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New York Flag Football League 

Rule Book

[RULE 1 The GAME, PLAYERS AND EQUIPMENT 3](#_Toc128599453)

[Section 1 General 3](#_Toc128599454)

[Section 2 The Field and Markings 3](#_Toc128599455)

[Section 3 Game Equipment 3](#_Toc128599456)

[Section 4 Players and Their Equipment 3](#_Toc128599457)

[RULE 2 DEFINITION OF PLAYING TERMS 4](#_Toc128599458)

[Section 1 Team and Player Designations 4](#_Toc128599459)

[Section 2 Ball – Status and Catching and Touching 5](#_Toc128599460)

[Section 3 Blocking and Deflagging 5](#_Toc128599461)

[Section 4 Shift 6](#_Toc128599462)

[Section 5 Down and Series 6](#_Toc128599463)

[Section 6 Lines 6](#_Toc128599464)

[Section 7 Out-of-Bounds 6](#_Toc128599465)

[Section 8 Zones 7](#_Toc128599466)

[Section 9 Kicks 7](#_Toc128599467)

[Section 10 Advancing the Ball 7](#_Toc128599468)

[Section 11 Snap 7](#_Toc128599469)

[Section 12 Handing the Ball 7](#_Toc128599470)

[Section 13 Passing the Ball 7](#_Toc128599471)

[Section 14 Foul 8](#_Toc128599472)

[Section 15 Spots Used in Administration 8](#_Toc128599473)

[Section 16 Hurdling 8](#_Toc128599474)

[Section 17 Tripping 9](#_Toc128599475)

[Section 18 Time-Outs 9](#_Toc128599476)

[Section 19 Ready-for-Play 9](#_Toc128599477)

[Section 20 Force 9](#_Toc128599478)

[Section 21 Rule 9](#_Toc128599479)

[RULE 3 PERIODS, TIME FACTORS AND SUBSTITUTIONS 10](#_Toc128599480)

[Section 1 Length of Periods (Halves) 10](#_Toc128599481)

[Section 2 Starting and Ending Each Half 10](#_Toc128599482)

[Section 3 Starting and Stopping the Clock 10](#_Toc128599483)

[Section 4 Ball Ready-for-Play and Delay 11](#_Toc128599484)

[Section 5 Substitutions 11](#_Toc128599485)

[RULE 4 Ball in Play, Dead Ball, Out-of-Bounds & Deflagging 11](#_Toc128599486)

[Section 1 Putting the Ball in Play 11](#_Toc128599487)

[Section 2 Dead Ball and End of the Down 11](#_Toc128599488)

[Section 3 Dead Ball Spot, Out-of-Bounds and In-bounds Spots 12](#_Toc128599489)

[Section 4 Deflagging 12](#_Toc128599490)

[RULE 5 DOWNS AND TEAM POSSESSION AFTER PENALTY 13](#_Toc128599491)

[Section 1 Series of Downs 13](#_Toc128599492)

[Section 2 Down and Possession after Penalty 13](#_Toc128599493)

[Section 3 Line-to-Gain 14](#_Toc128599494)

[RULE 6 KICKING THE BALL AND FAIR CATCH 14](#_Toc128599495)

[Section 1 Punts **Error! Bookmark not defined.**](#_Toc128599496)

[Section 2 Kicks Dead in the End Zone 15](#_Toc128599497)

[Section 3 Fair Catch 15](#_Toc128599498)

[RULE 7 SNAPPING, HANDING AND PASSING THE BALL 15](#_Toc128599499)

[Section 1 Before the Snap 15](#_Toc128599500)

[Section 2 Position and Action During the Snap 16](#_Toc128599501)

[Section 3 Handing and Advancing the Ball 16](#_Toc128599502)

[Section 4 Fumble and Backward Pass 17](#_Toc128599503)

[Section 5 Forward Pass 17](#_Toc128599504)

[RULE 8 SCORING PLAYS AND TOUCHBACKS 18](#_Toc128599505)

[Section 1 Value of Scores 19](#_Toc128599506)

[Section 2 Touchdown **Error! Bookmark not defined.**](#_Toc128599507)

[Section 3 Try-for-Point 19](#_Toc128599508)

[Section 4 Force, Safety and Touchback 20](#_Toc128599509)

[Section 5 Tie Games and Overtime Procedure 20](#_Toc128599510)

[RULE 9 CONDUCT OF PLAYERS AND OTHERS 21](#_Toc128599511)

[Section 1 Helping the Runner 21](#_Toc128599512)

[Section 2 Illegal Use of Hands and Holding and Blocking 21](#_Toc128599513)

[Section 3 Illegal Personal Contact 23](#_Toc128599514)

[Section 4 Non-contact Unsportsmanlike Conduct By Players 23](#_Toc128599515)

[Section 5 Illegal Participation 24](#_Toc128599516)

[Section 6 Illegal Kicking or Batting 24](#_Toc128599517)

[Section 7 Non-contact Unsportsmanlike Conduct by Non-Players 24](#_Toc128599518)

[Section 8 Unfair Acts 25](#_Toc128599519)

[Section 9 Protests and Suspensions 25](#_Toc128599520)

[RULE 10 PENALTY ENFORCEMENT 26](#_Toc128599521)

[Section 1 Procedure after a Foul 26](#_Toc128599522)

[Section 2 Double and Multiple Fouls 26](#_Toc128599523)

[Section 3 Types of Play and Basic Enforcement Spots 26](#_Toc128599524)

[Section 4 Administering Penalties 27](#_Toc128599525)

[Section 5 Special Enforcements 27](#_Toc128599526)

[Football Penalty Enforcement **Error! Bookmark not defined.**](#_Toc128599527)

[PERTINENT FLAG FOOTBALL RULES **Error! Bookmark not defined.**](#_Toc128599528)

[SUMMARY OF PENALTIES 27](#_Toc128599529)

NOTE: The designation “K” refers to any player of the kicking team and “R” refers to any player of the receiving team. The designation “A” refers to members of the offensive team and “B” refers to any member of the defensive team. The use of masculine pronouns is arbitrary and not meant to be sexist.

# RULE 1 THE GAME, PLAYERS AND EQUIPMENT

## Section 1 General

1. Football is played between two teams of seven players on a rectangular field. Each team must begin with either 5 to 7 players, but may continue with fewer players if no substitutes are available after the scheduled playing time. Each team may play with up to 7 players regardless of the number of opposing players.
2. A crew of officials administers the game. Officials’ jurisdiction begins with the scheduled coin toss of the game (or the first game if multiple games are scheduled). The Referees have authority to rule promptly, in the spirit of good sportsmanship, on any situation not specifically covered in these rules. All players, non-players, and others authorized to be within the team area are subject to these rules and are governed by the decisions of the officials.

