



PEORIA COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT



YOUTH 7-on-7 FLAG FOOTBALL RULES AND REGULATIONS AGES 9-10

THE GAME

- A coin flip will take place prior to the game. Winner of the toss will choose to receive, defend, or defer their choice to the second half. Loser of the toss makes the remaining decision.
- There will be a maximum of a five (5) minute rest period between halves.
- To begin a half or after a score, the ball will be placed on the offensive team's own 10 yard line.
- The dimensions of the playing field shall be 35 yards wide and 80 yards long, with end zones being 10 yards at each end.
- The field shall be divided into equal 15 yard zones. The lines are known as first down lines.
- A team in possession of the ball shall have four consecutive downs to advance to the next first down line. Any down may be repeated if provided for by rule.
- The ball carrier is declared down and the ball is set at the location of the ball at the time the clip on the belt is detached.

PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTES

- Seven (7) players constitute a full team on the field.
- At least four (4) offensive players must be on the line of scrimmage at the snap of the ball.
- Three "interior lineman", including the center, must line up within two (2) yards of the ball.
- There is no limit to number of substitutes made. Each substitute must play at least one (1) play upon entering the game.
- 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.

UNIFORMS, EQUIPMENT, and FLAGS

- Shoes shall be tennis/basketball shoes or rubber-cleats, which has cleats or ripples, which are an integral part of the shoe's construction.
 - Including detachable cleats or spikes.
 - No hard-soled street shoes may be worn.
 - Any shoe which has metal or steel tips is prohibited.
- No bare feet shall be allowed.
- No jewelry or accessories (such as rubber bracelets) may be worn by players.
- No players shall wear helmets, padded uniforms, or any hard/unyielding substance.
 - A player may not participate while wearing a cast.
 - Exception: A metal knee brace, which must have a protective covering over it.
- 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 (furnished by City of Peoria).
- Shirts must be tucked in at all times or be two inches above the waistline.
 - Playing with the shirt untucked and out and over the belt constitutes illegal procedure.

BALL

- The size of the ball will be:
 - **9-10 Division: Intermediate or Youth Ball.**

TIME and TIME-OUTS

- Each half will be played with a 20 minute running clock.
 - Running clock only stops on time-outs or injury.
 - Clock will run during extra point attempts.
- The clock will stop in the last two (2) minutes of the game on all dead ball situations.
 - Exception: If one team is ahead by ten (10) points or more, the clock will not stop.
- 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.
- Each team will have two (2) time-outs per game, lasting 30 seconds per time out.

SCORING AND SCORING PLAYS

- Touchdown - 6 points.
- Point(s) after touchdown: A team scoring a touchdown has its choice of attempting a P.A.T for:
 - One point conversion is from 3 yard line.
 - Two point conversion is from 10 yard line.
- Safety - 2 points.
 - After a safety, the team scoring the safety shall put the ball in play on their own 10 yard line.

SPORTSMANSHIP RULES

- If a team is winning by eighteen (18) points or more, all offensive plays must be pass plays.

LIVE BALL, DEAD BALL, and OUT OF BOUNDS

- A dead ball becomes live as a result of a legal snap from scrimmage.
- A live ball comes dead as a result of the following acts (any official of the game may declare the ball dead by signal or whistle):
 - When the ball makes contact with the ground or anything out of bounds.
 - When any part of the ball carrier other than his hands or feet touches the ground.
 - Removal of the ball carrier's flag belt.
 - When a touchdown, touchback, safety, fair catch or try for point is made.
 - When the ball touches the ground as a result of a muffed ball or fumbled ball.
 - Exception: Center snap cleanly fielded by the quarterback.
 - When a forward pass is caught simultaneously by opponents.
 - When a backward pass touches the ground.
 - A backward pass touching the ground shall be put in play at that spot.

