



## REGULAR SEASON RULE BOOK



# OPPORTUNITY RISING.



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Rules.....	3
II.	Terminology.....	4
III.	Eligibility .....	5
IV.	Equipment.....	5
V.	Field.....	6
VI.	Rosters .....	6
VII.	Timing and Overtime.....	7
VIII.	Scoring .....	8
IX.	Coaches.....	8
X.	Live Ball/Dead Ball .....	9
XI.	Running.....	10
XII.	Passing .....	11
XIII.	Receiving .....	11
XIV.	Rushing the Passer .....	12
XV.	Flag Pulling.....	13
XVI.	Formations.....	14
XVII.	Unsportsmanlike Conduct .....	14
XVIII.	Penalties .....	15
	i. General	
	ii. Defensive Spot Fouls	
	iii. Offensive Spot Fouls	
	iv. Defensive Penalties	
	v. Offensive Penalties	

# RULES

## I. 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 four (4) plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has four (4) plays to score a touchdown.
4. On 4th down the offence can choose to punt which results in a change of possession and the opposing teams starts on their 5-yard line. If the offence choses to go for it on 4th down and not make a 1st down or score, then the opposing team starts with the ball where the result of the play happens.
5. If the defensive team intercepts the ball, they will start possession where the flag is pulled.



## II. Terminology

<b>Boundary Lines</b>	The outer perimeter lines around the field. They include the sidelines and back of the end zone lines.
<b>Line of Scrimmage</b>	( LOS) an imaginary line running through the point of the football and across the width of the field.
<b>Line-to-Gain</b>	The line the offense must pass to get a first down or score.
<b>Rush Line</b>	An imaginary line running across the width of the field ten yards (into the defensive side) from the line of scrimmage.
<b>Offense</b>	The team with possession of the ball.
<b>Defense</b>	The team opposing the offense to prevent it from advancing the ball.
<b>Passer</b>	The offensive player that throws the ball and may or may not be the quarterback.
<b>Rusher</b>	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.
<b>Downs (1-2-3-4)</b>	The offensive team has four attempts or “downs” to advance the ball. It must cross the line to gain to get another set of downs or to score.
<b>Live Ball</b>	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.
<b>Dead Ball</b>	Refers to the period of time immediately before or after a play.
<b>Whistle</b>	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.
<b>Inadvertent Whistle</b>	Official’s whistle that is performed in error.
<b>Charging</b>	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.
<b>Flag Guarding</b>	An illegal act by the ball-carrier to prevent a defender from pulling the ball-carrier’s flags by stiff arm, lowering elbow or head or by blocking access to the runner’s flags with a hand or arm.
<b>Shovel Pass</b>	A legal pitch attempted beyond the line of scrimmage.
<b>Lateral</b>	A backward or sideways toss of the ball by the ball-carrier.
<b>Unsportsmanlike Conduct</b>	A rude, confrontational, or offensive behavior or language.



### III. Equipment & Rosters

1. The league provides each player with NFL Flag shorts and reversible jersey. Teams are provided footballs and flags.
2. Players can wear cleats. However, cleats with exposed metal are never allowed and must be removed.
3. Players may tape their forearms, hands, and fingers. Players may wear gloves, elbow pads and knee pads.
4. Braces with exposed metals are not allowed.
5. Players must remove jewelry.
6. Player's jerseys must be tucked into shorts
7. Home teams wear dark color jerseys. Visiting teams wear light color jerseys.
8. Teams must consist of at least five players with a maximum of 10 players.
9. Teams must start games with a minimum of five players. In the event of an injury, a team with insufficient substitute players may play with four players on the field but no fewer than four.



## V. Field & No Run Zone

1. The field dimensions are 25-30 yards by 70 yards with two 10-yard end zones, and a midfield line-to-gain.
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 the end zone), teams cannot run the ball. All plays must be pass plays, even with a hand off.
3. 3rd-8th grade divisions, you may hand off or pitch in the no run zone but any advancing of the ball past the LOS needs to be a pass.
4. If the defense rushes the passer in the no run zone the QB can't run to advance the ball, he or she still need to throw the ball.
5. Stepping on the boundary line is considered out of bounds.
6. Each offensive team approaches only ONE no-run zone in each drive (5 yards from the goal line to score a TD). Pre-K through 2nd grade divisions (The No Run zones have been eliminated from these divisions)



## V. Field & No Run Zone



## VII. Timing and Overtime

Games are played on a 40-minute continuous clock with two 20 minute halves unless one team gains a 35-point advantage, which will then be the final score and the teams can keep playing. Clock stops only for timeouts or injuries. Once the 28-point lead occurs, timeouts can no longer be used.

