegal flag pull (before receiver has ball) 10 yards and automatic first down

Illegal rushing (starting rush from inside 7-yard marker) 10 yards.

Offense:

Illegal motion (more than one person moving, false start, etc.) 5 yards and loss of down

Illegal forward pass (pass received behind line of scrimmage) 5 yards and loss of down

Offensive pass interference (illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender) 10 yards and loss of down

Flag guarding 10 yards (from line of scrimmage) and loss of down

Delay of game Clock stops, 10 yards and loss of down

Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage.

Only the team captain 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.

One Sided Game Rule

1. If a team is losing by 25 points or more in the second half, the losing offense will start at mid field instead of the 5 yard line and the clock cannot be stopped by the winning team.
2. If a team is losing by 35 points or more in the first half, the losing offense will start at mid field instead of the 5 yard line and the clock cannot be stopped by the winning team.
3. If a team is losing by 35 points or more at any point in the game, the opposing team will not be allowed to rush the quarterback at all. (7 second rule still applies)
4. If a team is losing by 25 points or more with 2 minutes or less in the game, the game will be called.