



**Flag Football Rules
2018 Season**

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LEAGUE RULES

It is understood that the rules herein are in addition to the official playing rules governed by the National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association 2017/2018 Rulebook.

LEAGUE ORGANIZATION

A. There will be the following divisions within the City of Sunrise Flag Football Program.

1. Instructional – 4 & 5 year olds
2. Pee Wee – 6 & 7 year olds
3. Junior – 8, 9 & 10 year olds
4. Intermediate – 11, 12, & 13 year olds

SUBSTITUTIONS

A. All participants must play at least one entire quarter in each half. There are no substitutions during the quarter, except for injuries. If a player is injured, the opposing coach will select which player will enter the game.

1. A player who arrives after the start of the first quarter but before beginning of second quarter must play the second quarter and at least one quarter in the second half.
2. A player who arrives after the start of the second quarter but before beginning of third quarter must play at least one quarter in the second half.
3. A player who arrives after the beginning of the third quarter but before beginning of the fourth quarter must play in the fourth quarter.

B. Failure to comply with this rule may result in forfeiture of the game and and/or suspension of the coach for one game.

C. **EXCEPTIONS:**

1. A referee and opposing coach are notified prior to the game that the player is sick, injured or being disciplined by the league or game official.

TEAMS

Teams will field the following number of players:

Instructional Division:

Maximum: 7 Players

All Other Divisions:

Maximum: 7 Players

Minimum to START a game: 6 Players

Minimum to COMPLETE a game: 5 Players

EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS

- A. Players must wear the jerseys supplied by the Leisure Services Department. No jewelry or hair clips may be worn during a game. No sunglasses are permitted and prescription eyeglasses must be secured. Players cannot wear bandanas. Earrings may not be concealed with tape.
- B. Molded cleats or tennis shoes will be acceptable. Shoes with metal spikes, screw-in or squared off molded cleats are prohibited. In cases of cold weather, long sleeved shirts and long pants may be worn underneath the official uniform.
- C. All teams shall have jerseys with numbers.
- D. Jerseys will be tucked inside player's shorts at ALL times. Every player (offense and defense) will constantly check to keep jersey tucked inside shorts so as not to interfere with the flags.
- E. Any clothing (shirt, towels, shorts, etc.) that might tend to conceal flag is prohibited. Examples - players shorts same or similar color as flags, thick stripes on shorts that are the same or similar color as flags; etc.
- F. Shorts with pockets or belt loops are NOT permitted.
- G. Only elbow and knee pads are allowed. Taping of pads or body is not permitted.
- H. It is mandatory that all players have a mouthpiece for games and practices.

(EXCEPT THE INSTRUCTIONAL DIVISION.)
- I. No hard casts may be worn in games or practices. All soft casts must be approved by the officials prior to the game.

PRACTICES

- A. Practice facilities shall be shared equally by teams engaging in practice simultaneously.
- B. Practice schedules for teams will be set by the Leisure Services Department and shall be strictly adhered to.
- C. There shall be no more than three mandatory practices per week before the season and no more than one mandatory practice per week during the season.

GAMES

A. GENERAL

All rules are governed by the National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association with modifications herein.

1. Games will be played at designated times. Failure to start a game at referees' command may result in a forfeit by one or both teams. The first game(s) of the night will have a 10 minute grace period. All ensuing games will not have any grace period.
2. The head coach is the official team representative.
3. The head coach and his/her staff are responsible for the conduct of his/her spectators. Officials may penalize (or even forfeit) a team for undesirable behavior of its spectators as determined by the game officials.
4. Coaches on the field MAY NOT converse with their players, once the offensive line is set until the end of the play. Penalty: 5 yds from line of scrimmage.
5. Field is 80 yds. long by 40 yds. wide with 10 yd. end zones. Three 20-yd. markers divide the field into 4 sections.

B. LENGTH OF GAMES

1. Time: There are four ten minute quarters in each game. Clock will run continuously except for time outs and during the following times:

During the last 2 minutes of the second and fourth quarters the clock will be stopped as in regulation tackle football (incompletions, out-of-bounds). The clock will be restarted after first downs, penalties, injuries, change of possession, and dead balls, once the ball has been set.

2. Each team has 2 time-outs per half with no carryover. Time-outs are 1 minute long. Official time-outs are not called for equipment repair or for bringing in the ball. (1 Timeout is allotted per team for overtime in post season tournament games).