Halftime is one minute.

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. Will not be enforced for divisions Pre-K -2nd.

Each team has one 30-second timeout per half.

Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.

In the event of an injury, the clock will stop then restart when the injured player is removed from the field of play.

**Overtime format** is as follows: No overtime during regular season! **ONLY IN PLAYOFFS**

- a. A coin flip will determine the team that chooses to be on offense or defense first.
  - i. If a second round of overtime must be played, the team that lost the coin toss will get to choose offense or defense for the start of the second round of overtime. This process continues with teams alternating who gets to choose to be on offense or defense to start out during every round of overtime.
  - ii. **If neither team scores whoever gets closet to the end zone (Yardage) Wins.**
- b. Each team will take turns getting one (1) play from the defense's 5-yard line for one point or the defense's 10-yard line for two points. Whether to go for one or two points is up to the offensive team. Whether or not the team that begins on offense converts the team that started on defense gets a chance on offense to win or tie by converting a one- or two-point play of their own.
  - i. Example: Team A starts on offense and chooses to go for one point from the 5-yard line and is successful. Team B is then on offense and can choose to either go for one point from the 5-yard line to tie and force a second round of overtime or to go for two points from the 10-yard line for the win.
  - ii. If the second team on offense in an overtime round fails to beat or match the team that went first, the team that went first wins.
- c. Both teams must "go for two" from the 10-yard line starting with the third round of overtime.
  - i. Example: End of regulation time, score is 14-14. Team A scores one point and Team B score two points. Team B wins with a final score of 16-14. Points are only added to total score from final round of overtime.
- d. All regulation period rules and penalties are in effect.
- e. There are no timeouts.



## VIII. Scoring

**Touchdown:** 6 points

**PAT** (point after touchdown) **1 point** (5-yard line PASS) or **2 points** (10-yard line RUN OR PASS)

- a. PAT'S intercepted can be returned for 2 points regardless of what the offence went for.
- b. 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.

**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 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.

**Forfeits are scored 35-0 for the winning team.**

## IX. Coaches

Coaches are expected to adhere to NFL FLAG philosophies, coaching guidelines, and code of conduct.

Coaches are allowed on the field to direct players Pre-K - 2nd grade divisions only. We are here for the kids to have fun and learn. Coaches and parents talking across the field to the opposing teams' coaches or parents will not be tolerated. Officials can enforce a penalty.

Officials will only address the Head Coach when it comes to penalties. Constant nagging and complaining from coaches and parents will not be tolerated. Assistants may address the official for down or time left in the half.



## X. Live Ball/Dead Ball

The play is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead.

The official will indicate the neutral zone and line of scrimmage.

- a. It is an automatic dead ball foul if any player on 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.

A player who gains possession in the air is considered inbounds as long as one foot comes down in the field of play.

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.

Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.

Any official can whistle the play dead.

Play is ruled “dead” when:

The ball hits the ground.

If the ball hits the ground because of a missed snap, the ball is then placed where the ball hit the ground.

The ball-carrier’s flag is pulled.

The ball-carrier steps out of bounds.

A touchdown, PAT or safety is scored.

The ball-carrier’s knee or arm hits the ground.

The ball-carrier’s flag falls off.

The receiver catches the ball while in possession of one or no flag(s).

The 7 second pass clock expires.

Inadvertent whistle.

**NOTE:** There are no fumbles. If the ball is snapped by the center and it hits the ground or goes over the QB’s head, the ball is spotted where it hits the ground.

8. In the case of an inadvertent whistle, 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 timeout 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.



## XI. Running

The ball is spotted where the hips are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball-carrier has the ball. Forward progress will be measured by the player's hips.

The quarterback can directly run with the ball only when a pass rusher rushes from the 10-yard rush line and crosses the line of scrimmage. (EXCEPTION in the no run zone) The quarterback is the offensive player who receives the snap.

Hand offs 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 hand offs.

- a. **“Center sneak” play is no longer allowed. The QB is not allowed to handoff to the center on the first handoff of the play.**

You can lateral but they must be behind the LOS no laterals beyond the line of scrimmage. You can shovel pass.

Any player who receives a handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.

Once the ball has been handed off in front, behind or to the side of the quarterback, all defensive players are eligible to rush.

Runners may not Dive to advance the ball,  
Runners may jump, spin as moves to advance the ball if they do not put another players safety at risk. (Judgment Call)

Not all jumps or hops constitute a safety risk.

