

Big Chicago

5-6th and 7-8th Grade

FLAG FOOTBALL RULES AND REGULATIONS

FOUR DOWN POSSESSIONS

There will only be one (1) run per set of four downs and there will be a three (3) second count from officials before defensive players can rush the quarterback. The referee should count 1-2-3-Go or 1-2-3-Rush with defenders rushing on the word Go/Rush.

Flag football rules state that all passes must go forward and be received beyond the line of scrimmage. Shovel passes, which are short passes to forward receivers, are allowed, but also must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.

Once a first down has been reached, the one (1) run per four downs rule automatically resets.

The team in possession of the ball will be awarded four (4) downs to cross the next first down marker.

You are allowed to pitch the ball backwards.

FIELD DIMENSIONS

On an eighty (80) yard field, it takes twenty (20) yards to make a first down. On smaller fields, the first down markers can be as short as fifteen (15) yards apart. Fields can be modified in size but must have at least 3 15 yard zones.

FIELD DIMENSIONS (LVL)

In the case of modified fields like Alcott Field, if two schools agree, modified fields can be used as a playing surface.

Alcott Field is an example of a modified field in that its dimensions are 35 yards wide and the field length is 60 yards long for all age groups with two end zones that are 7.5 yards deep.

CENTER EXCHANGE

The ball must be snapped within twenty (20) seconds of the referee whistling the ball ready for play. If there is a delay of game, the penalty is five (5) yards from the line of scrimmage.

The ball must be snapped between the legs of a center from the ground to the quarterback to start play in a 7th/8th game. 5th/6th are allowed to snap the ball standing sideways.

If the standing up method is used, the center will not be ruled off sides when straddling the ball.

All players are eligible to catch a forward pass. All forward passes must be thrown from behind the line of scrimmage.

BALL CARRIER

The ball carrier shall not grasp a teammate or be grasped, pulled, or pushed by a teammate. The penalty is five (5) yards.

The ball carrier shall be prohibited from obstructing an opponent with an extended hand or arm. This includes the use of a “stiff arm” extended to ward off an opponent. The penalty for stiff arming is ten (10) yards.

A ball carrier cannot protect their flags by blocking with arms or hands the opportunity of an opponent to pull or remove a flag. A penalty of ten (10) yards will be assessed for this infraction. Ball carriers can spin and use moves to evade defensive players from capturing their flag if one foot is in contact with the ground during any attempt to spin.

Ball carriers are not allowed to leave their feet to dive to advance the ball. If a player dives the ball is spotted where their feet are.

If the flag of a ball carrier comes off without being grasped, the ball will be ruled dead at the spot where the flag came off. If a defender or receiver catches the ball without a flag, (the flag having previously fallen off), the ball will be ruled dead at the spot of the catch.

BLOCKING

There is no blocking. Blocking, as in regulation tackle football, is PROHIBITED! A screen block shall take place WITHOUT CONTACT. The screen blocker shall have his or her hands behind his or her back. Any use of the hands, arms, elbows, legs, or body to initiate contact during a screen block is ILLEGAL!!!! A blocker may use his or her hand or arm to break a fall or retain his or her balance. A player must be on his or her feet before, during, and after screen blocking. Penalty-personal foul, 10 yards.

DEFENSIVE RULES

Any defender can rush the QB from his alignment after the 1-2-3-Go or the 1-2-3-Rush count from the referee.

When the flag is clearly taken from a ball carrier the down shall end and the ball is declared dead.

A player who removes the flag from the ball carrier should immediately hold the flag above his or her head to assist the official in locating the spot where the capture occurred.

To remove a flag from a ball carrier, defensive players may contact the body and shoulders of an opponent with their hands, but not their face or any part of the head.

A defensive player may not hold, push, or knock the ball carrier down in any attempt to remove the flag or a penalty of ten (10) yards will be accessed.

The defensive player shall not hold, grasp, or obstruct forward progress of a ball carrier when in the act of removing a flag. If they do, a penalty of ten (10) yards will be accessed.