## Section 2 Field and Markings

1. The field will be rectangular with the preferred dimensions of 60 yards by 30 yards (plus two end zones of 10 yards deep), although facility limitations may cause the field dimensions to be modified.
2. The sidelines and end lines are the boundary of the football field. These lines demark out-of-bounds; measurements will be from the inside edges of these lines. Each goal line is entirely in its end zone so that the edge toward the field of play and its vertical plane is the actual goal line. Each sideline is entirely out-of-bounds. The inside edge of the end line is the outer limit of each end zone.
3. End zones and in-bounds lines will be marked with brightly colored, flexible cone pylons. These cones will be placed on the out-of-bounds and end zone lines.
4. All non-players, coaches and substitutes must remain in their team box unless they are a substitute or replaced player about to become a player. The team box is within an area 2 yards behind the sideline and bound by the extension of both 10-yard lines.

Outside team/ coaches’ area – 5 yds

1. No more than three coaches may be in the coach’s area (but not on the field of play). The sideline, team box and the extension of both 20 yard-lines bind the coach’s area.

NOTE: If repeated infractions occur: 10 yards and/or disqualification of team personnel.

##

## Section 3 Game Equipment

1. Teams will provide their own Wilson NFL footballs. Either team may use their opponent’s ball at any time. The Referee will decide whether the ball meets the specifications or may authorize substituting a non-sanctioned ball. If the field is wet, teams may have a towel with the center or quarterback to dry the ball between plays.
2. A down indicator will mark the spot from where the ball is to be snapped and the down. A beanbag will be used to mark the ball’s spot and the line-to-gain.

## Section 4 Players and Their Equipment

1. Each team will designate up to two players as Field Captains. If all Captains become a non-player, another player will then be designated. The designated Captain(s) will confer with officials. A Captain’s first choice of any offered decision is final. Decisions involving penalties will be made before any charged time-out is granted to either team.
2. Players on each team must wear team jerseys. Jerseys must be long enough to remain tucked in to the pants. Jerseys must have numbers.
3. **All players must wear league approved shorts. The shorts must be black. Vertical stripes on a player’s pants are not allowed. Shorts MAY NOT have belt loops or pockets.**
4. Every player must wear shoes that completely cover the foot. Metal cleats, or those that, in the opinion of the umpire, are hazardous may not be worn.
5. Players must wear a belt around their waist that includes “triple threat” that hang at the player’s side and posterior side (3 flags). The flags must contrast with the player’s pants. Flags may not be looped around the inside of the belt before securing the belt. The flags shall be freely removable. They will be at least 2 inches wide and 12 inches long at all times.
6. Players are highly encouraged to wear an intraoral mouth and tooth protector.
7. Players may wear soft, pliable pads or soft pads specifically made for scrimmage pants; soft, single-layer, pliable elastic joint braces; stocking caps and other caps without hard bills and prescription or athletic safety eyeglasses. Eyeglasses are allowed and must be plastic sports frames or large goggles must be worn over glasses.. Tape, applied in fewer than four layers, may be used to support joints, such as wrists or fingers. Sunglasses are allowed, but plastic frames and lenses must be used.
8. Illegal equipment includes:
	1. Helmets
	2. Any kind of pads with hard components such as those for shoulder, hand, forearm or thigh, unless specifically authorized by the Head Referee
	3. Any hard or unyielding substance, other than permitted by a specific rule
	4. Anything that, in the opinion of the Head Referee, would confuse, potentially harm or endanger other players or is rough or abrasive
	5. Watches, rings or other jewelry
	6. Caps with hard bills
	7. Any foreign slippery or sticky substances

Failure to properly wear required equipment during a down – 5 yards, live ball foul

1. Prior to the game, the Team Captain will verify that all his players are legally equipped. The Head Referee will determine any questions concerning equipment legality. Each player must properly wear the required equipment while the ball is in play. A player with missing or illegal equipment, if spotted by an official will be subject to an equipment violation (live ball foul). .

# RULE 2 DEFINITION OF PLAYING TERMS

## Section 1 Team and Player Designations

1. A player is one of the team members who are designated to start either half of the game or who replaces another player. A player continues to be a player until a substitute enters the field and indicates to the player that he is replaced.
2. A disqualified player is a player barred from further participation in the game.
3. A non-player is a coach, trainer or other attendant, or a substitute who does not participate by touching the ball, hindering the opponent or influencing play.
4. **A quarterback is the player who receives the ball at the snap.**
5. A runner is the player who is in possession of a live ball or simulated possession of a live ball.
6. A pass rusher is a Team B player whose intent is to cross the line-of-scrimmage in an attempt to interfere with a passing play and/or deflag the passer. To be eligible, the initial pass rusher must be lined up at least 5 yards off the LOS.

## Section 2 Ball – Status and Catching and Touching

1. A live ball is a ball in play while a down is in progress. A dead ball is a ball not in play and indicates that the game is between downs.
2. A loose ball is a pass or fumble or a kick or otherwise not in player possession. A loose ball that has not yet touched the ground is in flight. Any loose ball continues to be a loose ball until a player catches it and secures possession or the ball becomes dead.
3. A catch is the act of establishing player possession of a live ball in flight. A catch of an opponent’s pass or fumble is an interception. If a player attempts to catch or intercept a loose ball while he is in the air, the ball must be in his possession when he returns to the ground in-bounds (at least the first foot must touch the ground in-bounds) prior to touching out-of-bounds. EXCEPTIONS: If a player catches a pass and is pushed out-of-bounds, the pass is considered complete if an official judges that the player would have caught the ball in-bounds except for the pushing.
4. A fair catch is a catch beyond the K’s scrimmage line and between the goal lines of any legal kick by a receiver under conditions in which the receiver forfeits his right to advance the ball in return for protection against being deflagged or contacted by an opponent.
5. A valid fair catch signal is made by extending and laterally waving one arm, at full arm’s length, above the head by any receiver. An invalid signal is one that fails to comply with a valid signal and is given before a kick is caught or recovered. An illegal signal is a fair catch signal given by the runner after catching or recovering a kicked ball.
6. A simultaneous catch is a catch in which there is joint possession of a live ball by players in-bounds.
7. A fumble is any loss of player possession other than by passing, kicking or handing.
8. A muff is touching a loose ball by a player in an unsuccessful attempt to secure possession; this includes an accidental kick.
9. Batting is intentionally slapping or striking, with hand, leg, arm or knee, a loose ball or a ball in player possession.

