

Big East Youth Football League

Flag Football Rules and Regulations

Section 1: Flags

1. Each player is to be equipped with three flags placed on hip, backside, and hip.
2. Flag colors must contrast with color of uniform.
3. Flags must be a minimum of fourteen (14) inches in length.
4. Flags are to be adhered to standard belt with Velcro material on each flag.
5. Interior linemen are not required to wear flags.

Section 2: Game Time

1. The game will consist of two halves with a ten (10) minute halftime break.
2. Each half will consist of 20 minutes with a running clock.
3. Overtime is only played during tournaments; otherwise, scores are not validated or verified.

Section 3: Clock Management

1. Clock stops only for injuries and timeouts.
2. There will be a forty (40) second play clock.
3. Each team is awarded one (1) timeout per half – no carryover to 2nd half; each timeout will be one (1) minute in duration.

Section 4: Coaches

1. A maximum of two (2) coaches per team are permitted on the field.
2. Coaches that are on the field are permitted to be a member of the huddle.
3. Upon huddle break, all coaches on the field, both on offense and defense, must be five (5) yards behind the deepest player and shall not be downfield while the ball is in play.
4. Any unsportsmanlike conduct by a coach will result in automatic ejection from the game, a fifteen (15) yard penalty and a report filed with the league Secretary and President that night.

Section 5: General Rules

1. A coin toss by the referee will determine possession to start the game. Deferment not permitted.
2. Play will start at the forty (40) yard line (standard width field is preferred, but not mandated).
3. There are no kickoffs or punts.
4. The offensive team will be given four downs to make a first down (1st down is the 20 yd line). In the event that a team does not make a first down, possession will change, and the ball will be placed at the forty (40) yard line for the opposing team.
5. After a touchdown is scored, possession will change, and the ball will be placed at the forty (40) yard line for the opposing team; There will be no PAT attempt.

6. Substitutions can be made on any dead ball.
7. All players must wear opaque mouthpieces at all times. If a player does not have a mouthpiece, they must exit the field of play immediately.
8. Compression shirts/shorts with built-in soft pads are acceptable.

Section 6: General Defense

1. A maximum of six (6) players can line-up on the line of scrimmage within the box (1-yard off the line). Remaining players must be at linebacker depth or deeper
 - a. (a minimum of 4-yards from the line of scrimmage).
2. Only six (6) players can rush or penetrate the offensive line; all defensive players can rush when the ball is handed off to the RB.
3. Defenders attempting to pull the ball carrier's flag must make a deliberate effort at the flag. Any attempt to tackle instead of pulling the flag is a 15-yard penalty and may result in an ejection at the discretion of the referees.

Section 7: General Offense

1. Offensive line must have at least seven (7) players on the line of scrimmage, with their hands on their knees or hand on the ground; exception – WRs.
2. There shall be no blocking below the waist.

Section 8: Hiking or Centering the Ball

1. The Quarterback must take a direct or shotgun snap from the Center.
2. No restriction on cadence (silent count is permitted); the play starts when the ball is snapped.

Section 9: Offense and Running

1. The ball will be spotted where the ball carriers' feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is, or where the flag lands.
2. The ball carrier will be considered down upon gaining possession of the ball if his/her flags are not spread out on the hip, backside, hip.
3. The following is prohibited by any ball carrier:
 - a. Attaching the flag in such a manner that it cannot be easily removed.
 - b. Using a "stiff-arm" against defenders.
 - c. Swinging the hand or arm over the flag belt, or batting or swatting defenders' hands (Flag Guarding).
 - d. Carrying the ball in a manner that prohibits access by the defender to the flag.
 - e. Lowering their shoulder that makes it impossible to avoid contact.
 - f. Initiating contact (deliberately attempting to "run over" a would-be defender); The ball carrier must avoid the defender.

Section 10: Receiving

1. Consistent with traditional football rules, only WRs, TEs, QBs and RBs may receive a pass. Offensive linemen are not eligible receivers.
2. A player must have at least one foot in bounds when making a reception.

Section 11: Passing

1. In the event of an interception, the ball is considered dead at the point of interception.
2. Interceptions change the possession of the ball; the ball will be placed at the forty (40) yard line.

Section 12: Blocking

1. Offensive players may block defensive players in the torso and shoulder areas.
2. No contact is to be made to the head, neck, throat, arms, or anywhere below the waist. If either the offensive or defensive player falls down, the other player must immediately stop all contact.

Section 13: Dead Ball

1. Play is ruled "dead" when:
 - a) The ball carriers' flag is pulled
 - b) The ball carrier steps out of bounds.
 - c) A touchdown is scored
 - d) The ball carriers knee touches the ground
 - e) Interceptions
 - f) The ball carriers flag falls off
 - g) Fumbles
 - h) The ball carriers' flag are not spread out on the hip, backside, hip

Section 14: Penalties

1. All penalties will be called by the officiating crew. Among the most common are the following:
 - a. Defensive
 - i. Offside – five (5) yards and replay of down
 - ii. Interference – five (5) yards and automatic first down
 - iii. Illegal Flag Pulling – before carrier/receiver touches the ball – five (5) yards and automatic first down
 - iv. Illegal Contact – Holding or Pushing – five (5) yards and replay of down
 - v. Illegal Defense – rushing more than six (6) players or having more than six (6) players on the line of scrimmage – five (5) yards and replay of down
 - vi. Neutral Zone Infraction (Defense must line up one (1) yard off the ball) – five (5) yards and replay of down
 - b. Offensive
 - i. Holding – five (5) yards from the line of scrimmage and replay of down
 - ii. Illegal Contact (intentional contact by the ball carrier with the defender – running over the defender, illegal blocks in the back/below waist, etc...) – fifteen (15) yards from the line of scrimmage and replay of down
 - iii. Illegal Motion – False Start – having more than one player in motion at the snap. Remaining offensive players must be set for on full second

prior to the snap – five (5) yards from the line of scrimmage and replay of down

- iv. Illegal Forward Pass (passing across the line of scrimmage) – five (5) yards from the line of scrimmage and loss of down
 - v. Flag Guarding– five (5) yards from the spot of the foul, the resulting spot will determine down and distance
- c. Unsportsmanlike Conduct – fifteen (15) yards and possible ejection of that player by the referee at their discretion. Two (2) unsportsmanlike conduct penalties is an automatic ejection for current game and the following game. This can include, but not limited to:
- i. Tackling
 - ii. Elbowing
 - iii. Cheap Shots
 - iv. Chop Blocking
 - v. Use of Profanity
 - vi. Fighting
 - vii. Illegal Contact by the ball carrier (attempting to run over defender)