Spinning is allowed.

No blocking is allowed at any time.

Offensive players without the ball must stop their motion once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage. No running with the ball-carrier.

Flag obstruction – All jerseys MUST be tucked in before play begins. The flags must be on the player's hips and free from obstruction. Deliberately obstructed flags will be considered flag guarding.



## XII. Passing

All passes must be from behind the line of scrimmage. You can double pass.

- a. Forward passes that are caught behind the line of scrimmage are allowed. Except in the no run zone. You can pass backwards ie double pass in the no run zone.
- b. The quarterback may throw the ball away to avoid a sack. Pass must go beyond the line of scrimmage.

Shovel passes are allowed.

The quarterback has a seven-second “pass clock.” If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, the play is blown 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.

If the QB is standing in the end zone at the end of the 7-second clock, the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage (LOS).

## Receiving

7- All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).

8- 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.

9- A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

10- In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.

11- Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception.





## XIV. Rushing the Passer

1. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of ten yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the quarterback from anywhere 10 yards off the LOS. Players not rushing the quarterback can defend on the line of scrimmage.
2. Once the ball is handed off, the ten-yard rule no longer is in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
3. A special marker, placed down by the referee, will designate a rush line ten yards from the line of scrimmage. Defensive players should verify they are in the correct position with the official on every play.
4. Note: **There is no rushing the passer in Divisions Pre-K -2nd.**
  - a. A legal rush is:
    - i. Any rush from a point 10 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 10-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 runner.
  - b. A penalty may be called if:
    - i. The rusher leaves the rush line before the snap and 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 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, NO contact can be made with the quarterback in any way. Blocking the pass or attempting to block the pass and then making contact with the passer will 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 hips are when flag is pulled.
  - a. A safety is awarded if the sack takes place in the offensive team’s end zone.



## i. Flag Pulling

A legal flag pull takes place when the ball-carrier is in full possession of the ball.

Defenders can dive to pull flags but cannot tackle, hold or run through the ball-carrier when pulling flags.

It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball-carrier's possession at any time.

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.

A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off a player who is not in possession of the ball.

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.



## XVI. 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 in 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.

## XVII. Unsportsmanlike Conduct

1. If the field monitor 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 is 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 kid friendly:
  - a. Keep younger kids and equipment such as coolers, chairs and tents a minimum of 10 yards off the field.
  - b. Fans of each team are to be on the sideline of their child's team.
  - c. Teams are to be on opposite sidelines.
  - d. Dispose of **ALL** trash in designated trash cans.
8. Unsportsmanlike conduct penalties:
  - a. Defense + 10 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
  - b. Offense - 10 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down

## XVIII. Penalties

### i. 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 clarification 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.

### ii. Defensive spot fouls

<b>Defensive pass interference</b>	<b>Automatic first down</b>
<b>Holding</b>	<b>Automatic first down</b>
<b>Stripping</b>	<b>+5 yards and automatic first down</b>

### iii. Offensive spot fouls

<b>Screening, blocking or running with the ball</b>	<b>-5 yards and loss of down</b>
<b>Charging</b>	<b>-5 yards and loss of down</b>
<b>Flag guarding</b>	<b>-10 yards and loss of down</b>

### iv. Defensive penalties

<b>Defensive unnecessary roughness</b>	<b>+10 yards and automatic first down</b>
<b>Defensive Unsportsmanlike conduct</b>	<b>+10 yards and automatic first down</b>
<b>Offside</b>	<b>+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down</b>
<b>Illegal rush</b> (Starting rush from inside 10-yard marker)	<b>+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down</b>
<b>Illegal flag pull</b> (Before the receiver has the ball)	<b>+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down</b>
<b>Roughing the passer</b>	<b>+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down</b>
<b>Taunting</b>	<b>+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down</b>

### v. Offensive penalties

<b>Offensive unnecessary roughness</b>	<b>-10 yards and loss of down</b>
<b>Offensive unsportsmanlike conduct</b>	<b>-10 yards and loss of down</b>
<b>Offside / false start</b>	<b>-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down</b>
<b>Illegal forward pass</b> (Any pass received or lands behind the line of scrimmage or throwing a pass after crossing the line of scrimmage)	<b>-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down</b>
<b>Offensive pass interference</b>	<b>-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down</b>
<b>Illegal motion</b> (More than one person moving)	<b>-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down</b>
<b>Delay of game</b>	<b>-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down</b>
<b>Impeding the rusher</b>	<b>-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down</b>
<b>Illegal Procedure</b>	<b>-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down</b>