

Tillamook County Family YMCA

Flag Football Rules 2024



I. Field Measurements:

- A. 40 yards long X 25 yards wide and divided in 4 equal 10 yards each between the end zones
- B. End Zones: 10 yards X 25 yards

II. Equipment:

- C. If no jersey, shirts must be tucked in at all times. Flag belts must be worn with the clip facing forward so the flags will be positioned on the sides and rear of the player. (3 total)
- D. No metal spikes or steel tip cleats allowed.
- E. If it is dry, an extension cord may be used to run the portable scoreboard for score and timing. If not, one of the coaches must use a timer on their phone or watch etc. (with integrity!) and the flip scorekeeper will be used.

III. General Game Rules:

- A. Coin toss at the beginning of each game. The winner chooses to "kick" or receive. The other team chooses the direction they want to defend. Switch both at half.
- B. 1 timeout per half for each team. Timeouts do not stop the clock (unless under 5 minutes), and are complete after 1 minute.
- C. 8 players on the field at one time (both offense and defense).
- D. Teams can play with fewer than 8 players if it is agreed upon by both coaches.
- E. EQUAL PLAYING TIME IS MANDATORY. Every player must play at least 50% of the game (approximately 24 plays per game). **No kid can play the entire game when subs are present.**
- F. No kickoffs. In any kickoff situation, the receiving team takes possession of the ball at its own 10 yard line.

G. No punts. In any punt situation the defense takes possession of the ball at midfield. Teams should always “go for it” on 4th down and if they don’t make it. The ball is then “turned over” and placed at midfield for the opposing team.

H. Points:

1. Touchdown = 6

2. Extra Point = 1 (Ball must be run or passed into the end zone from the 3rd yard line. There is no kicking of extra points).

3. Safety = 2

I. Play is blown dead when the flag belt is removed or when the ball carrier’s knee or rear hits the ground.

J. When the ball is fumbled or muffed, the whistle is blown for end of play and the ball is spotted where the fumble occurred. There is NO advancement or change of possession on a fumble. However, if the ball is intercepted, there is a change of possession and the player may advance. (Must be a clear catch, if it is not clear ie.. the player may have been out of bounds or the ball may have been secured by the ground, then it will be ruled an incomplete pass.)

K. If a flag belt falls off while the player is running, then the ball is dead at the spot of the flag.

L. It is understood that coaches will lead offenses that allow diversity in plays, and players who carry the ball, with the intent that all players have the opportunity to “touch” the ball.

M. No immediate defensive “rush”. Once a handoff, or the motions of a handoff occurs, the defense can rush. The QB can run after a 5 count if no receivers are open on a play. One defender should “spy” or be assigned to account for QB runs.

IV. Game Length:

A. TWO (2) - TWENTY-FIVE minutes half for a total of FIFTY (50) minutes

C. FIVE (5) minute rest period at half time.

D. 30 seconds maximum in between plays. This is the key to ensuring that the maximum of plays are executed in a game. (grace will be given as we start the season)

E. Delay of Game Penalty (after game flow is established) is a 5 yard penalty

V. Offense:

There will be at least 3 players on the line of scrimmage.

B. Charging - no ball carrier may run through, or charge a defensive player. (Make an avoidance move.)

C. The offensive backfield may not have more than three (3) players in at any time, and these players must be at least two yards behind the offensive line, except the quarterback when “under center.”

D. All players are eligible to receive a forward pass. This includes any of the offensive linemen. (They can block, go out on a route, or any combo of the two as long as they are following the other rules for blocking.)

E. A first down is attained whenever a 10 yard marker is crossed. Ball will be placed by the referee and may be one side of the field or the other depending on where the last play was down.

F. The center must snap the ball between legs. There may be 1 "bad snap" dead ball per possession that does not count as a play or loss of down.

G. Only one forward pass per play is allowed. That pass must be initiated from behind the line of scrimmage.

H. All laterals or backward passes are allowed.

I. A blocker cannot intentionally leave his feet, and all blocks must be made above the waist.

J. A blocker can use his hands to block for a RB or QB if the hands are inside the shoulders. (This does not mean holding is allowed).

K. One back in motion is allowed.

L. If a player makes a catch and falls (cannot secure the catch with the ground), he will be considered down with any contact. (A touch of the hand.) This is to avoid players diving on each other to get flags and causing injury in a pile-up. (Same rule for an interception.)

M. A touchdown is made when the ball crosses the plane, not the player.

VI. Defense:

A. The defensive line must line up no closer than one and a half (1.5) yard from the line of scrimmage, with the exception of the lineman over the center should be two (2) yards back, as to allow for a good snap. All defensive backs must line up no closer than three (3) yards from the line of scrimmage. A coach should stand so that he/she can watch the line! Defensive coaches are also responsible for keeping their teams on sides!

B. Defensive players may use their hands to force their way through the line, but may not hold or grasp the offensive linemen. (This is only to put them in position to make the play on a QB run. There is no defensive rush.)

C. Defensive players cannot use their hands "downfield" to push, block, grasp or hold any offensive player.

D. Defense must line up head to head with offensive linemen and tight ends (with appropriate spacing!). The defense cannot line-up more lineman than the offense. They must have at least three down lineman; but never more down lineman than the offense. For clarity, teams may line up up to 5 offensive lineman and(or) a tight end, in that case there would be 6 offensive players on the line, so defense can respond with 3 minimum and 6 maximum of their own players.

VII. Penalties (general football rules apply with the following exceptions):

- A. Fighting results in ejection of both (or all) fighting players.
- B. Drawing the defense offside by an irregular cadence is illegal procedure (5 yard penalty). A silent count is considered an irregular cadence.
- C. Defensive offsides occur when the imaginary one and a half (1.5) yard line is crossed (5 yard penalty).
- D. Tackling is a penalty (10 yard penalty from the point of infraction). Tackling consists of either a physical tackle or pushing the ball carrier to the ground or out of bounds. Offending player will be asked to sit for the remainder of the drive.
- E. There are NO "stiff arms" in the face (10 yard penalty from the infraction). Note that stiff arms to the chest, shoulders, etc. are acceptable.
- F. The ball carrier may not hold the flag belt in any way (at the clip, on the flags, etc.). Play is blown dead where the infraction occurred.
- G. The flag belts cannot be secured by any other means except by the velcro. Intentionally securing the flag belt in a way as to interfere with its removal will constitute a 10 yard penalty with loss of down. Second infraction by the same player will be an ejection from the game.
- H. The half or the game cannot end on a defensive penalty. If a penalty occurs when time has expired, assess the yardage and give the offense an additional play.
- I. Only two coaches from each team may be in the field of play. He/she should do everything possible to get out of the way while the play is executing. This is especially true of the defensive coach. (Please have a coach or team parent monitoring the bench.)
 - 1. First offense will result in a warning.
 - 2. Second offense will result in a 10 yard penalty.
- K. If a team has additional coaches, they should be used to help watch the lines and keep their benches in order. Please note: Only active players participating in the game should be on the field during play.
- M. Be very careful on any DOWN FIELD penalties. Tripping and clipping of any kind will be automatic 15 yard penalties – no warnings.