Defensive players in the open field are prohibited from initiating contact with an offensive player who has established position to impede his progress.

SSG/BSN Triple Threat Flag Football Belts should be used and is the acceptable standard for flags.

Schools are responsible for providing their own flags and balls. A three-flag belt configuration must be worn during all games. These belts must completely detach when the flag is grasped.

No tying of the flag belt will be tolerated and if done will result in a ten (10) yard penalty.

For the 7th–8th grade age group, teams must use either a junior-sized or youth-sized football. Each team is responsible for providing its own ball to use while on offense. Home team is responsible for the game ball.

All team members should wear reasonably similar jerseys and shorts which constitute a uniform.

Jerseys must be tucked into the players shorts or pants always. Failing to so will result in a warning and then a five (5) yard penalty.

Black or white shorts are an acceptable substitution.

Players are not allowed to wear metal cleats or any other football gear such as helmets, shoulder pads and/or other contact football equipment.

They may wear a mouthpiece if they so choose.

Rubber bands, earrings, head rags, and jewelry of any kind are prohibited.

Hoods, pants, jeans, or shorts with pockets or belt loops as well as exposed metal such as buttons, zippers and embroideries are also prohibited.

Baseball caps are prohibited.

FUMBLES

All fumbles on any play will result in a dead ball which will be marked at the spot of the impact with the ground with the team that fumbled the ball maintaining possession. Balls fumbled into the end zone will result in a touchback with the ball being spotted at the twenty (20) yard line or the fifteen (15) yard line in the case of a modified field.

GAME LOGISTICS

Both 5-6th and 7th-8th grade games will consist of two twenty-five (25) minute halves with the clock running continuously during the first half except for stoppage during time outs. The second half clock will also stop for timeouts and will stop at the end of each play, penalty, score, out of bounds, extra point tries during the last two (2) minutes of play.

Each team will receive two-timeouts per game.

If a team is ahead by 30 points with ten minutes left, the game will be over and the leading team will be awarded the win.

If in the opinion of the officials, darkness will threaten the completion of a game, time can be shortened by officials upon agreement of the coaches.

OVERTIME

If the game is still tied after one overtime period for regular season it will result in a tie. During playoffs the two teams will alternate possessions until one has outscored the other.

An overtime period consists of each team having 4 downs to score from the opponents twenty (20) yard line.

If a touchdown is scored, then a one (1) or two (2) point conversion attempt is allowed. If the game is still tied after the first overtime period, the order of ball possession is flipped and another overtime period is played.

However, each extra point attempt in second overtime and subsequent overtime periods must be tried from the ten (10) yard line.

FORFEITS

- A 24-hour notice is required if a team is not able to make a game.
 - If less than 24-hour notice is given, the other coach has the option to take a win by forfeit or to reschedule the game.
 - If the coaches are unable to schedule a make-up game, the team originally not able to play will be charged with a forfeit.
 - The score for a forfeited game shall be recorded as **6–0**.
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KICKING GAME

No kicking game.

Phantom kickoffs and punts will be used.

To begin the game and after every touchdown, the football is placed on the 20 yard line for the next offensive series.

If a team chooses to punt, the ball is placed on the opposing team's 20-yard line.

OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE FORMATIONS

Defenders that rush the quarterback can rush only after a three (3) second 1-2-3-Go or 1-2-3-Rush count from an official.

The penalty for an illegal formation is five (5) yards.

SCORING

Six points are awarded for each touchdown.

A successful conversion from the five (5) yard line from a run or a pass is worth one (1) point.

A successful conversion from the ten (10) yard line from a run or a pass is worth two (2) points.

The score for a forfeited game shall be 6-0.

TEAMS

The game shall be played between two teams of (8) players. However less per side is permitted on smaller fields.

There will be a limit of 20 players per team. A game will be forfeited, if there are not at least eight players on the team at the beginning of the game. Six (6) players are needed to complete a game.

A school can "play up" 5th-6th grade players to its 7-8th grade age group. However a 5th-6th grade player must declare which team they are playing for come playoff time. 5th-6th graders are not permitted to play for both 5th-6th grade and 7th-8th grade teams in the playoffs.

