



## FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

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Intramural Flag Football shall be governed by the National Intramural Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA) Flag and Touch Football rules, with some exceptions.

***All players must show their UGA ID Card before every game in order to participate. NO EXCEPTIONS!***

### A. THE FIELD

- a. Forty (40) yards wide and eighty (80) yards long, one hundred yards including the end zones.
- b. Two ball spotters will be used.
  - i. The orange ball spotter will mark the forward most point of the football.
  - ii. The yellow ball spotter will mark the defensive scrimmage line.
  - iii. The ball spotters will always be one yard apart.

### B. THE GAME AND PLAYERS

- a. Flag football is a non-contact sport with contact.
- b. Men's and Women's games shall be played between two teams of seven players each. Four players are required to avoid a default.
  - i. Co-Rec Games will be played between two teams of eight players each. Five players are required to avoid a default (See Co-Rec)
- c. **A designated captain will be the only player to confer with the referees.** The team will identify this player before the game.
- d. Winner of the coin toss can choose when to exercise their options (first or second half).
  - i. Overtime coin toss - winner has choice of ball, defense, or goal to defend.
  - ii. In additional overtime periods during the tournament, choice is made alternately by teams. Example: Red won first overtime option and a second overtime period is necessary, blue has choice, etc.

### C. GAME TIME

Playing time shall be 40 minutes, divided into four quarters of ten (10) minutes each. The intermission between halves shall be no more than five (5) minutes. When overtime is used there will be a three (3) minute intermission. Each team will have three (3) timeouts of one (1) minute in length **per game**.

- a. The clock will start when the ball is legally snapped. It will run continuously in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter. During the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, the clock will run continuously for the first nine (9) minutes unless it is stopped for a:
  - i. Team time-out -- starts on the snap.
  - ii. Referee's time-out -- starts based upon referee's discretion.
- b. Approximately one (1) minute before the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarter the referee shall stop the clock and inform both captains of the playing time remaining in that quarter. The clock will start again on the snap. The back judge will announce the remaining time to both teams after each play in the last one (1) minute.
- c. During the final (1) minute of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, the clock will stop for a(n):
  - i. Incomplete pass -- starts on the snap.
  - ii. Out-of-bounds -- starts on the snap.
  - iii. Score (touchdown or safety) -- starts on the snap at the 14-yard line.
  - iv. Team time-out -- starts on the snap.
  - v. First down -- dependent on the previous play inbounds/out of bounds.
    - i. Penalty and administration - dependent on the previous play. (Exception: delay of game -- starts on the snap).

- vi. Referee's time-out -- starts at his/her discretion or previous play.
- vii. Touchback -- starts on the snap.
- viii. Change of possession – starts on the snap.
- ix. Team attempting to conserve time illegally -- starts on the snap.

#### D. TIE GAMES

- a. During the regular season, a tie after one (1) over-time period will be recorded as a tie. In tournament play, over-time periods will continue until a winner is decided.

#### E. OVERTIME

- a. Each team is given a **series of downs** from the ten (10) yard line.
- b. Visiting team will call the toss. Toss is made for:
- c. Defense or offense first or:
- d. End of field overtime will be played.
- e. Choice on other overtime periods is made on an alternate basis. If red won choice on toss, blue has second overtime choice, etc.
- f. If a team scores on first down, then their series of downs is over.
- g. **If the defense intercepts or gains possession of the ball, then the play is dead and the series is over.** The overtime period is over if the defense has already played its series in overtime; otherwise the defense gets their series of downs.
- h. Extra points will be played if the contest has not been decided.
  - i. One overtime, if necessary, will be used in regular season play. After one overtime a tie game is recorded. During the post season tournament overtime play will continue until a winner is decided.
  - ii. Example: Red is on offense first and throws an interception and does not score. Blue then scores a touchdown so no extra points are needed to decide the game and blue is declared the winner.

#### F. SERIES OF DOWNS

- a. The team on offense is responsible to get the ball at the end of every down. The center will bring the ball from the huddle to the scrimmage line.
- b. Zone-line-to-gain: getting the ball to or into the next zone results a first down.
  - i. Exception – first down because of penalty that results in automatic first down. It could be the first and near twenty or first and less than one depending on where the next zone-line-to-game is.
  - ii. Loss on the play or due to a penalty a team may need more than twenty yards for a first down.

