

Flag Football Rules

ELIGIBILITY AND PARTICIPATION:

1. Any at least part-time student and is not on the varsity and/or reserve squad is eligible to participate
2. AU faculty, staff, spouses and children are eligible to play
3. Players may be added to rosters during the first week of the season, but not after that.

TEAMS:

1. Teams consist of five players on the field at one time
2. Ten minutes after game time is forfeit time
4. All players must be recorded on the game sheet before they are allowed to participate.
5. Team representatives, including players, substitutes, replaced players, coaches, trainers, and other persons affiliated with the team are subject to the rules of the game, and shall be governed by decisions of officials assigned to the game.

EQUIPMENT:

1. The IM department will provide the football, flags and orange cones denoting the corners of the field.
2. Teams may choose to wear the same color but is not required.

FIELD

The field dimensions are:

- Men + Women
 - 30 yards by 70 yards
 - 10 yard end zone

Field Location: IM fields (beside soccer fields)

Inbounds/Out-of-bounds: The lines bounding the sidelines and the end zones are out-of-bounds. They will be marked by orange cones on the corners.

Extra Point Lines: A one (1) yard wide line should be marked at each end at the three and ten yard lines in the middle of the field for the men's fields. For the women's fields, a line should be marked at each end at the three and seven yard lines in the middle of the field. These lines shall be used for the extra point try when a team scores a touchdown.

GAME TIME:

1. Each game will consist of two 20 minute halves
 - a. The first half will be a running clock, only stopped by an injury or a time out.

- b. The second half will be a running clock, only stopped by an injury or a timeout. During the last two minutes the clock will be stopped on a timeout, injury, fouls, incompleteness, spiked ball, or when the ball goes out of bounds.
2. There will be a ten-minute half time if game started on time.
3. Each team will be allowed one time-out, one minute in duration, per half.
4. If the end result is a tie, then the captains will flip a coin for who receives the ball. The winning team will start on their own 35 yd. line. They will only have 4 plays in which to score. If that team does not score, the other team will start from their own 35 yd. line. Each team must go for two. This will continue until a winner is determined.

PLAY THE GAME:

1. Each team must have 4 players on the field to start the game. If a team does not have 4 players to start they must forfeit the game.
2. A coin will be flipped or odd/even choice by the captain will determine the options as to how to start the game. The winner of the toss shall be given the options of offense, defense, or direction. The loser of the toss shall make a choice of the remaining options:
 - a. To choose whether his/her team will start on offense or defense.
 - b. To choose the goal his/her team will defend.
3. Play at the beginning of each half will start at the offense's 7 yard line.
4. All plays must be started by a legal snap from a point designated by the referee.
5. Following the ready for play and until the snap, no player on defense may encroach, touch the ball, nor may any player contact opponents or in any other way interfere with them. This includes standing in the neutral zone.
6. **False Start:** No offensive player shall make a false start or stimulate the start of a play. An infraction of this rule may be penalized whether or not the ball is snapped and the penalty for any resultant encroachment shall be cancelled. False Starts result in a 5 yard penalty.
7. **Snap:** The snapper, after assuming position for the snap and adjusting the ball, may neither move nor change the position of the ball in a manner simulating the beginning of a play until it is snapped. When over the ball, the snapper shall have his/her feet behind the scrimmage line. The snapper shall pass the ball backwards from its position on the ground with a continuous motion.
8. **Minimum Line Players:** The offensive team must have at least 4 players on their scrimmage line at the snap.
9. **Motion:** One offensive player may be in motion, but not in motion toward the opponent's goal line at the snap. Other offensive players must be stationary in their positions without movement of the feet, body, head, or arms.
10. **No Direct Snap:** The player who receives the snap must be at least two yards behind the offensive scrimmage. Violation of rule results in loss of down.
11. **Handing the Ball:** Any player may hand the ball backward at any time.

