

Sun City Youth Flag Football Official Rule Book

7 Vs. 7 Coed

Last Updated: March 18, 2025

Age Divisions: 7U, 9U, 11U, 13U, 15U

Mission Statement

The mission of Sun City Youth Sports (SCYS) is to create a positive, safe, and welcoming environment where children in the 7U to 15U age divisions can experience the joys of flag football. SCYS focuses on enhancing skills, fostering teamwork, promoting sportsmanship, developing character, and building friendships while encouraging family involvement. Above all, the league prioritizes fun and instills a love for the game.

Code of Conduct & Sportsmanship

I. Coaches' Responsibilities

- Coaches must exemplify the values of SCYS by demonstrating good sportsmanship and maintaining accountability for the conduct of players, parents, and spectators.
- All coaches must possess a City of El Paso Coaching ID to participate in league play.
- Access to the player box is restricted to individuals with a valid coaching ID and include any media

II. Unsportsmanlike Conduct Penalties

1. First Offense:

A 15-yard penalty will be assessed against any team, resulting in a first down for the offense. Additionally, the defense will also receive a 15-yard penalty for their infractions.

2. Second Offense:

- Ejection of the player or coach from the game.
- Mandatory participation in a league meeting, with the potential for additional disciplinary actions and a remediation period.

3. Third Offense:

- The head official may declare a forfeit, resulting in a 12-0 loss for the offending team.

III. Safety Rule:

- Result: If players, spectators, and coaches cannot be managed effectively, the game must be canceled immediately to ensure everyone's safety. All individuals involved in the game are required to attend a league meeting to discuss the incident. This meeting will address current concerns and may lead to further disciplinary actions if necessary. Additionally, a remediation period may be implemented to take steps to prevent future occurrences. Participants will have the option to replay the game, regardless of the score, but additional league costs will be the responsibility of the affected team(s). The safety and well-being of all players, spectators, and staff are our top priority, and we are dedicated to always maintaining a safe environment.

IV. Parent/Spectator Behavior

- Engaging in inappropriate behaviors, including verbal abuse or disruptive actions, may result in penalties, ejections, or player suspensions. Parents are required to comply with all City of El Paso rules and regulations regarding park and field policies; failure to do so may lead to the removal or cancellation of events.

Park rules link: <https://www.elpasotexas.gov/parks/faqs/>

V. Prohibited Behaviors

- Derogatory remarks, taunting, or disrespectful behavior toward players, officials, or spectators are strictly prohibited.

VI. Consequences for Inappropriate Conduct

1. First Offense:

A 15-yard penalty will be assessed against any team, resulting in a first down for the offense. Additionally, the defense will also receive a 15-yard penalty for their infractions.

2. Second Offense:

- Ejection from the game and further disciplinary actions, including a remediation period.

Coach Conduct & Expectations

I. Adherence to Standards

- Coaches are expected to maintain the integrity of SCYS by following all rules and regulations.

II. Misconduct Penalties

1. First Offense:

- 15-yard penalty and a first down for the opposing team.

2. Second Offense:

- Ejection of the player or coach from the game and mandatory participation in a league meeting.

3. Third Offense:

- Forfeit declared by the head official, with a 12-0 win awarded to the opposing team, regardless of the score.

Player personal fouls

1. If a player intentionally hits, pushes, or exhibits disrespectful behavior towards another player, officials, or spectators, a 15-yard penalty will be assessed against the offending team, resulting in a first down for the offense. Additionally, the defense will incur a 15-yard penalty for their infractions.
2. Second Offense:
Ejection may occur at the referee's discretion after an initial warning and penalties. Mandatory participation in a league meeting, with the potential for additional disciplinary actions or remediation periods.

Game Format & Rules

I. Ball Sizes

- Ages 7U to 9U: Pee Wee-sized ball.
- Ages 11U to 15U: Junior-sized ball.

League balls can be provided. Teams May use their balls.

II. Field Dimensions

- Length: 80 yards, including two 10-yard end zones.
- Width: 40 yards.

III. First Downs

- First downs are achieved exclusively at midfield.

IV. Timing Rules

- Games consist of two 20-minute halves with a running clock.
- Halftime: 5 minutes (10 minutes in summer).

The clock stops during the final 2 minutes of the **second half** for dead balls, penalties, incomplete passes, and out-of-bounds plays.

V. Play Clock

- 20 seconds: To snap the ball after setting.
- 35 seconds: After turnovers, kickoffs, or possession changes.

VI. Timeouts

- Each team is allowed three 60-second timeouts per half. (Summer: Two additional 2-minute water breaks per half.)

The referee will call water time-outs as needed, and players will remain in the huddle.

VII. Game Start

- A coin toss determines possession. Games begin with a kickoff from the 20-yard line, with teams in a protective stance.
- Kick-off teams will start with seven players on both the kickoff and receiving teams.
- Kickoff receiving teams will start at the 30 and adjust as needed for age groups.

Gameplay Regulations

I. Scoring & Field Play

- Teams have four downs to score after crossing midfield. Failure results in a turnover.