## Section 3 Blocking, Rushing, and Deflagging

1. Blocking is legally obstructing an opponent via contact with hands or body. Blockers must be on their feet before, during and after contact is made with an opponent. A blocker is allowed to contact only that portion of the opponent’s body between the waist and shoulders and the blocker’s hands or forearms must be in front or to the side of the player being blocked. Exceptions: a blocker who loses personal body control due to an opponent’s aggressiveness after contact shall not be penalized if he contacts an opponent other than as specified. This initial point of contact against an opponent must be with either open hands with palms contacting an opponent or a forearm. In any block, the hands or arms may not be swinging forward faster than the blocker’s body. Hands must always be in advance of the elbows and the arms must be flexed at the elbows. Players must block with hands and elbows within the frame of their body. Players are not allowed to cross their arms and thrust forward in the manner of a battering ram.
2. Clipping is an illegal block occurring when the force of the initial contact is from behind an opponent. Doubtful cases involving a side block or the opponent turning his back to a blocker are to be judged by an official according to whether the opponent was able to see or ward off the blocker.
3. Blocking below the waist is making illegal contact below the waist of an opponent.
4. Pass rushing is the act of crossing the line-of-scrimmage in an attempt to interfere with a passing play and/or deflag the passer. A pass rusher must avoid charging into any Team A player. When encountering a blocker from Team A, a pass rusher must (a) stop prior to making contact with the blocker or (b) clearly change direction in an effort to move around the blocker. If a pass rusher makes an effort to move around the blocker and the blocker moves into the path of the pass rusher, there is no charging. In any case, the pass rusher may block or contact the blocker using only the techniques described in 2.3.1 above. Any Team B player may pass rush provided that the conditions in 2.8.1 below are met. Any Team B player may pass rush from any position on the field provided they are on B’s side of the ball and outside the expanded neutral zone (five yards from LOS)
5. **Deflagging is clearly removing the runner’s flags.** Deflagging interference is when the runner intentionally slaps or obstructs the free action of an opponent’s hand during a deflagging attempt. The runner’s hand may not be moving faster than his body nor shall not be below his waist section when initial contact with an opponent is made. The runner’s arm may not be rigid and straight (stiff-arm).

## Section 4 Shift

1. A shift is the action of any offensive player(s) who, after a huddle or after taking set positions, move to a new set position before the ensuing snap.

## Section 5 Down and Series

1. A down is a unit of the game which starts with a legal snap or a kickoff after the ball is declared ready-for-play and which ends when the ball becomes dead. Between downs is the interval during which the ball is dead.
2. Loss of a down is the loss of the right to repeat a down.
3. A series of downs (series) is a set of four downs numbered 1, 2, 3 or 4 that is awarded to a team.

## Section 6 Lines

1. A yard line is any line and its vertical plane parallel to the end lines. The yard lines, marked or unmarked, in the field of play are numbered in yards from a team’s goal line to the middle of the field.
2. A goal line is the zero yard line and its vertical plane which marks the start of the field of play 10 yards from the end line. The goal line extends laterally around the globe. A team’s goal is the one they are defending.
3. An end line is the outer limit of each end zone.
4. A sideline is the lateral limit of the field of play and the end zones; it extends from one end line to the other.
5. A scrimmage is the action of the two teams during a down which begins with a snap or free-kick. The scrimmage line for each team is the vertical plane through the point of the ball nearest the team’s goal line. It is determined when the ball is ready-for-play and remains until the next ready-for-play signal.
6. Offensive players are on their line-of-scrimmage when they face their opponent’s goal line. Offensive players must be within one yard of the line-of-scrimmage to be on the line. They may stand, crouch, or kneel. At the snap, both feet of every player shall be outside the outside foot of any adjacent player. All offensive players must be behind the line-of-scrimmage at the snap.
7. A defensive player is on the line-of-scrimmage when he is within 1 yard of the scrimmage line at the snap. All defensive players must be beyond the line-of-scrimmage at the snap.
8. The line-to-gain is the yard line established when a new series (1st down) occurs. Unless there is a penalty, the line-to-gain for a new series is 10 yards in advance of the ball when played for the first down of the series. If the line-to-gain extends in to the end zone, the goal line is the line-to-gain.

## Section 7 Out-of-Bounds

1. A player or other person is out-of-bounds when any part of him touches anything other than another player or game official, which is on or outside the sideline or end line.
2. A ball in player possession is out-of-bounds when the runner or the ball touches anything, other than another player or game official, which is on or outside the sidelines or end line. Exception: The cones marking the sideline, goal line, and back line are in. It is a legal catch if the first foot of the receiver is in-bounds if the ball was caught while the receiver was in the air.
3. A loose ball is out-of-bounds when it touches anything, including a player or game official, which is out of bounds.

## Section 8 Zones

1. The offense starts a down behind the line-of-scrimmage and the defense starts a down beyond the line-of-scrimmage.
2. The expanded neutral zone extends five yards past the line-of-scrimmage on the B’s side of the ball

## Section 9 Kicks

1. Kicking the ball means intentionally striking the ball with knee, lower leg, or foot.
2. A kicker is the player who punts the football. Players on this team are called kickers and their opponents are called receivers.
3. A kick ends when a player gains possession or when the ball becomes dead.
4. A punt is legally kicking the ball by the player who drops it and kicks it before the ball hits the ground.
5. A scrimmage kick is a punt from at or behind the kicker’s line-of-scrimmage. For announced punts, a scrimmage kick formation must be used; it is a formation where all the teammates of the kicker, except the kicker, must be within 1 yard of the line-of-scrimmage. The kicker must be 5 yards behind the line-of-scrimmage when he receives the snap and must attempt to kick the ball within 5 seconds from near the set position. An announced punt also requires that the receivers have 4 players within 1 yard beyond their line-of-scrimmage until after the ball is kicked. No receiver may cross or move off the line-of-scrimmage until after the ball is kicked.

## Section 10 Advancing the Ball

1. The ball may be advanced by a scrimmage running play or scrimmage passing play.
2. A scrimmage running play is advancing the ball across the line of scrimmage via a runner. It includes handing a pass thrown parallel with or toward the passer’s end line. Only one scrimmage running play may be used in any one possession. A scrimmage running play does not include a legal forward pass. Note: Point after conversions are considered a separate series, so running is allowed on these plays.
3. A scrimmage pass play is advancing the ball across the line-of-scrimmage by throwing a forward pass.