3. A team has 30 seconds to put the ball in play once the referee has marked the ball and blown the whistle. No play will start until ball is marked and whistle is blown.

C. RULES OF PLAY

1. A first down is gained when a team reaches a 20 yd. Marker in 4 downs or less.

D. SCORING

Safety = 2 points

Touchdown = 6 points

Extra Points = 1 point for attempt from the three (3) yard line.

2 points for attempt from the ten (10) yard line.

3 points for attempt from the 20 yard line.

(An interception by the opponent on a extra point try will result in a dead ball)

OVERTIME: (No Overtime for Regular Season Games. Games finish in a tie.)

1. Each team will begin at the twenty yard line and have up to four plays to score more points or gain more yards than the opposing team to win the game.
2. If a team turns the ball over (i.e. interception) all yards gained prior to turnover are nullified.
3. Once a team gains more yards than the other team, that team wins, and the game is over. For example, team one runs four plays and gains 10 yards. Team two runs one play and gains 11 yards, the game is over, and team two wins. It is not necessary to run all four plays to win the game.
4. All penalty yardage gained by team offensive is included when determining what team gained more yardage.

D. KICK-OFF

1. At the start of the game, visitors call coin toss. The winner of a coin toss will have a choice of goals, to receive or to kick the ball, or defer. At the start of the second half, the loser of the initial coin toss will have the choice to receive or to kick the ball. Exception, if a team defers, they will have the choice in the second half. Note: Teams must switch sides before the 2nd half.
2. The kicking team will kick off from the 40 yd. line for all divisions. All kicks must be done from either a tee or the ground only. The kicking tee must be placed at least 10 yards from each sideline.

3. Kick offs must travel a minimum of 10 yards, before the Kicking Team can "Down the Ball". A kickoff is illegal unless it travels 10 yards (or more) OR is touched by the receiving team. Once touched by the Receiving Team, the kick shall be treated as legal.

Penalty for Kicking Team "Downing the Ball" short of the 10 yards, will result in the Receiving Team having the option to *accept the result of the play or a 5 yard penalty to be applied to the re-kick (Kick to be re-taken from kicking team 35 Yard Line)*.

If the Kicking Team Illegally kicks the ball out of bounds, short of 10 yards, they will be penalized 5 yards. The Receiving Team will take possession at receiving team 35 yard line.

4. There are no onside kicks. The receiving team is always in possession of a kick-off. (However, if the receiving team tries to lateral the ball and the kicking team catches the ball before it hits the ground, the kicking team will have possession of the ball).
5. If a kick-off goes out-of-bounds, the receiving team will get the ball at their 30 yard line.
6. Kick-off receiving team must have at least 3 players on their own 20-yd. line for all divisions.
7. A kick-off receiver may advance a kick-off that is caught on the fly or picked up on bounces.
8. A kick-off receiver may not advance a kick-off if the receiver muffs the ball and the ball hits the ground. The ball is dead where it first hits ground. If the ball is touched by the receivers teammate(s) and the ball hits the ground the ball is dead where it hits the ground. If a bouncing ball is downed by the kicking team, kicking team cannot down ball until the ball hits the ground.

As soon as the kick-off receiver fields the ball, all screening rules go into effect (see section on screen blocking)

8. Kick-off or Punt that goes pass the end zone line will be ruled a touchback.
9. Touchbacks go to receiving teams 14 yd. line.

F. OFFENSE

All offensive players must be in the huddle between plays. This eliminates all sleeper plays. Officials must be notified of all "No huddle" situations. Team official must advise referee, "I am going to run 2 plays." Referee will notify defensive coach. Once first play is completed and referees spots ball and blows whistle, offense may run second play without huddle.

Offense will have a minimum of 1 player on line of scrimmage. This 1 player will be the center.

All offensive players are eligible receivers. Receivers (or defenders) must have one foot in bounds to catch pass. The player while on knee(s), catches ball is credited with legal catch but play is dead at spot of catch. Sidelines and end lines are out of bounds.

Only one forward pass is permitted per down, regardless of whether or not they are still behind the line of scrimmage.

A pass or lateral to a teammate who is even with or behind the ball carrier is permitted regardless if the ball is ahead of or behind the line of scrimmage.

NOTE – Any player may hand the ball forward or backward at anytime.

A ball carrier may not:

Stiff arm.

Shield flags in any way.

Slap a defender reaching for ball carrier's flag(s).

Jump into an opponent

Charge (defined as not trying to avoid a defender) into a defender who has established position).

