



YOUTH 5-on-5 FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

SECTION 1: COACH and SPECTATOR CONDUCT / RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Coaches, family members, parents, and spectators are required to observe the contest from designated areas.
2. Coaches must agree to strictly adhere to our guidelines for coach conduct and attitude.
 - a. If a coach displays any type of negativity toward his or her players, coaches or staff, the coach will be removed from the field immediately and unable to coach for the remainder of the game.
3. All family members, parents and spectators will observe play from the designated areas. Participants, coaches and family members must conduct themselves appropriately during the season.
4. Inappropriate, rude or confrontational behavior by any coach, team or parent(s) may lead to a team's disqualification from the league at the sole discretion of the City of Peoria.
5. Misconduct by any individual may lead to removal from the premises at the sole discretion of the City of Peoria.

SECTION 2: THE GAME

1. At the start of each game, captains from both teams meet at midfield for the coin toss to determine who starts with the ball. The visiting team calls the toss.
2. The winner of the coin toss has the choice of offense or defense. The loser of the coin toss has the choice of direction. Possession changes to start the second half to the team that started the game on defense.
3. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has three (3) plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has three (3) plays to score a touchdown.
4. If the offence fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team starts its drive on its own 5-yard line.
5. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its own 5-yard line.
6. All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line.
7. Team changes sides after the first half. Possession changes to the team that started the game on defense.

SECTION 3: TERMINOLOGY

Boundary Lines	The outer perimeter lines around the field. They include the sidelines and back of the end zone lines.
Line of Scrimmage	(LOS) an imaginary line running through the point of the football and across the width of the field.
Line-To-Gain	The line the offense must pass to get a first down or score.
Rush Line	An imaginary line running across the width of the field seven yards (into the defensive side) from the line of scrimmage.
Offense	The team with possession of the ball.
Defense	The team opposing the offense to prevent it from advancing the ball.
Passer	The offensive player that throws the ball and may or may not be the quarterback.
Rusher	The defensive player assigned to rush the quarterback to prevent him / her from passing the ball by pulling his/her flags or by blocking the pass.
Downs (1-2-3)	The offensive team has three attempts or "downs" to advance the ball. It must cross the line to gain to get another set of downs or to score.
Live Ball	Refers to the period of time that the play is in action. Generally used in regard to penalties. Live ball penalties are considered part of the play and must be enforced before the down is considered complete.
Dead Ball	Refers to the period of time immediately before or after a play.
Whistle	Sound made by an official using a whistle that signifies the end of the play or a stop in the action for a timeout, halftime or the end of the game.
Inadvertent Whistle	Official's whistle that is performed in error.
Charging	An illegal movement of the ball-carrier directly at a defensive player who has established position on the field. This includes lowering the head or initiating contact with a shoulder, forearm or the chest.
Flag Guarding	An illegal act by the ball-carrier to prevent a defender from pulling the ball-carrier's flags by stiff arm, lowering the elbow or head or by blocking access to the runner's flag with a hand or arm.
Shovel Pass	A legal pitch attempted beyond the line of scrimmage.
Lateral	A backward or sideways toss of the ball by the ball-carrier.
Unsportsmanlike Conduct	A rude, confrontational or offensive behavior or language.