## Section 11 Snap

1. A snap is handing or passing the ball backward from its position on the ground. The snap begins when the snapper first moves the ball other than an adjustment. In a snap, the movement must be a quick and continuous backward motion of the hand(s) during which the ball actually leaves the hand(s) of the snapper and touches the quarterback before it touches a Team A lineman or the ball touches the ground. The snap ends when the ball touches the ground or any player. The player who snaps the ball, usually the center, is the snapper.

##

## Section 12 Handing the Ball

1. Handing the ball is transferring player possession from one teammate to another without passing, fumbling, or kicking it. The ball is still in contact with the first player when it is touched by the receiving player.

## Section 13 Passing the Ball

1. Passing the ball is throwing it. In a pass, the ball travels in flight. The initial direction determines whether a pass is forward or backward; therefore, a shuffle pass, screen pass, etc. is either backward or forward.
2. A pass ends when it is caught or not caught, touches the ground, or is out-of-bounds.
3. A passer is a player who throws a forward pass. He continues to be a passer until the pass ends or until he moves to participate in the play.
4. A forward pass is a pass thrown toward the opponent’s end line.
5. A backward pass is a pass thrown parallel with or toward the passer’s end line.
6. A catchable forward pass is an untouched legal forward pass beyond the neutral zone where a Team A player has a reasonable opportunity to move toward and catch the ball. When in question, a forward pass is catchable.

## Section 14 Foul

1. A foul is a rule infraction for which a penalty is prescribed. A penalty is a yardage loss that may be imposed by a rule against a team that has committed the foul; it may include a loss of down, but usually includes replaying the down. The type of fouls are:
	1. Player - A foul, other than unsportsmanlike, by a player in the game (hereafter referred to as a foul)
	2. Non-player or unsportsmanlike - A non-contact foul during the down which is not illegal participation and does not influence the play in progress.
	3. Double - One or more live ball fouls, other than unsportsmanlike, committed by each team at such time that the penalties offset.
	4. Multiple - Two or more live ball fouls, other than unsportsmanlike, committed by the same team during the same down at such time that the offended team is permitted a choice of penalties.
	5. Dead Ball - A foul that occurs in the time interval after a down has ended and before a ball is next legally snapped or free-kicked.
	6. Simultaneous with Snap - An action or game situation that becomes an infraction when the ball is snapped.

NOTE: No foul causes loss of the ball. No live ball foul causes the ball to become dead. There are game situations that produce results somewhat similar to fouls but are called violations. They include player disqualification, forfeiture of a game, and players (accidentally) crossing the line-of-scrimmage before a declared punt.

## Section 15 Spots Used in Administration

1. The previous spot is where the ball was last snapped.
2. The spot where a run ends is where the runner loses player possession, where an illegal pass is thrown, or where the ball becomes dead in his possession.
3. The succeeding spot, as related to any non-player, unsportsmanlike, or dead foul, is where the ball would next be snapped if a foul had not occurred. The succeeding spot is the 10-yard line after a score, unless adjusted by a foul.

The spot of a player foul is where the foul occurs. If a player foul occurs out-of-bounds and during a down, the spot of the foul is at the intersection of the sideline and the yard line extended through the spot on which the foul occurs. (A non-player or unsportsmanlike foul is treated as dead ball foul and is administered from the succeeding spot). A ball carrier is down when he/she has his/her flag seized, at the spot ***WHERE THE*** ***FLAG IS PULLED, NOT THE BALL.***

##

## Section 16 Hurdling

1. Hurdling is the runner jumping so that both feet leave the ground at the same time. The runner may not hurdle to prevent being deflagged. The runner may step over an opponent who is lying prone.

## Section 17 Tripping

1. Tripping is obstructing an opponent below the knee.

## Section 18 Time-Outs

1. Time-outs are suspensions of play when any player requests a charged time-out or when an official suspends play. Each team is allowed two charged time-outs per half. The duration of each charged time-out is 30 seconds..
2. An official may suspend play with an official’s time-out to administer a penalty, review a misapplied rule, or manage other game-related contingencies. Official’s time-outs are discretionary.

## Section 19 Ready-for-Play

1. A ready-for-play signal is an indication by the referee that a snap may occur. It is a short blast of the whistle given after administration duties are complete, e.g. administering a penalty and/or after the ball is spotted for the succeeding down. The ready-for-play signal is given during a dead ball interval. A ball may not be legally snapped until the ready-for-play signal.

## Section 20 Force

1. Force is a result of energy exerted by a player that provides initial movement of the ball. The term force is used only in connection with the goal line and in only one direction, i.e. from the field of play into the end zone. Force may result from a carry, fumble, kick, pass, or snap. Force is not a factor on grounded, muffed kicks in R’s end zone; they are always a touchback regardless of who supplied the force.

## Section 21 Rule

1. A rule is one of the groups of regulations that govern the game. A game regulation, commonly called a rule, sometimes states what a player may do, but if there is no such statement for a given act (such as faking a pass), it is assumed that he may do what is not prohibited. In like manner, a game regulation sometimes states or implies that the ball is dead or that a foul is involved. If it does not, it is assumed that the ball is alive and that no foul has occurred to affect the given situation. If a foul is mentioned, it is assumed that it is not part of a double or multiple fouls unless so stated or implied.

# RULE 3 PERIODS, TIME FACTORS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

## Section 1 Length of Periods (Halves)

1. The game shall be played in two periods (hereinafter called “half”) of 25 minutes. The clock will run continuously. Exception: The clock will stop for player’s time-outs, official’s time-outs, penalty conferences and the 2-minute warning of each half.
2. A game shall last only as long as the time it has been allotted. A team who does not have at least 5 players present to play within at the scheduled start of the game shall utilize the curtsey rule to bring the player total up to five; if this is not successful they must forfeit the game. The score of a forfeit game shall be 21-0. Ten (10) minutes prior to the end of the allotted time, both Teams will be warned. At the end of the allotted time, the game shall end following the next play. The score of that game at that point shall be the final score.
3. During the last two minutes of each half, the clock will run continuously with the following exceptions: the clock will stop for player’s time-outs, official’s time-outs, penalty conferences, first downs, scoring play, a change of possession, incomplete pass and a player deflagged out of bounds.
4. A half may be shortened by agreement of opposing coaches and the Head Referee.
5. Games interrupted because of events beyond the control of the officials shall be continued from the point of interruption unless the teams agree to do otherwise. When weather conditions are construed to be hazardous, the officials are authorized to delay or suspend the game.
6. There may be up to a 5-minute intermission between the haves when time allows.