7-8th grade age players cannot "play down" to the 5-6th grade age group.

Each team shall designate a field captain. The field captain will speak for the team in all dealings with the officials on the field. At or prior to the coin toss, coaches should inspect the belts of all opposing players and mediate any concerns regarding unfair advantages gained through improper belts.

FLAGS

Each player on the field will wear a 3-flag belt at the waist line; the belt should be attached not tied. Wrapping or tying or securing the flags to the uniform or belt, other than the prescribed rule is illegal. A penalty of ten (10) yards and possible disqualification of a player will apply when the rule is broken.

Players cannot hold, conceal or grab their belts on a play. A violation of this rule is a ten (10) yard penalty. If your team does not have the correct 3-flag belt, you will forfeit the game.

SHIRTS AND JERSEYS

Shirts and jerseys must be tucked into a player's waistband always with their belts clearly visible. Players who do not conform to the "tuck" rule will be warned the first time and then their team will be penalized five (5) yards for each occurrence after the warning.

FLAGRANT FOULS/POOR SPORTSMANSHIP

Using fists, kicking, or excessively rough play. Using locked hands, elbows, tripping, clipping, tackling the ball carrier or any part of the forearm or hand.

Whenever, in the judgment of a game official the acts listed above are deliberate or flagrant, the players involved shall be disqualified from the game.

There shall be no contact with an opponent who is on the ground. The runner shall not be thrown on the ground.

No player shall contact an opponent who is obviously out of play either before or after the ball is declared dead.

There shall be no unnecessary roughness of any nature. The ball carrier shall not deliberately drive or run into a defensive player.

The penalty for all the violations listed above is ten (10) yards from the point of infraction.

Flagrant offenders may be disqualified if the act is found to be repetitive by the officials.

CONTROL OF SPECTATORS

Only coaches and players will be allowed at/or behind each player's bench.

Coaches are not allowed on field after the ball is snapped.

PLAYOFFS

Playoff information will be released week 2 of the season. Four teams make the playoffs.

Flag Football Penalties

Loss of 5 yards: All penalties are from the line of scrimmage unless stated otherwise.

1. Required equipment worn illegally. Has to be Triple Threat Flag Football Belts. Cannot tie.
2. Delay of game: 5 yards and repeat down, from line of scrimmage
3. Illegal Snap, Motion or Rush: 5 yards and repeat the down, from line of scrimmage
4. False start or Offsides: 5 yards and repeat the down, from line of scrimmage
5. Illegal flag pull (before receiver has ball, dropped pass or catch made) -- repeat the down
6. Illegal forward pass Ball is thrown after crossing the line of scrimmage.
7. Intentional grounding (5 yards from the original line of scrimmage and loss of down).
8. Helping the runner: the runner shall not grasp a teammate or be grasped, pulled/pushed by a teammate.
9. Illegal contact (holding, blocking, etc.): 5 yards and repeat the down, from line of scrimmage
10. Substitution fouls (player enters field after ball is blown ready for play for defense or offense, i.e. to deceive opponents, or 6 players on the field) -- 5 yards and repeat the down, from line of scrimmage

Loss of 10 yards: All penalties are from the line of scrimmage unless stated otherwise.

1. Delaying the start of either half.
2. Two or more consecutive encroachments during the same interval between downs. The initial encroachment was 5 yards.
3. Offensive or defensive pass interference. 10 yards and automatic first down
4. Illegally secured belt on touchdown. (Revoke touchdown and loss of down).
5. Guarding the flag belt (and stiff arming) or Illegal flag belt removal. Applied at the spot of foul.
6. Unsportsmanlike Conduct or Roughing the passer. (Automatic 1st Down)

7. Spiking the ball or not returning the ball to the official during the dead ball.
8. Attempt to steal the ball from the carrier.
9. Flagrant unsportsmanlike conduct or personal fouls. +10 yards if on defense and automatic first down, -10 yards if on offense and loss of down

If penalty is accepted you will replay down, unless stated otherwise above