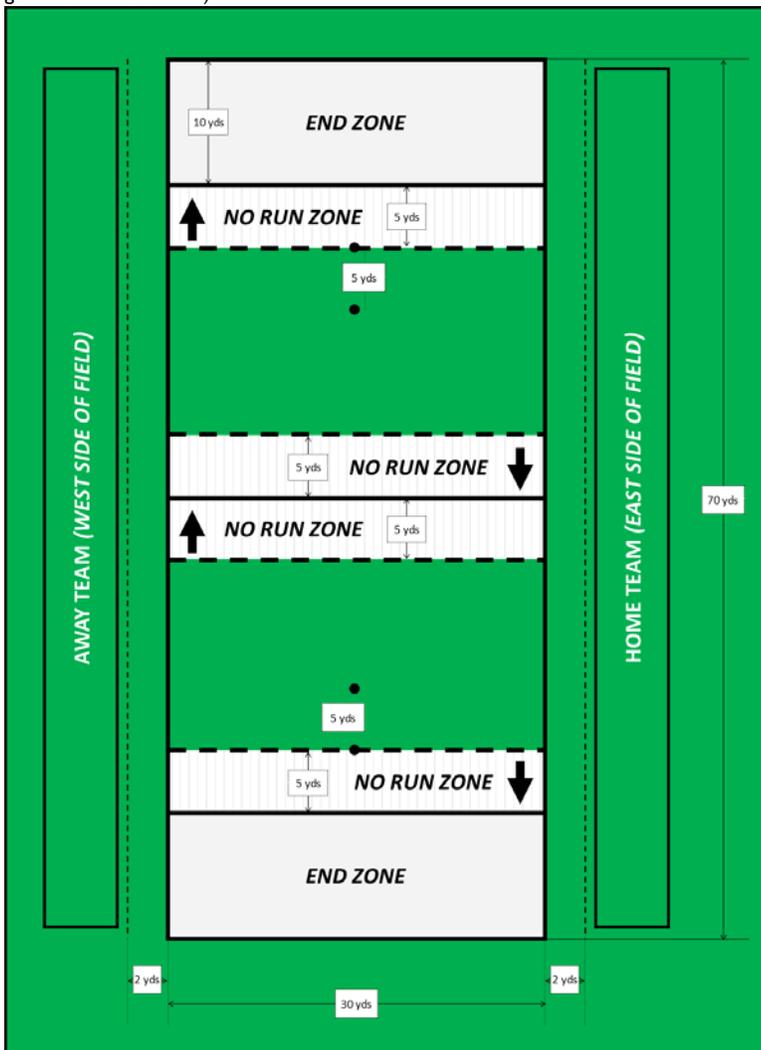


SECTION 4: EQUIPMENT

1. Mouthpieces are MANDATORY for EVERY player.
2. Shoes shall be tennis/basketball shoes or rubber-cleats, which has cleats or ripples, which are an integral part of the shoe's construction.
 - a. Including detachable cleats or spikes.
 - b. No hard-soled street shoes may be worn.
 - c. Any shoe which has metal or steel tips is prohibited.
3. No bare feet shall be allowed.
4. No jewelry or accessories (such as rubber bracelets) may be worn by players.
5. No players shall wear helmets, padded uniforms, or any hard/unyielding substance.
 - a. A player may not participate while wearing a cast.
 - b. Exception: A metal knee brace, which must have a protective covering over it.
6. Each player on the field must wear a belt at his waistline with three (3) flags attached, one (1) on each side and one (1) on the back (provided by City of Peoria).
7. Shirts must be tucked in at all times.
 - a. If any part of the shirt covers the flag belt, and hinders the opponent, it will constitute Illegal Procedure.

SECTION 5: FIELD

1. The field dimensions are 30 yards by 70 yards with two 10-yard end zones, and a midfield line-to-gain. No-run zones precede each line-to-gain by 5 yards.
2. No-run zones are in place to prevent teams from conducting power run plays. While in the no-run zones (a 5-yard imaginary zone before midfield and before the end zone), teams cannot run the ball in any fashion. All plays must be pass plays, even with a handoff.
3. Stepping on the boundary line is considered out of bounds.
4. Each offensive team approaches only TWO no-run zones in each drive (one zone 5 yards from midfield to gain the first down, and one zone 5 yards from the goal line to score a TD).





SECTION 6: PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTES

1. Only City of Peoria registered players may participate in games and practices.
2. Five (5) players constitute a full team on the field; although a team may start a game with only four (4) players.
3. There is no limit to number of substitutes made. Each substitute must play at least one (1) play upon entering the game.
4. It is expected that all players play at least 50% of the game. It is encouraged that players be exposed to as many different positions as possible throughout the course of the season.

SECTION 7: TIMING and TIME-OUTS

1. Each half will be played with a 20 minute running clock.
 - a. Running clock only stops on time-outs or injury.
 - b. Clock will run during extra point attempts.
2. The clock will stop in the last two (2) minutes of the game on an incomplete pass, when the ball carrier steps out of bounds, OR on a change of possession.
 - a. Exception: If one team is ahead by twelve (12) points or more, the clock will not stop.
3. There shall be a time limit of twenty five (25) seconds between plays, from the time the ball is declared live by the referee until the ball is snapped on the next play.
4. Each team will have two (2) time-outs per game, lasting 30 seconds per time out.