## Section 2 Starting and Ending Each Half

1. Three minutes before the start of the game, the officials and team captains will meet at midfield. One team will arbitrarily be assigned heads (or a color if two-colored coin is used) and the other team will be assigned tails (or a color). The Head Referee will toss a coin to determine which team is permitted a choice of options. The options are: starting on offense, starting on defense or defending a goal. The captain who loses the toss will choose from the remaining option. The second half mirrors the first half.
2. The team that begins on offence will start at their 10-yard line.
3. Two minutes before the end of both halves, the clock operator will notify both teams and officials of the time remaining.
4. If a dead ball, unsportsmanlike conduct or non-player foul occurs after either half ends, the penalty shall be measured from the succeeding spot.

## Section 3 Starting and Stopping the Clock

1. At the beginning of each half, the clock shall start when the ball is hiked on the first play.
2. Each team is permitted 2 timeouts per half. Unused timeouts from the first half may not be used in the second half.
3. Time-outs will last 30 seconds; the ready-for-play signal will be given immediately after the time-out expires.
4. **Clock starts of the ready to play whistle for the following: OFFICIALS TIMEOUT, PENALTY CONFREANCE, FIRST DOWN**
5. **Clock starts of the snap for the following: TEAM TIMEOUT, INCOMPLETE PASS (UNDER TWO MINUTES), OUT OF BOUNDS DEFLAGGING (UDNER 2 MINUTES), TWO MINUTE WARNING, TOUCHDOWN and all change of possessions (UDNER 2 MINUTES)**

## Section 4 Ball Ready-for-Play and Delay

1. The ball is declared ready-for-play when, after it has been placed for a down, the referee gives the ready-for-play signal. NOTE On a punt the kicker must kick the ball within 5 seconds of the snap.

Delay of game

5 yards

1. Action or inaction that delays putting the ball in play is delay of game. This includes:
	1. Failing to snap the ball within 25 seconds after the ready-for-play signal**;**
	2. Unnecessarily carrying the ball after it becomes dead or intentionally consuming time when the down ends;
	3. No change in the ruling occurs after a coach-referee conference during which the referee is requested to reconsider the application of a rule after all permissible timeouts have been used;
	4. Failure to wear the legal or required equipment when the ball is snapped;
	5. Failure of the offense to assist the officials in resetting the field.
	6. Failure of offense to retrieve the ball following a play.
	7. Snapping the ball prior to ready for play signal.
2. Failure to play within 2 minutes after being ordered to do so by the referee shall result in forfeiture.

## Section 5 Substitutions

1. No substitutes shall enter during a down. Between downs, any number of eligible substitutes may replace players provided the substitution is completed by having the replaced players off the field before the ball becomes live.

# RULE 4 Ball in Play, Dead Ball, Out-of-Bounds, & Deflagging

## Section 1 Putting the Ball in Play

1. A snap shall put a ball in play for each scrimmage down. After putting a ball in play, the ball remains alive until the down ends.
2. After a dead ball has been declared ready-for-play, it becomes live when it is legally snapped. The ball remains dead and the down has not begun if a snap is attempted before the ball is ready-for-play or there is an illegal snap or other snap infraction or a dead ball foul occurs.

## Section 2 Dead Ball and End of the Down

1. The ball becomes dead and the down is ended when:
	1. a live ball goes out of bounds;
	2. the runner goes out-of-bounds or allows any part of his body except hand or foot to touch the ground (note: the down does not end if a ball touches the ground while still in control of a player);
	3. the runner is deflagged (note: if a runner’s flag falls off accidentally, he is not considered down until touched by a defender);
	4. the runner’s jersey becomes untucked and interferes with deflagging;
	5. the runner hurdles or lowers his head to avoid being deflagged or uses deflagging interference;
	6. any fumble or muffed ball, including a punt muffed in flight, touches the ground, except a snapped ball dropped by the punter. If a loose ball touches the ground, it becomes dead where the balls hits the ground unless fumbled forward, then where the runner lost possession;
	7. any forward pass (legal or illegal) is incomplete;
	8. any loose ball is simultaneously caught by opposing players;
	9. any member of the kicking team catches or possesses a kicked ball or touches a grounded, kicked ball;
	10. a kicked ball becomes loose behind the line of scrimmage;
	11. the passer passes to himself;
	12. a second legal forward pass is thrown;
	13. following a valid or invalid fair catch signal given by R and the ball is caught by R;
	14. any score occurs;
	15. a runner has less than three flags and is touched by an opponent between the shoulders; and waist, including touching a runner whose three flags are not reasonably in proper position (unless misadjusted by action during a down)
	16. an official inadvertently sounds his whistle;
	17. the passer crosses the line of scrimmage after A has already used their scrimmage running play;

NOTE: The ball belongs to the team in possession after a simultaneous catch.

1. During a down, or during a down in which a penalty for a foul is declined, if an inadvertent whistle occurs while:
	1. A legal pass or snap is in flight or during a legal kick, the down shall be replayed.
	2. The ball is loose following a backward pass, fumble, illegal forward pass or illegal kick, the team last in possession may choose to put the ball in play where possession was lost or replay the down.
	3. The ball is in player possession, the team may choose to accept the play at that point or replay the down.

## Section 3 Dead Ball Spot, Out-of-Bounds and In-bounds Spots

1. The dead ball spot is the spot under the foremost point of the flag when it becomes dead by rule or is declared dead by an official.
2. When a runner goes out-of-bounds, the in-bounds spot is fixed by the yard line through the foremost point of the flag at the time the runner crosses the plane of the sideline.
3. If a ball is declared out-of-bounds and the out-of-bounds spot is between the goal lines, the ball shall be put in play at the in-bounds spot unless a forward pass is involved. If the out-of-bounds spot is behind a goal line, it is a safety or a touchback.
4. If a ball is declared out-of-bounds during a forward pass, the ball is returned to the spot of the snap if the pass is legal and to the spot of the pass if it is illegal and the penalty is accepted.

## Section 4 Deflagging

1. The runner is considered “tackled” when a player **clearly removes** the runner’s flags. The player should hold the flags over his head at the spot of the deflagging.
2. A defensive player may not hold, push, or knock the runner down in an attempt to remove the flag. It is best for the defensive player to attempt to grab only one flag at a time. Attempting to grab more than one flag at the same time may be considered illegal blocking if it appears that the deflagger is attempting to obstruct the forward progress of the runner.
3. The runner must keep flags on each side of his body at waist level and across the posterior. Flags not in proper position will cause a runner to be considered deflagged when touched. Allowances will be made for flag position shifts as a result of action that occurs during the down.
4. If a runner has less than three flags and is touched by an opponent between the shoulders and waist, the runner is considered to be deflagged. The ball becomes dead at the spot where the runner’s waist was when the runner is touched.