NOTE: Contact may occur sometimes between the ball carrier and defender. It is the referee's judgment if contact was caused by ball carrier (charging), by the defender (may either be charging, pushing, or tackling) or by incidental contact (no penalty).

The center may receive a hand-off if the hand-off is completed at least 1 yd. behind the line of scrimmage.

All snaps from center must be caught in the air. A snap that bounces before it gets to intended player is down at the spot where it first hit the ground. The down is not replayed. NOTE – Direct Snaps may only be taken in the Pee Wee Division. Quarterbacks in all other divisions must be at least 2 yards back from the center.

A fumble or free ball will be dead at the spot where it first hits the ground and will belong to the team that last had possession. The play counts and down will advance as usual. When a returnee muffs a punt or kick-off, the ball immediately will be dead at the spot where the ball first hit the ground after being touched by the returnee. If the ball first hits in the end zone after the returnee touches the ball, a touchback will be awarded. In both cases, the ball belongs to the returnee's team.

Forward fumbles are not allowed. Sometimes a ball carrier will intentionally "fumble" the ball forward in an attempt to gain extra yardage for a first down. In this situation, the ball will be

returned to the spot where the ball carrier “lost possession” of the ball. However, if a defender should catch the ball before the ball hits the ground, the ball would belong to the defense. If the ball is fumbled forward into the end zone, the play will result in a touchback for the opposing team.

G. **PUNTING**

1. A punt must be announced and completed during the 30 seconds allotted to snap the ball. It is offensive coach’s responsibility to advise the referee.
2. The punter picks up ball at line of scrimmage, then proceeds to punt ball. No part of the punter's body may cross the scrimmage line when making the punt. The punting team must stay behind the line of scrimmage until the punt is away.
3. There is no minimum number of players that need to be on the defensive scrimmage line when receiving a punt. The defense may not block a punt.

NOTE: During last 2 minutes of a half, the clock will be stopped for all punting plays.

4. Quick-kick - The offense may quick-kick on 1st, 2nd, or 3rd down by lining up in regular offensive formation and announcing to the official that they are punting. All players will not move until the punt is away.

H. **DEFENSE**

1. The defensive “line of scrimmage” or restraining line is 5 yds. in front of the ball. Exception: When the ball is within 5 yards of a first down or the goal line, the defensive restraining line will be half of the distance.
2. A legal “tackle” is made by pulling a flag from the ball carriers flag belt. The defender will hold up the flag for the referee to see. Tying of flags is prohibited.
3. Defensive player(s) may not:

Grab or hold any part of a ball carrier’s body or clothing.

Tackling the ball carrier

4. If a ball carrier is missing a flag, the defense merely has to one hand touch the ball carrier anywhere between the shoulders and waist to make a legal “tackle.”
5. Defensive players must go around a screen blocker. The defender may touch the screen blocker only to keep balance: pushing, pulling, or sliding across a screen blocker is not permitted.

6. Roughing the passer is defined as when momentum carries the rusher(s) into the quarterback's arm or body.
7. A defensive player who intercepts in the end zone may either down the ball for a touchback or advance the ball at own risk.
8. Safety - the team charged with a safety will either kick (from the tee or ground) or punt the ball from their 20 yd. line.

PENALTIES

Loss of 5 yards

A. Dead Ball Fouls

Delay of Game, Encroachment, False Start, Illegal Snap

B. Live Ball Fouls

Illegal Equipment, Substitution Infraction, Illegal Motion, Illegal Shift, Intentional Grounding*, Illegal Forward Pass*

*=Loss of Down

Loss of 10 Yards

Illegal Player equipment, Quick Kick, Two or more encroachment penalties, Offensive Pass Interference**, Defensive Pass Interference, Illegally secured flag belt***, Unsportsmanlike Conduct, Stripping, Illegal Contact, Hurdling, Roughing the Passer**, Illegal Screen Blocking, Flag Guarding, Illegal Participation, Unfair Acts

*=Loss of Down

**=Automatic first down

***=Loss of Down on Offense, Automatic First down on Defense

Loss of 10 yards

Flagrant Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Flagrant Personal Fouls

Illegally Securing Flag Belt

****All Penalties may be declined, except player disqualification and forfeit****

All rules contained herein are subject to interpretation and/or change, upon the recommendation of the Flag Football Committee and with the approval of the Department of Leisure Services.

2018 Youth Flag Football Committee