II. Punting Regulations

- Teams must declare their intent to punt.
- No rushing or jumping is allowed during punts. Line violations result in a re-kick.

III. No-Run Zones

- Passing plays can only occur within 10 yards of the goal line (Red Zone). Blitzing is not permitted for the 11U, 13U, and 15U groups. -For 7U and 9U, teams can blitz players prior to the play to rush the quarterback. This is permissible since the quarterback is allowed to run in the Red Zone.

IV. Touchdowns & Extra Points

- Passing plays only within 10 yards for 11U, 13U & 15U
- 7U Division: Allowed to run, with one attempt only.
- 9U Division: Allowed to run, with one attempt only.

Touchdown values:

- 6 Points

Extra Point Values:

- 5 yards = 1 point

- 10 yards = 2 points
- 15 yards = 3 points

Interception Extra Point Values:

- 5 yards = 1 point
- 10 yards = 2 points
- 15 yards = 3 points

Blocking Rules

I. Allowed Blocking

- Blocking is allowed when the arms are positioned upright, knuckle to knuckle.
- A Blocking Extension results in a 10-yard penalty from where the infraction occurred.
- Holding, tripping, or blocking from behind incurs a 10-yard penalty from the point of infraction.
- Defensive or offensive pushing out of bounds leads to a 15-yard penalty from the point of infraction.

The initial violation of these blocking rules serves as the first safety warning. Additional violations will result in a loss of down and ejection from the game. Ensuring player safety is our top priority.

Quarterback, Receiving, Handoff, Center, and Passing Rules

I. Eligibility

- All players are eligible to receive passes.

II. Catching Conditions

- A valid catch requires at least one foot in bounds.

III. Simultaneous Possession

- In the case of simultaneous possession, the offensive team maintains possession of the ball.

IV. Pass Interference

Definition:

Pass interference occurs when either an offensive or defensive player deliberately obstructs another player from catching the ball.

Examples of Pass Interference:

- Tripping, pushing, pulling, or cutting off the receiver.
- Blocking the receiver's face.
- Grabbing the receiver's hands or arms.

Exceptions:

- Contact made while both players are genuinely attempting to catch the ball is not regarded as interference.

Penalties:

Defensive Pass Interference:

- The play is ruled a completed pass at the point of infraction.
- The offense is granted an automatic first down.
- No additional yardage is added as a penalty.

Offensive Pass Interference:

- The offense is penalized at the line of scrimmage of 15 yards
- A loss of down is enforced unless there is an interception.

Roughing the passer

- A penalty is called when defensive players illegally contact the quarterback after the pass is thrown. The defensive player may signal by raising their hand or try to grab the flags. Jumping at any time is prohibited for the defensive player, as it risks a safety collision. This results in a 15-yard penalty from the point of infraction and an automatic first down.

V. Quarterback Regulations

- The quarterback must release the ball within 6 seconds after the snap—failure to do so results in an incomplete pass and a loss of down.
- Overhand Shovel and screen passes are permitted, except in the red zone or during extra-point attempts.

Prohibited Passes:

- Two-handed shovel passes or two-handed overhand throws are not allowed. Violations lead to a loss of down.

VI. Center Regulations

- The ball must be snapped between the center's legs.

- Center sneaks are allowed if a teammate touches the ball before it crosses the line of scrimmage. **CENTER SNEAKS ARE NOT ALLOWED FOR 11U-15U GROUPS WITHIN THE RED ZONE.**

VII. Handoff Rules

1. Definition of a Handoff

A handoff is when the ball is directly transferred from the quarterback (or another player holding it) to a teammate, without the ball leaving either player's hands.

2. Location of Handoff

- Handoffs must occur behind the line of scrimmage.
- The receiving player must start their motion behind the line of scrimmage.

3. Eligible Players

- Any offensive player is eligible to receive a handoff.
- Players receiving a handoff can advance the ball by:
Running,
Passing, or
Pitching to another teammate

4. Restrictions After Handoff

Players receiving a handoff are prohibited from:

- Stiff-arming defenders.
- Lowering their heads.
- Performing any blocking motion.
- The ball carrier is not allowed to guard flags (using their hands to protect their flags).

5. Defensive Rules During a Handoff

- Defenders may attempt to pull the flags from the ball carrier but must refrain from initiating physical contact.
- Diving to grab flags is permitted as long as no contact is made with the ball carrier.

6. Penalties for Violations

Illegal Handoff:

- If the handoff occurs past the line of scrimmage, the play is ruled dead. A 5-yard penalty is enforced from the previous spot.
- Flag Guarding: If the ball carrier protects their flags with their hands, a 5-yard penalty is enforced at the spot of the foul.

- Contact During Handoff: If a defender initiates contact during the handoff, the defense incurs a 5-yard penalty for unnecessary roughness.
- Stiff Arming: Stiff arms, lowering heads, or bull rushing will result in a 10-yard penalty and a loss of down at the point of infraction. Multiple offenses may lead to ejection from the game.