12. **Backward Pass and Fumble:** A runner may pass the ball backward or lose player possession by a fumble at anytime.
13. **Intercepted:** A pass or fumble in flight may be caught; the player may run the ball back.
14. **Fumble:** Defense cannot cause a fumble. A fumble can be recovered by the defense and ran back. If a knee is down when the ball is recovered, the play is dead at the spot.
15. **Legal Forward Pass:** All players are eligible to touch or catch a pass. During a down and before a change of possession a forward pass may be thrown provided the passer's feet are behind the offensive line of scrimmage when the ball leaves the passer's hand. Only one forward pass is allowed per down. A play involving a run across the line of scrimmage is not a completion.
16. **Illegal Forward Pass:** A forward pass is illegal if:
 - a. If the passer's foot is beyond the line of scrimmage when the ball is released.
 - b. If intentionally thrown to the ground or out-of-bounds to save loss of yardage.
 - c. If there is more than one forward pass per down.
 - d. If a passer catches his/her untouched forward or backward pass.
17. **Forward Pass Interference:** During a down in which there is a legal forward pass, contact or action that interferes with an eligible receiver is pass interference. It is also pass interference if an eligible receiver is deflagged prior to touching the ball. The player may still catch the ball. The player without/flag is down upon one-hand touch and an automatic first down is rewarded. The ball will be spotted at the point of the foul.
18. **Blocking:** Any block beyond the line of scrimmage is illegal. All blocking fouls are 10 yard penalties. Examples of illegal blocking include, but aren't limited to:
 - a. Blocking a member of the opposing team after the ball has passed the line of scrimmage on a run play.
 - b. Blocking a member of the opposing team after a completed legal forward pass.
 - c. No stiff arm
 - d. No bump and run
 - e. No full extension of the arms to block.
19. **Rushing the Passer:** Any player intending to rush the passer must be at least 7 yards behind the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped, which is denoted by the official. You may not bull rush the person who is blocking. You must make an obvious attempt to go around the person blocking.
20. Teams may substitute players only on a dead ball. The referee must acknowledge the substitution.
21. One one-minute time out is allowed per team per half.
22. **Delay of Game:** The ball must be put in play promptly and legally and any action or inaction by either team, which tends to prevent this, is a delay of game. This includes:
 - a. Failure to snap or free kick within 15 seconds after the ball is ready for play.

- b. Putting the ball in play before it is declared ready for play.
- 23. A team has four downs to make it to the 35 yard line, and four downs to make it from the 35 yard line to the endzone.
- 24. In the event of an offensive penalty, the down shall be repeated unless the penalty also involves a loss of down. If the penalty involves a loss of down, the down shall count as one of the four in that series.
- 25. No rule decision (interpretation) may be changed or protested after the ball is next legally snapped.
- 26. **Flag Guarding:** Runners shall not flag guard by using their hands, arms, or the ball to deny the opportunity for an opponent to pull or remove the flag belt. Examples of flag guarding include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Placing or swinging the hand or arm over the flag belt.
 - b. Placing the ball in possession over the flag belt.
 - c. Lowering the shoulders in such a manner which places the arm over the flag belt.
- 27. **Obstructing the Runner:** The defensive player shall not intentionally hold, grasp, or obstruct the forward progress of a runner when in the act of removing the flag belt. Violation results in a 5 yard penalty
- 28. **Cross Routes:** A cross route is LEGAL. On crossing routes, motion must be continuous...no stopping to “set a pick”

PENALTIES:

- 1. Ten seconds for the quarterback to release the ball.
- 2. Any attempt that the referee feels is an obstruction for an offensive player towards the end zone.
- 3. A game cannot end on an accepted penalty.

PLAYER MISCONDUCT:

- 1. Misconduct penalties will result in a player ejection.
- 2. Misconduct penalties include:
 - a. Any use of profanity
 - b. Extensive abuse of the facility and/or equipment
 - c. Slashing
 - d. Unnecessary rough play
 - e. Fighting
 - f. Deliberate roughing/checking
 - g. Verbal or physical abuse towards an official, opponent, or supervisor
 - h. Any unsportsmanlike conduct that, in the opinion of the official, warrants ejection

The officiating will be done by the referee and he/she is in absolute control of the game. Teams are responsible for keeping their spectators under control. Misconduct of spectators, players or coaches can result in assessment of an ejection or forfeiture of

the game. Spectators must also remain in the area designated by the officials. The officials shall have the power to make decisions on any matters or questions not specifically covered in the rules. The Referee has authority to rule promptly, and in the spirit of good sportsmanship, on any situation not specifically covered in the rules.