SNAPPING & THE TIME OF THE SNAP

- Snaps may be between the legs or from the side.
- Prior to snap, the center must have both feet behind the scrimmage line and no part of his body shall be beyond the forward point of the ball.
- No player of either team shall encroach upon the neutral zone after it has been established.
 - It is encroachment/offside if you cross the neutral zone whether you contact an opponent or not.
- No players shall interlock their legs.
- No player may make contact or interfere with an opponent or the ball before it is snapped.
- No player shall make a false movement to cause opponents to be offside/encroach.
- When the ball is snapped, only one offensive player may be in motion.
 - Motion must be backwards or parallel to line of scrimmage.
- All players must line up within 15 yards of the ball (at least 5 yards away from the sideline).
 - Penalty: Illegal Formation, 5 yards.
- All offensive players must be set a full second before ball is snapped.
 - Exception: One player may be in motion.

FUMBLES

- Any ball that is fumbled or muffed and touches the ground shall be dead immediately and shall belong to the team last in possession.
 - Exception: Center snap cleanly fielded on one bounce in front of quarterback or punter.

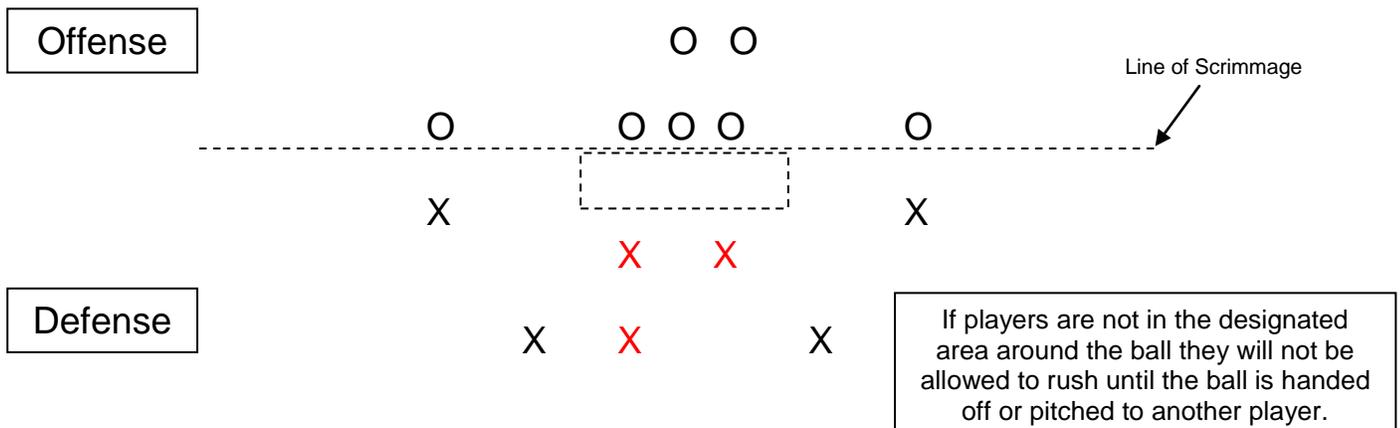
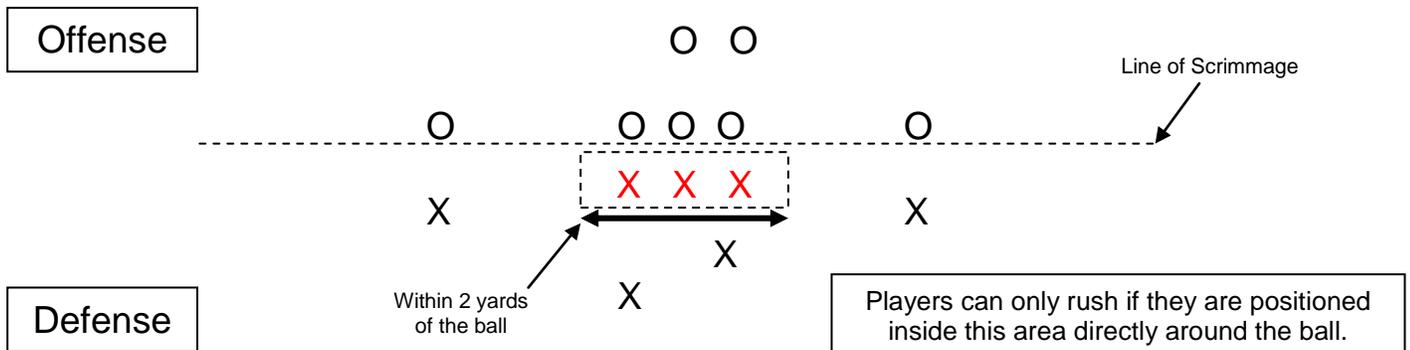
- A player may not attempt to strip the ball from the ball carrier.
 - Penalty: Illegal contact, 10 yards from the end of the run.

