

SUPREME YOUTH FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

The following rules and regulations have been established to allow participants to compete in a safe and fair environment. Participants and coaches are to be familiar with these directives. These rules may be subject to change during the season if a team gains an unfair advantage over other teams due to a given rule in the league. All coaches and players will be notified of any rule changes made during the season.

A. GAME

1. There will be no coin toss. The home team will begin with the ball possession and the away team will begin with ball possession after halftime. The home team will wear dark jerseys.
2. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has four (4) downs to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has three (3) downs to score a touchdown.
3. If the offense fails to score, after crossing midfield, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team starts its drive on its 5-yard line
4. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, on 3 downs, then the offensive team has the option to punt. If the offensive team goes for it on 4th down and does not cross midfield, the opposing team will start its possession from the spot.
5. Teams change sides after the first half. Possession changes to the team that started the game on defense.

B. FIELD LAYOUT



B. EQUIPMENT/CLOTHING:

1. Participants must bring their own official NFL FLAG belts and mouth guards to games. Extra belts and mouth guards will be available for purchase.
2. Players must wear shoes. Rubber-molded cleats are allowed. However, cleats with hard plastic or 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. Braces with exposed metals are not allowed.
4. Players must remove all jewelry, hats, and do-rags. Winter beanies are allowed.
5. Players' jerseys must be tucked into shorts or pants.
6. We recommend players wear shorts or pants that do not have pockets. **Flag belts cannot be the same color as shorts or pants.**

C. ROSTERS:

1. Home teams wear dark color jerseys. Visiting teams wear light color jerseys.
2. Teams must consist of at least five players with a maximum of 10 players.
3. 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.

D. TIMING AND OVERTIME:

1. Games are played on a 40-minute continuous clock with two 20 minute halves unless one team gains a 28 point advantage, which will then end the game. **Clock stops only for timeouts or injuries.**
2. Halftime is three minutes.
3. Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 25 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced.
4. Each team has three 30-second timeouts per game.
5. Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
6. In the event of an injury, the clock will stop then restart when the injured player is removed from the field of play.
7. If the score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, an overtime period will be used to determine a winner. Overtime format is as follows:
 - a. There will be NO coin flip. The team that started the game with the ball will start overtime with the ball. If the second round of overtime must be played the visiting team will start the second round with the ball. This alternating process will continue for each round of overtime. The referee will determine which end of the field the overtime will take place on.
 - 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.
 - c. Both teams must "go for two" from the 10-yard line starting with the second round of overtime.
 - d. Starting with the 3rd overtime, each team will get 1 play from the 5-yard line going out from the endzone. The team with the most yards will be the winner. The team with the most yards will be awarded 1 point added to their final score.
 - e. All regulation period rules and penalties are in effect.
 - f. There are no timeouts.
 - g. Interceptions are returnable in OT and worth 2 points. Both teams must have an offensive possession in OT.

E. SCORING:

1. **Touchdown:** 6 points
2. **PAT** (point after touchdown) **1 point** (5-yard line) or **2 points** (10-yard line). 1 point is pass only; 2 point PAT can be run or pass.

3. **Safety:** 2 points (A safety occurs when the ball-carrier is declared down in his/her end zone. Runners can be called down when their flags are pulled by a defensive player, a flag falls out, they step out of bounds, their knee or arm touches the ground, or a fumble occurs in the end zone.)
4. Extra points that are returned equals 2 points.
5. A team that scores a touchdown must declare whether it wishes to attempt a 1-point conversion or a 2-point conversion. 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.
6. After one team is winning by 28 points or more, the game is over. Once a 28 or more point advantage is gained, no other scores will be counted but teams may continue to play out the rest of the game clock in a scrimmage format.
7. Forfeits are scored 28-0 for the winning team.
8. The coaches, officials, and scorekeeper must sign the score sheet. If a coach does not sign the score sheet before leaving the field, the scorekeeper will note on that score sheet and the score will be FINAL.

F. COACHES:

1. Coaches are expected to adhere to Supreme Flag and NFL FLAG philosophies, coaching guidelines, and code of conduct.
2. One coach per team is allowed on the field. All other coaches must remain on the sideline. Coaches, it is your responsibility to keep your fans in the designated areas. Fans must sit a minimum of 10 yards away from the field boundaries.

