

Pittsburgh NFL Flag Football League Rules 2020

GAMEPLAY

1. Flag Football is played 5 on 5.
2. A coin toss determines first possession
3. **Coaches must call plays from the sideline, unless during a timeout.**
4. Possession starts at the five-yard line.
5. There are "no rushing zones" five yards from the first down and five yards from the end zone. If you forget to pass within these zones, you will have a loss of five yards, the down repeated, and still must pass the ball.
6. You will have three downs to get a first down and a touchdown. On fourth down **ONLY BEFORE THE FIRST DOWN**, you have the option of going for the first down. If you choose not to go for fourth down, the other team takes over at its five-yard line. If a team decided to go for it on fourth down and don't make the line to gain, then the opposition takes over possession at that spot at the end of the play.
7. Interceptions can be returned in both age groups.
8. There are no fumbles. The ball is dead when it hits the ground or comes out of the runner's hands.

TIMING

1. Games are 40 minutes, 2 halves, 20 minutes per half.
2. The clock continuously runs in the first half, and it stops with two minutes left in the second half. Under two minutes, the clock will stop on incomplete passes, running out of bounds, change of possessions, and after all, scoring plays. If there is an 18 point lead or more at the two-minute mark, the clock keeps on running. **If a team goes up by 35 points at any time, the mercy rule gets put into effect, and the game ends.**

3. Once the ball is spotted, your team will have 30 seconds to snap the ball. If the ball is not snapped in time, a delay of game penalty will be enforced.
4. Each team gets **three (3)** timeouts per half.
5. If the game is tied, we go into overtime. Each team will get the ball at the five-yard line. If the first team scores, the other team has a chance to match it. If they do, then we go into a second overtime. If not, the game is over. If the first team doesn't score and the second team does, the game is also over. For the 10-13 year olds, we will treat it like a regular game with each team getting at least one possession. If team A scores on their first possession, then the other team must match it on their possession. If that happens, we play a second overtime. If team A does not score and Team B does score, then Team B wins. **If no team scores, then we will go into double overtime with the ball at the five-yard line. The game is over when one team scores and that score is not matched.**

ATTIRE

A mouthpiece is mandatory to play, and cleats with non-metal tips are optional.

SCORING

Touchdown: 6 points

Extra point: 1 point (played from 5-yard line and must pass)

2 points (played from the 12-yard line and can either run or pass)

Safety: 2 points

RUNNING

1. The quarterback cannot run with the ball.
2. Only direct hand offs behind the line of scrimmage are allowed
3. Laterals or pitches can only be done in the backfield.
4. Spinning is allowed, but players can't leave their feet to avoid the defense.

5. The ball is placed where the ball is when the flag is pulled.
6. There is no blocking allowed.

RECEIVING

1. All players are eligible to receive passes.
2. A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

PASSING

1. All passes must be forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage.
2. Shovel passes are allowed but are to be caught beyond the line of scrimmage.
3. In both age divisions, the QB has seven seconds to pass the ball. Once the ball is handed off, the seven-second rule is no longer in effect.
4. A player who takes a handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.

DEAD BALLS

1. The ball must be snapped between the legs to start the play.
2. Play is ruled dead when the following happens:
 - a. Ball carrier's flag is pulled or falls off in the midst of play
 - b. Ball carrier steps out of bounds
 - c. Touchdown or safety is scored
 - d. Ball carrier's knee hits the ground
 - e. Ball carrier loses control of the ball and it hits the ground
 - f. Ball carrier catches the ball or receives handoff with one or no flags on. Where they get the ball will become the new line of scrimmage.

RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK

1. Players who rush must be seven yards back from the line of scrimmage.
2. Any number of players can rush the quarterback.

3. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend up near the line of scrimmage.
4. A marker or the referee will designate the seven yard mark.
5. Once the ball is handed off, any defender can go after the ball carrier.
6. The defense cannot cross the line of scrimmage until the quarterback hands the ball off.

PENALTIES- All penalties and punishments are up to the referee's discretion based on the seriousness of the play.

1. Defensive penalties
 - a. Offsides (or crossing the line of scrimmage before handoff)- 5 yards
 - b. Interference- 10 yards and an automatic first down
 - c. Illegal contact (holding, tackling)- 10 yards and an automatic first down
 - d. Illegal rushing (starting rush from inside 7-yards)- 5 yards

2. Offensive penalties
 - a. False Start- 5 yards
 - b. Delay of Game- 5 yards
 - c. Offsides- 5 yards
 - d. Illegal forward pass- 5 yards and a loss of down
 - e. Offensive pass interference- 10 yards and loss of down
 - f. Flag Guarding- 5 yards from spot of the foul and loss of down
 - g. Blocking- 5 yards from the spot of the foul and loss of down
 - h. Illegal Snap- 5 yards
 - i. Impeding the rusher- 5 yards

3. Unsportsmanlike conduct - 1st offense- out for a possession, 2nd offense- ejected from the game. **Anytime a player gets ejected, he or she will be out for their next game as well. In the result a player gets ejected from two games they are suspended for the remainder of the season.**