# RULE 5 DOWNS AND TEAM POSSESSION AFTER PENALTY

## Section 1 Series of Downs

1. A team in possession of the ball shall have four consecutive downs (a series) to advance to the line-to-gain. Any down may be repeated if provided for by rules (usually a penalty).
2. When a scrimmage down ends and after considering any live ball fouls, except unsportsmanlike fouls, with the ball in the field of play or out-of-bounds between the goal lines, a new series is to be awarded:
	1. to Team A if the ball belongs to A on or beyond the line-to-gain;
	2. to Team B if the ball belongs to B at the end of any down;
	3. to Team B if, at the end of the 4th down, the ball belongs to A behind the line-to-gain;
	4. to the team in possession at the end of the down, if there is a change of possession during the down, unless the penalty is accepted for a foul which occurred before the change of possession;
	5. to Team R if K punts during any scrimmage down or an unannounced punt goes out-of-bounds.

 The loss of down aspect of a penalty has no significance following a change of possession or if the line-to-gain is reached after enforcement. The forward-most point of the ball, when declared dead between the goal lines, shall be the determining factor in establishing the next line-to-gain.

## Section 2 Down and Possession after Penalty

1. When a penalty is declined, the number of the next down is the same as if the foul had not occurred. If a double foul occurs during a down, the number of the next down is the same as that of the down in which the foul occurred. After a distance penalty, the ball belongs to the team in possession at the time of the foul. Team possession may then change if a new series is awarded.
2. When a foul by A or B occurs during a scrimmage down and before any change of possession, and before a receiver is first to touch a scrimmage kick while it is beyond the line, the ball belongs to A after measurement. The number of the next down is the same as that of the down during which the foul occurred unless penalty acceptance includes a 1st down or loss of down or the measurement or the advance results in a 1st down.
3. When a foul by A or B occurs prior to a scrimmage down or simultaneously with the snap, the number of the next down after measurement is the same as the number established before the foul occurred unless measurement for a foul by B results in a 1st down.
4. Following a foul, a series of downs ends when:
	1. the acceptance of the penalty includes the award of a 1st down;
	2. acceptance or declination of any penalty leaves A in possession beyond the line-to-gain;
	3. declination of any penalty leaves B in possession;
	4. there is acceptance or declination of the penalty for any foul which occurs after team possession changes during a down.

After a series of downs ends, a new series, with the line-to-gain ten yards in advance of the ball is awarded unless a team scores. The 1st down is awarded to the team in possession when the foul occurs unless, as in c) and d), declining the penalty leaves the other team in possession.

## Section 3 Line-to-Gain

1. The line-to-gain is established at the beginning of each half on Team A’s 20- yard line and at the end of the down in which a new series is awarded and after considering the effect of any act that occurs during the down. The line-to-gain remains fixed until the series ends and a new line-to-gain is established.
2. A ball touching the goal line (vertical) plane when it becomes dead is in the end zone.

#

# RULE 6 KICKING THE BALL AND FAIR CATCH

## Punts/Throws

1. On 4th down and before the ready-for-play signal, the captain(s) of Team A will be given the option for punt/throw protection or use a scrimmage play; they must declare this option quickly and the referee will announce this decision to the opposing team. The decision is irrevocable; if the down is replayed, team will be provided the same scrimmage play/punt option.
2. If team chooses protection, they must attempt a punt/throw. If punt is chosen they must punt, if throw is chosen they must throw. Punting/throwing team must be in scrimmage kick formation; an attempt to punt/throw must occur within 5 seconds after the punter receives the snapped ball. All teammates of the kicker/thrower, except the kicker/thrower, have all players on the LOS. 4 members/punt or 2 members/throw of the receiving team must be on their respective line-of-scrimmage when the ball is kicked.thrown.. Minor encroachments will be tolerated.

 NOTE: Team A may punt, unannounced, on any down, however the ball must be kicked behind the line-of-scrimmage. Note; the above only pertains to a punt, not a throw.

1. Any R may catch and advance a punt/throw. If R touches the ball in flight and the ball then touches the ground (muff a kick), it belongs to him and becomes dead.
2. Any K may obtain possession of a punt after it has been touched by R and before it touches the ground (catch a muffed kick); it belongs to him and becomes dead. If any K touches a grounded kicked ball, it becomes dead and belongs to the receiving team.
3. Touching of a low punt by any player is ignored if the touching is in the expanded neutral zone or on K’s side of the line-of-scrimmage.
4. When any punt goes out-of-bounds in the end zone or becomes dead in the end zone it is a touchback. When any punt goes out-of-bounds in the field of play the ball will be put in play at the in-bounds spot.
5. When throw goes out of bounds before falling on the field. Throwing team will be charge a 10 yard penalty from spot the ball went out of bounds. If the ball goes inside the 10 yard line teams have the option to move the ball to the 15 yard line. Example 1: If ball goes out of bounds at the 23 yard line then the team will take the penalty and move the ball to the 33 yard line. Example 2: If the ball goes out bounds inside the 10 yard line the team can start the ball on the 15 yard line).
6. Any kicked/thrown ball is not dead if it touches the ground and remains in-bounds beyond the line-of-scrimmage. It may be advanced by any R or becomes dead if any K touches the grounded ball. Any grounded, kicked ball that moves behind the line-of-scrimmage becomes dead and belongs to R.

## Section 2 Kicks Dead in the End Zone

1. Any kick muffed in flight that touches the ground while the kicked ball is on or behind R’s goal line is dead and becomes a touchback. If any kick becomes dead in K’s end zone, it is a safety. NOTE: K is team in possession during a kick. A kick ends when a player gains possession or when the ball becomes dead.
2. If a kick becomes dead in K’s end zone and the force is the kick, it is a safety if the kick is out-of-bounds or K has possession; it is a touchdown if R catches the kick or has possession.
3. Any kicked ball that goes out-of-bounds behind R’s goal line, untouched by R, is a touchback.

##

# RULE 7 SNAPPING, HANDING AND PASSING THE BALL

## Section 1 Before the Snap

Encroachment (dead ball foul) - 5 yds

1. No player shall encroach upon the neutral zone after the ball is declared ready-for-play by touching the ball or an opponent. After the snapper has made his final adjustment of the ball, it is encroachment for any player to break the plane of the line-of-scrimmage, except for the snapper’s right to be over the ball. When over the ball, the snapper shall have his feet behind the line and no part of his person other than a hand(s) on the ball may be beyond the foremost point of the ball. Exception: For announced punting situations, minor encroachments will be tolerated.