G. LIVE BALL/DEAD BALL:

1. The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead.
2. The official will indicate the neutral zone and line of scrimmage.
3. 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.
4. A player who gains possession in the air is considered inbounds as long as one foot comes down in the field of play.
5. 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.
6. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
7. Any official can whistle the play dead.
8. Play is ruled "dead" when the ball hits the ground, the ball carrier's flag is pulled, the ball-carrier steps out of bounds, a touchdown/PAT/safety is scored, the ball carrier's knee or arm hits the ground, the ball carrier's flag falls out, the receiver catches the ball while in possession of one or no flag(s), the 8-second pass clock expires, or an inadvertent whistle.
9. There are no fumbles. The ball becomes a dead ball. If the ball is fumbled forwards then it will be spotted where the ball carrier lost possession. **Exception:** The quarterback/punter will be given the chance to pick up a snap that hits the ground from either a bad snap or a missed catch. Any loss of control after the ball is picked up may be deemed a fumble and the ball would be dead at the spot.
10. If an inadvertent whistle occurs with no time left on the clock at halftime or the end of the game, the offense will have one untimed down. The offense may take the ball where it was when the whistle blew and the down is consumed, or replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.
11. 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 to give each team the full benefit of each call.

H. RUNNING:

1. The ball is spotted where the ball is when the flag is pulled.
2. The quarterback cannot directly run with the ball. The quarterback is the offensive player who receives the snap.

3. Direct handoffs and backward laterals behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Handoffs 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 handoffs/laterals.
4. "Center Sneak" is not allowed. The QB is not allowed to handoff to the center on the first handoff of the play.
5. No-run Zones are located 5 yards before each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield are designed to avoid short-yardage power-running situations. Teams are not allowed to run in these zones if the subsequent line is LIVE. (Reminder; Each offensive team approaches only TWO no-run zones in each drive – one 5 yards from midfield and the other 5 yards from the goal line.)
6. Any player who receives a handoff/lateral can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
7. Once the ball has been handed off/lateraled, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
8. Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. Diving, leaping or jumping to avoid a flag pull is considered flag guarding.
9. Spinning/Jump Cuts are allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a flag pull. Players spinning out of control will be called for flag guarding.
10. Runners may leave their feet if there is a clear indication that he/she has done so to avoid collision with another player without a flag guarding penalty enforced.
11. 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.

I. BLOCKING:

1. No blocking or "screening" is allowed.
2. Offensive players without the ball must stop their motion once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage. No running with the ball carrier.

J. RUSHING THE PASSER:

1. A defensive player may not impede the forward progress of the ball carrier.
2. The officials will count to 4 one thousand and then call "go" when the defense can rush in. They are also responsible to say go if the ball is handed off or pitched. Please coach kids to listen for the officials when rushing the passer.
3. Once the ball is snapped, all defenders can pass the defensive line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off or the 4-one-thousand count has been called, all defenders may pass the offensive line of scrimmage.
4. A special marker will be used to designate the 3-yard Neutral Zone. One marker will be for the offensive line of scrimmage and the other marker will be for the defensive line of scrimmage. Players should verify they are in the correct position with the official on every play. If the goal line or midfield line is inside the 3-yard neutral zone, then the goal line or midfield line will become the defensive line of scrimmage.
5. A legal rush is any rush after the 4-second officials count or any rush after the ball has been handed off or lateraled by the QB.
6. Players rushing the quarterback may attempt to block a pass; however, contact to the QB, unless ruled incidental by the official, would result in a roughing of the passer penalty.
7. The offense cannot impede the rusher in any way. The rusher has the right to a clear path to the quarterback, regardless of where the line up before 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.
8. A sack occurs if the quarterback's flags are pulled behind the line of scrimmage. The ball will be spotted where possession of the ball is once the flag is pulled.
9. A safety is awarded in a sack/flag pull that occurs in the offensive team's end zone.
10. No 3 point stance is allowed, use a 2 point stance (hands-on knees).

K. FLAG PULLING:

1. A legal flag pull takes place when the ball carrier is in full possession of the ball.
2. Defenders can dive to pull flags but cannot tackle, hold or run through the ball-carrier when pulling flags.
3. It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball carrier's possession at any time. This will be considered unsportsmanlike conduct.
4. 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.
5. A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off of a player who does not have the ball. This is considered unsportsmanlike conduct.
6. 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.

L. FUMBLE:

1. All fumbles are dead at the spot, except on a fumbled snap or a snap during a punt.
2. A fumbled ball is a dead ball and will stay in possession of the team that fumbled at the point of the fumble, except on fourth down.
3. The ball may not be fumbled forward.

