

Norton Youth Flag Football Rules

NYF Official 5 vs. 5 Flag Football Rules

Flag Football is a popular five-on-five game filled with fun and action. In this game, the offensive team plays for a first down at midfield and a touchdown in the end zone.

General Rules:

- Maintain a safe and FUN atmosphere!
- A coin toss determines first possession.
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has four plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has four plays to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on its 5-yard line.
- Running and passing plays are allowed; however, the offensive team cannot run four consecutive running plays without a pass.
- If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its 5-yard line.
- All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line. Interceptions may be run back.
- The defensive team covers receivers, rushes the passer and grabs flags to make "tackles".
- Teams change sides after the first 20 minutes. Possession changes to loser of coin toss.
- Field dimensions are: 50 yards long X 30 yards wide with 7-10 yard end zones.

Players/Game Schedules:

- Teams must field a minimum of five players at all times. Teams consist of 8 to 10 players – generally five players on the field.

Timing/Overtime

- Games are played in two 20 minute halves with a running clock. Clock will stop in last one minute of each half.
- Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced.
- Each team has one 30-second time-out per half.
- Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
- There is no over time in the regular season.

Scoring

- Touchdown: 6 points
- Extra point: 2 points from 10 yard line
- Safety: 2 points
- Forfeits: Any forfeit will be scored as 7-0 for the non-forfeiting team

Please remember that scoring is part of the game but not the main focus; always place the kids before the win!

Running

- The quarterback cannot run with the ball past the line of scrimmage.
- Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Offense may use multiple handoffs
- The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
- Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player (no diving).
- The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.
- Laterals and pitches are only allowed behind the line of scrimmage.

Receiving

- All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
- As in the NFL, only one player is allowed in motion at a time.
- A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

Passing

- **All passes must be forward. Passes do not have to cross the line of scrimmage, but they must clearly be forward of the throwers hand. No backward or swing passes that are not clearly forward.**
- Shovel passes are allowed.
- Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the end of the run back. Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start on the 5-yard line.

Dead Balls

Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.

Play is ruled “dead” when:

- Ball carrier’s flag is pulled
- Ball carrier steps out of bounds
- Touchdown or safety is scored
- Ball carrier’s knee hits the ground
- The ball is fumbled and hits the ground
- Ball carrier’s flag falls out

The ball must be snapped between the legs, or off to one side, to start play.

**Note: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground.

**Note: There are no kickoffs, and no blocking is allowed.

Rushing the Quarterback

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 may defend on the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off or thrown, the seven-yard rule no longer is in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage. A special marker, or the referee, will designate seven yards from the line of scrimmage. Remember, no blocking or tackling is allowed.

Sportsmanship/Roughing

If the field monitor or referee witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. **FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.** Trash talking is illegal. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. (Trash talk is talk that may be offensive to officials, opposing players, teams or spectators.) If trash talking occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the player or players will be ejected from the game.

Defensive Penalties

- **Offside** -- 5 yards and repeat the down
- **Pass Interference** -- 15 yards and automatic first down
- **Illegal contact** (holding, blocking, etc.) -- 5 yards and repeat the down
- **Illegal flag pull** (before receiver has ball) -- 5 yards and repeat the down
- **Illegal rushing** (starting rush from inside 7-yard marker) -- 5 yards and repeat the down
- **Substitution fouls** (player enters field after ball is blown ready for play, i.e. to deceive opponents, or 6 players on the field) -- 5 yards and repeat the down
- **Interference with opponent or ball at the snap** -- 5 yards and repeat the down
- **Defensive holding** -- 5 yards from the point of the foul

Offensive Penalties

- **Excessive Delay of game** -- 5 yards and loss of down
- **Substitution fouls** -- 5 yards and loss of down
- **Illegal motion** (more than one person moving, etc.) -- 5 yards and loss of down
- **False Start** -- 5 yards and loss of down
- **Offensive holding** -- 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) -- 5 yards and loss of down
- **Flag guarding** (carrying ball close to flag in an effort to guard or stiff-arms) -- 5 yards from the point of foul and loss of down

Attire

- Cleats are allowed, except for metal spikes.
- **All players must** wear a protective mouthpiece; there are no exceptions.
- No pockets or hoops on shorts.
- No hats with brims or bills.
- The official NYFF jersey/shirts must be worn during play.

Playoffs

Seeding Playoffs - Teams will be placed in a single elimination format with the highest seeded team playing the lowest seeded team and so on.

Tiebreakers for Post Season - Tiebreakers will be in the following order:

1. Head to Head Competition
2. Point Differential - points scored minus points allowed for the season (a maximum of 15 points per game)
3. Total Points Allowed
4. Coin Flip

Overtime (Playoffs Only) - If the score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, teams move directly into overtime (only in the playoffs).

- Coin flip will determine possession
- Each team will get one possession starting at mid-field
- Continue until winner is **determined**.

Playing Field

The typical playing field is 50 yards in length and 30 yards wide with 10 yard end zones at each end. These dimensions can be modified to suite the area or other concerns.