Encroachment (dead

1. After the ball is ready-for-play and until it is snapped, no defensive player may touch the ball or any Team A player.

False Start (dead ball foul) - 5 yds

1. After the ball is ready-for-play and before the snap, no false start shall be made by any A player. It is a false start if:
	1. a shift or feigned charge simulates action at the snap;
	2. any act is clearly intended to cause an opponent to encroach.

 If the false start causes B to encroach, only the false start is penalized. If offensive movement is caused by an irregularity such as calling players off the line for receiving a new signal or B stepping into the neutral zone too soon, the accidental false start is ignored.

1. The snapper may make preliminary adjustments to the ball before assuming a set position and before Team A lineman have assumed positions on their line. During these preliminary adjustments, the snapper may slightly lift the ball off of the ground for lateral rotation without changing the location of the ball, tilt the ball, or remove his hand(s).

Snap Infraction

(dead ball foul) – 5 yds

1. After gripping the ball following preliminary adjustment or prior to the snap and with the ball resting on the ground with the long axis at right angles to the line-of-scrimmage, the snapper may not:
	1. fail to clearly pause before the snap;
	2. remove both hands or slide his hand(s) along the ball;
	3. make any movement which simulates a snap;
	4. lift or move the ball in other than a legal snap.

 An illegal snap or other snap infraction causes the ball to remain dead.

## Section 2 Position and Action during the Snap

1. There are no restrictions to the number of Team A that must be on the line-of-scrimmage.

Illegal Formation

(Live ball foul) - 5 yds

1. After the ball is ready-for-play, each Team A player must momentarily be within 15 yards of the ball before the snap.

Illegal Motion

(Live ball foul) - 5 yds

1. Only one A player may be in motion at the snap and then only if such motion is not toward the line-of-scrimmage.

Illegal Shift

(Live ball foul) - 5 yds

1. After a huddle or shift, all Team A players shall come to an absolute stop and remain stationary, simultaneously, without pronounced movement of hands, feet, head or body for at least one second before the snap.
2. A legal snap shall be such that the ball leaves the hand(s) of the snapper and touches the quarterback, or the ground. A scrimmage down must start with a legal snap. An illegal snap causes the ball to remain dead.

Illegal Snap

(Dead ball foul) - 5 yds

1. At the snap, Team A players on the line-of-scrimmage must have both feet outside the outside foot of the player next to him.

Encroachment (live ball foul) –

5 yds

1. No defensive player shall be in the neutral zone at the time of the snap.

## Section 3 Handing and Advancing the Ball

Illegal Forward Handing - 5 yds & loss of down

1. Any player may hand the ball backward at any time.
2. During a down, Team A player may hand the ball forward behind the line to a teammate.
3. In each possession, Team A may use only one scrimmage running play, where the runner crosses the line-of-scrimmage. Any number of backward passes and hand-offs may be used before the runner crosses the line-of-scrimmage. If a shovel or a screen pass is used, its initial direction determines whether it is a forward or backward pass.
4. If more than one scrimmage running play is used during a series, play shall continue until the ball becomes dead by rule. All Team A progress beyond the line-of-scrimmage is negated. The ball will be spotted at the previous spot (spot of the snap) unless Team A controls the ball behind the previous spot or if there was a change of possession. If Team A controls the ball behind the previous spot, the down counts and the ball is spotted at the end of the run. If there was a change of possession, a new series will be awarded.
5. If a passer crosses the line-of-scrimmage and Team A has already used a running play for the series, the play is flagged and the play continues.

 NOTE: Only one scrimmage running play is allowed per possession; the other downs must include a forward pass.

## Section 4 Fumble and Backward Pass

1. During any down, any player in possession may make a backward pass or may lose possession through a fumble. There is no limit to the number of backward passes that may be made, including backward passes beyond the line-of-scrimmage.
2. Any player that catches a fumble or backward pass before it hits the ground may advance. If a fumble or backward pass hits the ground, it becomes dead where the ball hits the ground unless fumbled forward, then where the runner loses possession. If a backward pass or fumble goes out-of-bounds between the goal lines or becomes dead in-bounds or is caught simultaneously by opposing players, the ball belongs to the passing or fumbling team unless lost after 4th down. If a fumble or backward pass is out-of-bounds and becomes dead behind a goal line, the ball belongs to the team defending their goal and the result is either a touchback or safety.

## Section 5 Forward Pass

Forward Pass Classification:

 Legal Forward Pass: From in or behind the neutral zone

 Illegal Forward Pass: (Ball remains alive until declared dead by rule) From a point beyond B’s side of the neutral zone or after team possession has changed during the down

 Completed Forward Pass: Pass caught by any player or pass simultaneously caught by opposing players (ball becomes dead and belongs to the passing team)

 Incomplete Forward Pass: Pass which touches the ground; pass which goes out-of-bounds; pass possessed by a player who is in the air but first touches the ground out-of-bounds (NOTE exception in Rule 7.5.4.)

1. It is a legal forward pass, if during a scrimmage down and before team possession has changed, a player of Team A throws the ball with both feet of the passer on his side of the line when the ball is released. Only one legal forward pass (including a forward shuffle or screen pass) is permitted per down. If a second legal forward pass is thrown (behind the line), the ball becomes dead at the spot where the second pass was thrown.

Illegal Forward

Pass - 5 yds & loss of down and use of run

1. An illegal forward pass includes:
	1. a pass from B’s side of the line;
	2. a pass after team possession has changed during the down;
	3. any forward pass after a scrimmage running play has been established.

NOTE: Intentional grounding is allowed.

1. If a forward pass (legal or illegal) is complete, the ball may be advanced when caught by any player. If a forward pass is caught simultaneously by opponents, the ball comes dead and belongs to the passer’s team.
2. If a forward pass (legal or illegal) is incomplete, the ball becomes dead when the pass touches the ground or goes out-of-bounds. It is also incomplete when a player in the air possesses the pass and alights so that his first contact with the ground or with anything other than a player or game official is on or outside a boundary (first foot needs to be in-bounds). When contact by an opponent causes a receiver, who is airborne, to first contact the ground out-of-bounds, the pass is complete if the covering official judges that the receiver would have landed in-bounds if no contact had occurred. To complete the catch, the airborne player must have possession of the ball when he touches the ground. When an incompletion occurs, the down counts unless the pass is after a series has ended. If the pass is legal and incomplete, the passer’s team next snaps the ball (unless lost after a 4th down) from the spot of the previous snap. If the penalty for an illegal pass is accepted, measurement is from the spot of such pass. If the offended team declines the distance penalty, it has the choice of having the down counted at the spot of the illegal pass; or if the illegal pass is caught or intercepted, of having the ball put in play as determined by the action which followed the catch.
3. Pass eligibility rules apply on a legal forward pass. All Team A and Team B players are eligible.
4. No player of A or B shall interfere with an opponent beyond the line-of-scrimmage during a legal forward pass. For A, the restriction begins at the time of the snap, and for B, when the ball leaves the passer’s hand. The restriction does not apply if the pass does not cross the line. It is interference if any player who is beyond the neutral zone interferes with an opponent’s opportunity to move toward, catch, or bat a catchable ball.