#### G. THE FIELD, UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

- a. Jerseys must be long enough so they remain tucked in the pants during the entire down or short enough so there is a minimum of 4" from the bottom of the jersey to the player's waistline.
- b. **Each player must wear shorts/pants, which do not have belt loops, pockets, belts or exposed drawstrings.** The pants must be a different color than the flags.
- c. Players of opposing teams must wear contrasting colored shirts without pockets (**home = light and away = dark as noted on schedules**).
- d. **No jewelry**, hats, bandanas, casts, or other equipment that may be dangerous to another participant will be permitted!
  - i. Exception: knit or stocking caps are acceptable (even with soft ball on top)
- e. Penalty for improper dress: the player cannot play.

#### H. THE SNAP

- a. Must be one continuous motion
- b. To a back at least two yards behind the scrimmage line on scrimmage plays and punts. There cannot be a hand-to-hand center-back exchange on the snap. This would be an illegal snap.
- c. Illegal snap is a dead ball foul.

#### I. DEFLAGGING/TAGGING

- a. Runners must not guard the flags with ball, hands or shoulders.

- b. Flags must not be attached to runner in a way that one pull cannot deflag the runner. (Flag tampering results in a 10-yard penalty and disqualification.)
  - i. If a runner loses his/her flag belt, a one-hand tag by the opposing team between knee and shoulder will end the run. Touching the head or below the knee will not stop the play.
- c. Runner scoring a touchdown must raise hands so nearest official can deflag the scorer.
  - i. *If two pulls do not remove the flag, the touchdown does not count. Penalty: Ten yards from the previous spot and a loss of down.*
- d. Intentional deflagging of an offensive player without the ball by a defensive player results in a 10 yard penalty and an automatic first down if the ball is in the air for a pass. If quarterback still has the ball it is illegal contact and a 10-yard penalty.
  - i. *Basic spot for penalty is based on all-but-one principle.*
- e. Deflagger may leave feet to deflag runner.

J. RUNNER CANNOT

- a. Stiff arm
- b. Run over potential deflagger
- c. Flag guard in any way

K. DEFENSIVE PLAYER CANNOT

- a. Intentionally deflag a player without the ball (personal foul).
- b. Hold, push or knock the runner down while attempting to deflag.

L. SCREEN BLOCKING

- a. Screen blocking is legally obstructing an opponent without contacting him/her with any part of the screen blocker's body.
- b. Blocker cannot use arms or elbows. Hands must be at side or behind the back.
- c. Blocker must get in the moving rusher's direction of movement quick enough for a change of direction to be made prior to possible contact.
- d. Screen block must be made short of contact in defensive player's visual field and one step away in defensive player's blind area (directly behind player being blocked).

M. FORWARD PASS

- a. Only one forward pass can be made per down.
- b. Ball can be passed or handed backward to any player at any time.
- c. Forward **handing** can be made at any point during the game and as many times as you want.
- d. All players are eligible pass receivers.
- e. Illegal forward pass:
  - i. Two forward passes during a down.
  - ii. Intentionally throwing ball away; however, ball can be spiked into ground to stop clock.
  - iii. Intentionally throwing ball away to save a loss. This includes backward pass out-of-bounds. Player can spike in ground to stop clock.
  - iv. If passer is beyond offensive scrimmage line.
  - v. Pass after possession change.
  - vi. If passer catches own untouched pass.
- f. If a player throws a backward pass to conserve time or fumbles to keep from being deflagged/tagged, it is an illegal pass. (Penalty is five yards and is a loss of down; and the clock will be started on ready for play whistle.)

N. BALL TOUCHES GROUND

- a. The Ball is dead when it touches the ground at any time, except for on a punt prior to it being touched by any player.

O. PUNTS

- a. Must be announced by referee after asking team captain on fourth down how they want to play the down: kick or play.
- b. There are no quick kicks - illegal kick.