SECTION 8: SCORING and SCORING PLAYS

1. Touchdown - 6 points.
2. PAT (point after touchdown): A team scoring a touchdown has its choice of attempting a PAT for:
 - a. A one point conversion is from the 5 yard line.
 - b. A two point conversion is from the 10 yard line.
 - i. *Note: 1 point PAT is pass only; 2 point PAT can be run or pass*
3. Safety - 2 points.
 - a. A safety occurs when the ball-carrier is declared down in his / her own end zone. Runners can be called down when their flags are pulled by a defensive player, a flag belt falls off, they step out of bounds, their knee or arm touches the ground, a fumble occurs in the end zone or if a snapped ball lands in or beyond the end zone.
4. A team that scores a touchdown must declare whether it wishes to attempt a 1-point conversion (from the 5-yard line) or a 2-point conversion (from the 10-yard line). Any change, once a decision is made to try for the extra point, requires a charged timeout. A decision cannot be changed after a penalty. Interceptions on conversions cannot be returned.
5. If a team is winning by eighteen (18) points or more, all offensive plays must be pass plays.
6. **After one team is winning by 28 points or more, the game is over. Once a 28 or more point advantage is gained, no PAT will be attempted.**

SECTION 9: COACHES

1. **5 & 6, 7 & 8 and 9 & 10 Division:** One coach per team is allowed on the field of play to help instruct players.
2. **11 & 12 and 13 & 14 Division:** Only the Offensive team is allowed to have one coach on the field of play to help instruct players. No Defensive coaches are allowed on the field of play in these age divisions.
3. All on-field coaches MUST withdraw at least 15 yards from the line of scrimmage prior to the snap of the ball. After the snap of the ball, all on-field coaches MUST not interfere with the play.

SECTION 10: LIVE BALL, DEAD BALL, and OUT OF BOUNDS

1. The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead.
2. The official will indicate the neutral zone and line of scrimmage.
 - a. It is an automatic dead ball foul if any player on the defense or offense enters the neutral zone. In regard to the neutral zone, the official may give both teams a "courtesy" neutral zone notification to allow their players to move back behind the line of scrimmage.
3. A player who gains possession in the air is considered inbounds as long as one foot comes down in the field of play.
4. The defense may not mimic the offensive team signals by trying to confuse the offensive players, while the quarterback is calling out signals to start the play. This will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.
5. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
6. Any official can whistle the play dead.
7. Play is ruled "dead" when:
 - a. The ball hits the ground.
 - i. If the ball hits the grounds as a result of a bad snap, the ball is then placed where the ball hit the ground.
 - b. The ball-carrier's flag is pulled.
 - c. The ball-carrier steps out of bounds.
 - d. A touchdown, PAT or safety is scored.
 - e. The ball-carrier's knee or arm hits the ground.
 - f. The receiver catches the ball while in possession of a flag belt.
 - g. The seven (7) second pass clock expires.



- h. Inadvertent whistle.

NOTE: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball-carrier's feet were at the time of the fumble.

- 8. If an inadvertent whistle occurs with no time left on the clock at halftime or end of game, the offense will have one untimed down. The offense has two options:
 - a. Take the ball where it was when the whistle blew, and the down is consumed.
 - b. Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.
- 9. A team is allowed to use a timeout to question an official's rule interpretation. If the official's ruling is correct, the team will be charged a timeout. If the rule is interpreted incorrectly, the time out will not be charged and the proper ruling will be enforced. Officials should all agree upon any controversial call in order to give each team the full benefit of each call.

SECTION 11: RUNNING

- 1. The ball is spotted where the runner's feet are when the flat is pulled, not where the ball-carrier has the ball. Forward progress will be measured by the player's front foot.
- 2. The quarterback cannot directly run with the ball. The quarterback is the offensive player who receives the snap.
- 3. Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Handoffs may be in front, behind or to the side of the offensive player but must be behind the line of scrimmage. The offense may use multiple handoffs.
 - a. "Center Sneak" play is not allowed. The QB is not allowed to handoff to the center on the first handoff of the play.
- 4. Absolutely NO laterals of any kind.
- 5. Any player who receives a handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
- 6. Once the ball has been handed off in front, behind or to the side of the quarterback, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- 7. Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. Diving, leaping or jumping to avoid a flag pull is considered flag guarding.
- 8. Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a flag pull.
 - a. Players spinning out of control will be called for flag guarding.
- 9. Runners may leave their feet if there is a clear indication that he / she has done so to avoid collision with another player without a flag guarding penalty enforced.
- 10. No blocking or "screening" is allowed at any time.
- 11. Offensive players without the ball must stop their motion once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage. No running with the ball-carrier.
- 12. Flag obstruction – All jerseys MUST be tucked in before play begins. The flags must be on the players hips and free from obstruction. Deliberately obstructed flags will be considered flag guarding.