M. PASSING:

1. All players are eligible to receive a pass.
2. When in the No-Run Zone, all forward passes must be thrown from behind the line of scrimmage and received beyond the line of scrimmage.
3. All passes that do not cross the line of scrimmage in the No-Run Zone, whether received or not, are illegal forward passes.
4. Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage in the No-Run Zone.
5. If no defensive players rush the quarterback after the 4-second count, then the official will verbally tell the quarterback that they need to throw the ball and begin a 4 one thousand count. If the quarterback has not thrown the ball by the end of the 4-second count, the ball is dead, the down is consumed and the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off or lateraled the 4-second/4-second count rules are no longer in effect.
6. If the QB is standing in the end zone at the end of the 4-second official count, the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage.

N. PUNTING:

1. If a team has not crossed midfield after 3 downs then they may declare to punt or "go for it" on 4th down.
2. The defense may not rush a declared punt. Any other play will be illegal once the team has declared they will kick.
3. The snap can be dropped and still be kicked on a declared kick play. However, the defense still may not rush.
4. After the ball has been legally kicked, the ball becomes dead when it touches a player and hits the ground if it hits the ground before touching a player the receiving team can return the kick. No blocking or screening is allowed on the punt return. The return team players must stop moving once the returner begins to advance the ball.
5. The 1st/2nd-grade division will not physically kick the ball. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, on 3 downs, and elect to "punt" on 4th down, possession of the ball changes, and the opposition starts its drive from its 5-yard line.

O. RECEIVING:

1. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
2. 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.
3. A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

4. In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.
5. Interceptions are returnable at any time. A returned interception is worth 6 points (2 points on PAT conversions).

P. 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.
2. One player at a time may go in motion 1 yard behind and parallel to the line of scrimmage. No motion is allowed toward the line of scrimmage.
3. 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.
4. 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. Ball may be snapped in shotgun or under center.

Q. PENALTIES:

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 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.
8. In the last 2 minutes of the game offensive offsides/false start will result in a LOSS OF A DOWN.

****** The offended team may take or decline a penalty. A declined penalty will result in the play standing.**

R. PENALTY ENFORCEMENT:

1. Defensive Pass Interference (spot foul) – Automatic first down
2. Defensive Holding (spot foul) – 5 yards and an automatic first down
3. Stripping (spot foul) – 5 yards and an automatic first down
4. Screening, Blocking or Running with ball-carrier (spot foul) – 5 yards and loss of down
5. Charging (spot foul-unsportsmanlike) – 5 yards and loss of down
6. Flag Guarding (spot foul) – 5 yards and loss of down
7. Defensive Unnecessary Roughness – 10 yards and an automatic first down
8. Defensive Unsportsmanlike Conduct – 10 yards and an automatic first down
9. Offside – 5 yards from the line of scrimmage and replay the down
10. Illegal Rush – 5 yards from the line of scrimmage and replay the down
11. Illegal Flag Pull – 5 yards from the line of scrimmage and an automatic first down
12. Roughing the Passer – 5 yards from the line of scrimmage and an automatic first down
13. Taunting – 5 yards from the line of scrimmage and an automatic first down
14. Offensive Unnecessary Roughness – 10 yards and loss of down
15. Offensive Unsportsmanlike Conduct – 10 yards and loss of down
16. False Start – 5 yards from the line of scrimmage and replay the down.
17. Illegal Forward Pass – 5 yards from the line of scrimmage and loss of down
18. Offensive Pass Interference – 5 yards from the line of scrimmage and loss of down
19. Illegal Motion – 5 yards from the line of scrimmage and replay the down
20. Delay of the game – 5 yards from the line of scrimmage and replay the down
21. Impeding the Rusher – 5 yards from the line of scrimmage and loss of down
22. Illegal Procedure – 5 yards from the line of scrimmage and replay the down

S. 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. Yell to cheer on your players, not to harass officials or other teams. Keep comments clean and profanity-free. Compliment **ALL** players, not just one child or team.
7. Fans are required to keep fields safe and kids friendly. Keep younger kids and equipment such as coolers, chairs, and tents a minimum of 5 yards off the field in the end zone area. Stay in the end zone area, not between the fields. Dispose of **ALL** trash in designated trash cans.
8. Unsportsmanlike conduct penalties are 10 yards from the line of scrimmage and automatic first down or loss of down.

****** THE INTENT OF THIS PROGRAM IS FOR ALL THE PARTICIPANTS TO HAVE FUN!!!!******

Rules are subject to change at any time.

Rules questions should be directed to Jordan Bleil, jbleil@coralville.org.