- c. Punting formation: Kicking Team must have at least one player on the scrimmage line.
- d. Kicker must kick immediately upon receiving the snap. If not, it is illegal procedure (5 yards).
- e. Neither kickers nor receivers can cross their scrimmage line until ball is kicked.
- f. Punts can be fielded off of the ground and then returned.
- g. Scrimmage kicks that are not announced are illegal kicks (10-yard penalty).
  - i. If a time-out is taken by either team, "K" team can change decision concerning a kick or an announced scrimmage play. Also, decision can be changed if down is repeated because of penalty.
  - ii. A "K" player may not kick the ball to himself or any other "K" player. Illegal Kicking - 10 yards.

P. BASIC PENALTY SPOTS

- a. Previous spot is used to administer:
  - i. Loose ball fouls.
  - ii. Fouls (including encroachment) that are committed at about snap time.
- b. Spot of foul - distance is marked from foul spot.
- c. Illegal pass.
- d. Fouls by offense behind end of run.
- e. All-but-one penalty principle.
  - i. Used after play gets under way and does not involve a loose ball.

Q. PENALTIES THAT RESULT IN A LOSS OF DOWN

- a. Illegal forward pass in all cases except after change of possession – illegal pass
- b. Illegally secured flag belt
- c. Illegal backward pass
- d. Offensive pass interference

R. FOULS THAT CREATE AUTOMATIC FIRST DOWN

- a. Roughing the passer
- b. An illegally secured flag belt

S. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

Ejection from the game because of flagrant foul(s)/unsportsmanlike conduct (physical or verbal) will result in disqualification from at least the next scheduled game.

- a. Individuals who receive two unsportsmanlike penalties or one major unsportsmanlike penalty will be ejected from the game and suspended from the next game.
- b. When ejected from the game, the offending player(s) will be expected to leave the playing area within 60 seconds. This means "out of sight and sound."
- c. Offending team will enforce the sound and sight rule.
  - i. Failure of team to maintain control of their players and fans will result in the forfeit of the game.
- d. Two discipline reports filed on an individual and/or the team will result in the team being dropped from the program.
- e. Teams receiving 2 ejections in the season or the playoffs combined will be removed from the league.

T. LOCAL RULES

- a. Spiking and aggressively throwing the flag after removal will constitute an unsportsmanlike foul.
  - i. Spinning, spiking, or throwing the ball, and other gestures to taunt opponents or to draw attention to one self will be an unsportsmanlike foul.
- b. Players are not allowed to wear jewelry. In each game the first player will be penalized for unsportsmanlike conduct.
  - i. Other players on that team violating this rule during the game or overtime(s) will be ejected and the team penalized for unsportsmanlike conduct.
  - ii. Player or substitute using tobacco in any form in warm-ups or during the game will be considered unsportsmanlike conduct. This infraction will be penalized as the jewelry rule above

U. OTHER

- a. Rules decisions are final after the ball is next legally snapped
- b. Inadvertent whistle
  - i. Replay down if ball is loose on pass or kick
  - ii. Replay down or take play results option to team whose player is in possession at time of whistle
- c. Roughing the Passer
  - i. If a defensive player trying to block a pass contacts the passer's arm, it will constitute roughing the passer. This is the case if the ball is touched or missed by the defender. Defensive players should go for the flag belt ONLY.

V. CO-RECREATIONAL RULES

- a. The game shall be played between two teams of eight players each. **Five** players are required to avoid a forfeit (three men and two women or three women and two men).

4-males, 4-females	3-males, 4-females
4-males, 3-females	3-males, 3-females
2-males, 4-females	4-males, 2-females
- b. The offensive team must have a minimum of one player on the scrimmage line at the snap for a punt or a regular scrimmage play. Infraction: Illegal Procedure, five yards from previous spot.
- c. An offensive team male player may not advance the ball through the scrimmage line. There are no restrictions once the ball has been advanced past the scrimmage line, if there is a change of possession, during a run by a female, or after a legal forward pass. Infraction: Illegal Advancement, five yards from the previous spot.
- d. The offensive team may not complete two consecutive male to male passes. This includes extra point attempts. Infraction: Illegal Reception, five yards from the previous spot, loss of down.
- e. **Touchdown value: If a female is involved in a touchdown it will be worth nine (9) points. The female must either throw the pass or cross the goal line with the ball.**