BLOCKING

- Blocking will follow these guidelines:
 - **9-10 Division: Physical blocking will be allowed by the three “interior linemen” at the line of scrimmage and in the backfield.**
 - No downfield physical blocking will be allowed.
 - The three “interior lineman” may hold their initial block downfield. Once separation occurs, physical blocking is not allowed.
 - Players may “shadow” block down field.
- All physical blocking, anywhere on the field, must be “push blocking” only. “Push blocking” consists of arms extended forward and palms open to defensive player.
 - No pull downs are allowed.
 - Blocking is allowed only to that portion of defender’s body between their waist and shoulders (stomach and chest).
 - A player may not leave their feet on a block.
 - A player may not initiate a block on an opposing player from the behind.
 - Blockers head and hands must be in front of opposing player.
 - A player may not make contact with an opponent’s head.
 - A blocker’s hands and arms may be no wider than shoulder width.

DEFENSIVE RUSH

- Defensive rushing will follow these guidelines:
 - **9-10 Division: Three rushers will be allowed. These players must identify themselves by lining up on the line of scrimmage and be within two yards of the ball prior to the snap of the ball.**
 - All other defensive players must line up at least two yards off the line of scrimmage.
 - Players who line up inside the designated rush area do NOT have to rush and can drop off into coverage.



- The defensive rushers may not:
 - Run through a blocker.
 - Grab or hold the blocker, or pull the blocker toward him/her.
- The rusher may push the blocker sideways if they get partially past the blocker but only with enough force to elude the blocker and not enough force to push the blocker down.

RUNNING THE BALL

- Running the ball will follow these guidelines:
 - **The quarterback may not run the ball across the line of scrimmage.**
 - There must be a handoff on all running plays.
- A ball carrier may hand or pass backwards at any time.
- A backward pass may be intercepted by an opponent before it hits the ground and may be advanced.
- When a backward pass or fumble hits the ground between the goal lines it becomes dead and belongs to the team last in possession of the ball at the spot where the ball hit the ground.
- If a backward pass or fumble hits the ground in the end zone, it shall be ruled a safety.
- An attempt to avoid a stationary opponent by jumping or diving over/into them shall be a violation.
 - Penalty: Illegal Contact, 10 yards from the spot of the foul.
- A player may jump over a fallen opponent.

PASSING

- The offensive team is allowed one forward pass from anywhere behind the line of scrimmage.
 - There can be no forward pass made beyond the line of scrimmage.
- A receiver must have one foot inbounds to make a completed pass.
- When a legal forward pass touches the ground or anything out of bounds, it becomes dead and is ruled as an incomplete pass.
- An eligible receiver who leaves the field of play loses his eligibility, but may regain it again after he returns to the field of play, and after the ball has been touched by any other player.
 - Penalty – Illegal Touching, 5 yards.
- If a legal forward pass is caught simultaneously by eligible receivers of opposing teams, the ball becomes dead and belongs to the team which put the ball in play, unless such play was a fourth down, and line-to-gain has not been reached.
- During a down in which a legal forward pass is thrown, contact which interferes with an eligible receiver who is beyond the neutral zone will result in:
 - Defensive Pass Interference, 10 yards, Automatic First Down
 - Offensive Pass Interference, 10 yards, Loss of Down
- All players of both teams are eligible pass receivers.
- The lines marking the sidelines and the back of the end zones shall be considered out-of-bounds.

FLAGGING

- A down shall be ended and the ball declared dead when the ball carrier's belt is removed.
 - The defensive player should immediately hold the flag above his head where the capture occurred.
 - When any part of the ball carrier, other than the hands and feet, touches the ground, the ball is dead at the spot.
- Anytime a ball carrier inadvertently loses his belt, play then resorts to one-hand touch between the shoulders and the knees to down the ball carrier.
- Flag pulling of a player who does not have the ball is considered Defensive Pass Interference.
 - Penalty – 10 yards, automatic first down.
- Flag Guarding
 - A ball carrier shall not interfere with the defensive team's effort to pull their flags.
 - The ball carrier is allowed to spin when running.
 - No stiff arms or knocking the hands of the defender away from your flags.
 - The ball carrier should keep his hands and arms above the flag to avoid penalty.
 - Penalty – 10 yards from the spot of the foul.
- Defensive Obstruction
 - If, in attempting to take the flag, the defensive player obstructs the ball carrier without pulling his/her flags, defensive obstruction will be called.
 - Includes **UNINTENTIONAL** holding, tripping, "knee blocking", etc.