SECTION 12: PASSING

- 1. All passes must be from behind the line of scrimmage, thrown forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage.
 - a. All passes that do not cross the line of scrimmage, whether received or not, are illegal forward passes.
 - b. The quarterback may throw the ball away to avoid a sack. Pass must go beyond the line of scrimmage.
- 2. Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- 3. The quarterback has a seven-second "pass clock". If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, the play is dead, the down is consumed and the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off, the seven-second rule is no longer in effect.
 - a. If the QB is standing in the end zone at the end of the seven-second clock, the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage.

SECTION 13: RECEIVING

- 1. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
- 2. Only one player is allowed in motion at a time. All motion must be parallel to the line of scrimmage and no motion is permitted toward the line of scrimmage.
- 3. A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.
- 4. In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.
- 5. Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception. Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start on the 5-yard line.
- 6. Interceptions are returnable but not on conversions after touchdowns.

SECTION 14: RUSHING THE PASSER

- 1. 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 can defend on the line of scrimmage.
- 2. Once the ball is handed off, the seven-yard rule is no longer in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
- 3. A special marker, or the referee, will designate a rush line seven yards from the line of scrimmage. Defensive players should verify they are in the correct position with the official on every play.
 - a. A legal rush is:
 - i. Any rush from a point 7-yards from the defensive line of scrimmage.
 - ii. A rush from anywhere on the field AFTER the ball has been handed off by the quarterback.
 - iii. If a rusher leaves the rush line early (breaks the 7-yard area), they may return to the rush line, reset and then legally rush the quarterback.
 - iv. If a rusher leaves the rush line early and the ball is handed off before he / she crosses the line of scrimmage, he / she may legally rush the quarterback.
 - b. A penalty may be called if:



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- i. The rusher leaves the rush line before the snap crosses the line of scrimmage before a handoff or pass – illegal rush (5-yards from the line of scrimmage and first down).
 - ii. Any defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped – offsides (5-yards from the line of scrimmage and first down).
 - iii. Any defensive player not lined up at the rush line crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is passed or handed off – illegal rush (5-yards from the line of scrimmage and first down).
 - c. Special Circumstances
 - i. Teams are not required to rush the quarterback with the seven second clock in effect.
 - ii. Teams are not required to identify their rusher before the play.
4. Players rushing the quarterback may attempt to block a pass; however, contact to the QB, unless ruled incidental by the official, would result in a roughing the passer penalty.
5. The offense cannot impede the rusher in any way. The rusher has the right to a clear path to the quarterback, regardless of where they line up prior to the snap. If the “path or line” is occupied by a moving offensive player, then it is the offense’s responsibility to avoid the rusher. Any disruption to the rusher’s path and / or contact will result in an impeding the rusher penalty. **If the offensive player does not move after the snap, then it is the rusher’s responsibility to go around the offensive player and to avoid contact.**
6. A sack occurs if the quarterback’s flags are pulled behind the line of scrimmage. The ball is placed where the quarterback’s feet are when flag is pulled.
 - a. A safety is awarded if the sack takes place in the offensive team’s end zone.

SECTION 15: FLAG PULLING

1. A legal flag pull takes place when the ball-carrier is in full possession of the ball.
2. Defenders can dive to pull flags but cannot tackle, hold or run through the ball-carrier when pulling flags.
3. It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball-carrier’s possession at any time.
4. If a player’s flag inadvertently falls off during the play, the player is down immediately upon possession of the ball and the play ends. The ball is placed where the flag lands.
5. A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off a player who is not in possession of the ball.
6. Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball-carrier to obstruct the defender’s access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping the head, hand, arm or shoulder or intentionally covering the flags with the football jersey.