Dead Ball Situations & Fumbles

I. Dead Ball Triggers

A play is considered dead when:

- A flag is pulled.
- The ball carrier steps out of bounds, falls, or a knee touches the ground.
- A fumble occurs. (Quarterbacks may recover a muffed snap only in front of their position)
- Overhead quarterback snaps are treated as a dead ball, resulting in a loss of down at the infraction point.
- Flags falling to the ground represent the possession point.

II. Fumble Recovery

- Only quarterbacks may recover muffed snaps.

Overtime Rules

Overtime:

- Coin flip to decide possession.
- The team that lost the coin flip chooses the defensive side
- 10-minute running clock.

Teams will start at the 40-yard line and have four downs to score a touchdown, along with an extra point opportunity of one, two, or three. Each team will have one chance to score. If a non-scoring result occurs, the process will restart from the 30-yard line for each team. If there is a stalemate on the second attempt, we will declare a tie.

Age Requirements

Sun City Youth flag football leagues often use “U” age divisions in alignment with best practices (e.g., 7U, 9U, etc.) to organize players based on age, with a birthday cutoff date to ensure fairness and consistency. Here’s a breakdown of how this system typically works:

Player Eligibility Rules Using August 1 Cutoff

The Sun City League has a consistent cutoff date for determining player eligibility, which promotes fairness and aligns with school calendars. For this league, the cutoff date is August 1. This means a player's age on August 1 of the current year dictates their eligibility.

The Sun City Youth Football (SCYF) league organizes its football programs into specific age brackets, determining eligibility based on the child’s age as of August 1st of the current year. This means that whatever age your child is on August 1st is the age bracket they play in for Flag Football.

The age brackets are as follows:

- Tykes (7U): Ages 6-7
- Rookies (9U): Ages 8-9
- Juniors (11U): Ages 10-11
- Seniors (13U): Ages 12-13
- Varsity (15U): Ages 14-15

For example, if a child turns 10 on or before August 1st, they would participate in the Juniors (11U) bracket for that season. SCYF does not impose weight restrictions; players are assigned to teams based on age.

SCYF certifies football players each season to ensure they are of the proper age and assigned to the correct age bracket. This certification process is crucial for maintaining fair play and safety within the league.

For the most accurate and up-to-date information, it's recommended to consult the official SCYF website or contact your local SCYF-affiliated organization."

Playing Up or Down

Playing Up:

- Advanced younger players can request to compete in an older division, but they are allowed to move up only one age division (e.g., a 7u player can play at the 9u level). Approval from the league is necessary.

Playing Down:

- Rarely allowed, but exceptions may be made for older players with developmental needs. Approval from the league is necessary with a waiver.

Why the August 1 Cutoff Matters

- Fair Competition: Ensures players of similar physical and mental development compete together.
- School Alignment: Matches age groups with school grade levels, allowing players to compete alongside peers they know.

Rosters & Registration

- Registration deadlines and rosters must be finalized by mid-season to be eligible for the final tournament.
- A minimum of 5 players (for 7 vs 7 games) must be present for the match to take place; otherwise, the team will forfeit. Teams may use the time slot for practice if the game is forfeited.

Players can be on a roster and may play in an age group above their own; however, they must be listed on the roster to be eligible. For example, a 13U player can be on both the 13U and 15U rosters but cannot play up in two age groups.

In a situation where teams are divided into A and B groups, only two players from the A group are permitted to play in the B group. These players must be announced to both the coaches and the referee before the game begins.

Miscellaneous Rules

Note: Triple-threat flags are mandatory, with length sizes determined by age group

Coaches Badges: Coaches badges are required, and Sun City will accept background equivalents, which must be approved and accepted by the league. Only coaches are allowed to be in the coaches boxes with the players.

STARTING SUMMER 2025, WE WILL SHIFT TO THE ZORTS SYSTEM, MAKING COACHES AND PLAYERS CARDS REQUIRED TO IMPROVE THIS PROCESS. YOU CAN UPLOAD YOUR ID EQUIVALENT HERE TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE.

Player IDs: Sun City will accept State ID's equivalents and or birth certificates, which the league must approve and accept. Starting with the summer 2025 season, we will shift to the Zorts system to enhance this process.

No horns, bullhorns, or electronic bullhorns

Moving forward, all horns and bullhorns are banned. Parents, players, and fans are prohibited from honking horns directly at players, as this is disruptive and unsafe. Our goal is to maintain a positive and fair environment for everyone.

Game Time Field Code of Conduct

Effective Immediately:

For Players:

- Parents are prohibited from communicating directly with opposing players during games.
- Trash-talking among players is strictly prohibited before, during, or after the game.

For Coaches:

- Coaches may communicate only with their own players, not with opposing players.
- Trash-talking between coaches and players or parents is also strictly prohibited.

For Referees:

- Parents must not speak directly to referees unless addressed by them during the game.

Conduct Violations:

- Any harassment, offensive language, or poor conduct will result in ejection and penalties against the team.
- This may also lead to a board review and disciplinary action, potentially resulting in game forfeiture, regardless of win or loss.