- Penalty – 10 yards from the end of the run.

PUNTING

- When the offensive team wishes to punt (regardless of down), it is required to declare to the officials its intention to kick while they are still in their huddle.
 - The decision can only be changed after a penalty or charged time out.
- There shall be no quick kicks.
 - Penalty – Illegal Procedure, 5 yards
- When a team punts, both the offensive and defensive teams must have a minimum of five (5) players on the line of scrimmage until the ball has been kicked.
- There shall be no rushing the punter, nor shall any defensive or offensive man cross the line of scrimmage until the ball has been kicked.
- If the punt hits a member of the punting team who has not crossed the line of scrimmage, it is dead at that spot and the receiving team's ball.
- A punt that goes across the goal line and into the end zone is dead and no advance is permitted.
- A player of the receiving team shall be given an unmolested opportunity to catch the ball before it strikes ground.
- A fair catch shall be made when a player of the receiving team, who is beyond the neutral zone, signals his intention by raising either, but only one, arm distinctively above his head and waives it from side-to-side.
- When a player makes a fair catch, the ball becomes dead where the player first touched it.
- A muffed punt is dead at the spot it touches the ground.

OFFICIAL'S ELASTICITY CLAUSE

- The flag football rules in this manual may not cover all rules/situations that may occur in a flag football game. Those rules and situations not covered in this manual will be governed by commonly accepted flag football rules as understood by the officials.

PENALTY ENFORCEMENT

- If the penalty occurs during a loose ball play (pass or punt), the penalty is enforced from the previous spot and the down played over. On passing play, penalize from spot of foul if behind line of scrimmage
- On a running play, the penalty is enforced from either the spot of the foul or the end of the run, whichever hurts the team the most, and the down played over. If you accept the penalty, the down is replayed.
- If there is a foul or rule infraction by both teams on the same live ball, the fouls cancels out and there are no yards marked off. Replay the down.
- A live ball foul and a dead ball foul do not cancel each other out. Each foul will be administered in the order of occurrence and the yardage stipulated for the foul.
- On a foul or rule infraction by the offense, then a change of team possession occurs (such as an intercepted pass), the ball would then belong to the team intercepting the pass. If the intercepting team also commits a foul on the run-back during the same live ball, we have two live ball fouls **BUT** they do not cancel each other out and the down replayed. We have a new element, change of team possession. The intercepting team must turn down the offensive foul or rule infraction, accept possession of the ball, and then be penalized for the foul on the run-back.
- An intercepted pass caught behind the goal line can be advanced. If the receiver doesn't get out beyond the goal line and into the field of play it is still a touchback.
- The first half or end of the game cannot end with an accepted foul.

SUMMARY OF PENALTIES

- Loss of 5 Yards
 - Delay of Game.
 - Putting ball in play before declared ready.
 - Illegal Snap.
 - Illegal Formation.
 - Illegal Motion/Shift.
 - False Start.
 - Illegal Kick.
 - Illegal Equipment (Example: Flags not in place and/or not visible).
 - Defense Holding (automatic 1st down).
 - Illegal Forward Pass (loss of down).

- Intentional Grounding (loss of down).
- Loss of 10 Yards
 - Offensive Pass Interference (loss of down).
 - Defensive Pass Interference (automatic first down).
 - Roughing the Passer (automatic first down and penalty yardage added to completed pass).
 - Hurdling.
 - Tripping.
 - Illegal Contact.
 - Flag Guarding.
 - Defensive Obstructing.
 - Kick Catch Interference.
 - Illegal Block.
- Loss of 15 yards (possible ejection)
 - Striking, kicking or kneeing an opponent.
 - Unsportsmanlike Conduct.