SECTION 16: FORMATIONS

1. Offenses must have a minimum of one player on the line of scrimmage (the center) and up to four players on the line of scrimmage. The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.
 - a. One player at a time may go into motion 1-yard behind and parallel to the line of scrimmage.
 - b. No motion is allowed toward the line of scrimmage.
2. Movement by a player who is set or a player who runs toward the line of scrimmage while in motion is considered a false start.
3. The center must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion between his / her legs to a player in the backfield, and the ball must completely leave his / her hands.

SECTION 17: UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

1. If the City Official or referee witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. The decision will be made at the referee’s discretion. No appeals will be considered. **FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!**
2. Offensive or confrontational language is not allowed. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If offensive or confrontational language occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the player or players will be ejected from the game.
3. Players may not physically or verbally abuse any opponent, coach or official.
4. Ball-carriers **MUST** make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position.
5. Defenders are not allowed to run through the ball-carrier when pulling flags.
6. Fans must also adhere to good sportsmanship as well:
 - a. Yell to cheer on your players, not to harass officials or other teams.
 - b. Keep comments clean and profanity free.
 - c. Compliment ALL players, not just one child or team.
7. Fans are required to keep fields safe and kids friendly:
 - a. Keep younger kids and equipment such as coolers, chairs and tents a minimum of 10 yards off the field in the end zone area.
 - b. Dispose of ALL trash in designated trash cans.
8. Unsportsmanlike conduct penalties:
 - a. Defense + 10 yards from the line of scrimmage and automatic first down.
 - b. Offense – 10 yards from the line of scrimmage and automatic first down.



SECTION 18: PENALTIES

General

1. The referee will call all penalties.
2. Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.
3. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, except as noted (Spot fouls).
4. Only the team captain or head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarifications and interpretations. Players may not question calls.
5. Games may not end on a defensive penalty unless the offense declines it.
6. Penalties are assessed live ball then dead ball. Live ball penalties must be assessed before play is considered complete.
7. Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.

Defensive Spot Fouls

Defensive Pass Interference	Automatic First Down
Holding	+5 Yards and Automatic First Down
Stripping	+10 Yards and Automatic First Down

Offensive Spot Fouls

Screening, blocking or running with the ball	-10 Yards and Loss of Down
Charging	-10 Yards and Loss of Down
Flag Guarding	-10 Yards and Loss of Down

Defensive Penalties

Defensive Unnecessary Roughness	+10 Yards and Automatic First Down
Defensive Unsportsmanlike Conduct	+10 Yards and Automatic First Down
Offside	+5 Yards from line of scrimmage and Automatic First Down
Illegal Rush (Starting rush from inside 7-yard marker)	+5 Yards from line of scrimmage and Automatic First Down
Illegal Flag Pull (Before the receiver has the ball)	+5 Yards from line of scrimmage and Automatic First Down
Roughing the Passer	+5 Yards from line of scrimmage and Automatic First Down
Taunting	+5 Yards from line of scrimmage and Automatic First Down

Offensive Penalties

Offensive Unnecessary Roughness	-10 Yards and Loss of Down
Offensive Unsportsmanlike Conduct	-10 Yards and Loss of Down
Offside / False Start	-5 Yards from line of scrimmage and Loss of Down
Illegal Forward Pass (Any pass received or lands behind the line of scrimmage or throwing a pass after crossing the line of scrimmage)	-5 Yards from line of scrimmage and Loss of Down
Offensive Pass Interference	-5 Yards from line of scrimmage and Loss of Down
Illegal Motion (More than one person moving)	-5 Yards from line of scrimmage and Loss of Down
Delay of Game	-5 Yards from line of scrimmage and Loss of Down
Impeding the Rusher	-5 Yards from line of scrimmage and Loss of Down
Illegal Procedure	-5 Yards from line of scrimmage and Loss of Down

SECTION 19: BALL

- I. The size of the ball will be:
 - a. 5 & 6, 7 & 8, 9 & 10 Division.....Pee Wee
 - b. 11 & 12 Division.....Junior
 - c. 13 & 14 Division.....Youth / Intermediate



SECTION 20: FIELD LAYOUTS WITH SPECTATOR AND TEAM SIDELINES

1. Below is a diagram of where spectators and teams may sit during games.
 - a. Away Team – West Side of Field
 - b. Home Team – East Side of Field
 - c. No Spectators behind End Zones