Pass Interference -

Spot of infraction. First Down.

**NOTE: If Pass Interference by either team’s player is conspicuously intentional or unsportsmanlike, his team is penalized another 10 yards. If the foul is flagrant, e.g. tackling a receiver before the ball is caught; the offending player may be ejected.**

 **EXCEPTIONS TO INTERFERENCE**

1. Unavoidable contact occurs when two or more players are making a simultaneous, bona fide attempt to move toward, catch, or bat a catchable ball.

2. If the ball has been touched by A or B, restrictions end for all players.

3. If contact on A is immediately made by a Team B lineman and contact does not continue beyond the expanded neutral zone.

1. The passer may not pass to himself. He may catch his own pass if the ball first touches an opponent. The passer may not deliberately pass to an opponent to facilitate catching his own pass. If the passer passes to himself, the ball becomes dead. If the passer catches his own pass after the ball first touches an opponent, the pass is ignored relative to allowing only one legal forward pass per down.
2. It is illegal pass-play contact when any player who is beyond the neutral zone intentionally obstructs an opponent’s opportunity to move freely about the field. For A, the restriction begins when the ball is snapped. For B, the restriction begins when the pass is in the air or when the Team A player occupies the same yard line as the Team B player or is beyond the defender.

Illegal Pass-Play Contact - 5 yds

 NOTE: A defender must use a legal block before the restriction.

# RULE 8 SCORING PLAYS AND TOUCHBACKS

## Section 1 Value of Scores

1. The game is won by the team that accumulates the most points.
	1. Touchdown 6 points
	2. Safety (points awarded to opponent) 2 points
	3. Successful Try-For-Point (from either run or pass)
		1. From the 10-yard line 2 points
		2. From the 5-yard line 1 point

d Mercy rule to bylaws. If a team is ahead by 36 points at the 5-minute point or 25 points at 2 minutes or under point the game is over.

# Section 2 Touchdown

* + 1. Possession of a live ball in the opponent’s end zone is always a touchdown.
			1. It is a touchdown when the runner advances from the field of play so that the waist/flags penetrate the opponent’s goal line (vertical plane).
			2. It is a touchdown when a loose ball is caught by a player in-­‐bounds on while the ball is on or behind his opponent’s goal line.
		2. If an opponent of the scoring team fouls during a down in which a touchdown is scored and there is no change of possession; or there was a change of possession and the opponent fouled after the final change of possession; the following rules apply:
			1. Any foul that carries a 5-­‐yard penalty is automatically declined.
			2. The offended team may choose to enforce the penalty for any other foul on the try or on the subsequent possession following the try.
		3. If either team fouls following a down in which a touchdown is scored and prior to the initial ready-­‐for-­‐play signal on the try, the offended team may choose to enforce the penalty on the try or on the subsequent possession following the try.
		4. If during a touchdown-­‐scoring play in which there is no change of possession, the opponent of the scoring team commits one or more fouls that carry a penalty of 10-­‐yards, the scoring team may accept the results of the play and have the penalty enforced from the succeeding spot or may choose to have the penalty enforced on the start of the subsequent drive (penalty enforced from the 10-­‐yard line).
		5. If during a touchdown-­‐scoring play in which there is a change of possession, the opponent of the scoring team commits one or more fouls that carry a penalty of 5-­‐yards after the change of possession, the foul(s) are automatically declined and the touchdown stands.
		6. If during a touchdown-­‐scoring play in which there is a change of possession, the opponent of the scoring team commits one or more fouls that carry a penalty of 10-­‐yards after the change of possession, the scoring team may accept the results of the play and have the penalty enforced from the succeeding spot or may choose to have the penalty enforced on the start of the subsequent drive (penalty enforced from the 10-­‐yard line).

## Section 3 Try-for-Point

* + 1. After a touchdown, the scoring team is permitted a try-for-point where the ball is snapped from B’s 5- or 10-yard line (as indicated by A) anywhere between the in-bound lines. Exception: If a touchdown is scored during the last down of the game, the try-for-point shall not be attempted unless the point(s) would affect the outcome of the game. Interceptions during a point after attempt or a two point conversion are allowed. If team B runs back the interception for a TD that team will be awarded either 1 or 2 points depending on the attempt. The try-for-point begins when the ball is ready-for-play. It ends when B secures possession or the ball becomes dead. Team A may change their decision to attempt a 1-­‐ or 2-­‐point play after a team timeout is used. The defense shall be given notice of the decision and shall be allowed ample time for player substitution, if necessary.
1. During a try-for-point, Team A may score 2 points from a play originating on the 10-yard line, or 1 point from a play originating from the 5-yard line. Either a running play or a pass play may be used to score during the try.
2. If during a successful try Team A commits a loss of down foul, no point(s) are scored and there is no replay. If during a successful try Team B commits a foul, Team A is given the choice of accepting the penalty and replaying the down following measurement or accepting the results of the play and having the penalty administered from the succeeding spot. If A fouls (with no loss of down) during a successful try, the down is replayed after measurement.
3. If during an unsuccessful try-for-point, a foul by A occurs, there is no replay. If B fouls, the down is replayed after measurement.
4. If either team commits a dead ball foul prior to the try-for-point, the down is played after measurement.
5. If a double foul occurs, the down is replayed.
6. When a try-for-point is replayed, the snap may be from any point between the in-bounds lines on the yard line through the spot of the ball.

## Section 4 Force, Safety and Touchback

1. Responsibility for forcing the ball from the field of play across a goal line is attributed to the player who carries, snaps, passes, fumbles or kicks the ball. The muffing or batting of a pass, kick, or fumble in flight is not considered a new force because the original force has not been spent.
2. It is a safety when: (also see Rule 6.2)
	1. a runner carries the ball from the field of play to or across his own goal line and it becomes dead there in his team’s possession. Exception: when a Team B player intercepts a forward pass or catches a kick between his 5-yard line and the goal line and his original momentum carries him in to the end zone, where the ball is declared dead in his team’s possession or it goes out-of-bounds in the end zone, the ball belongs to Team B at the spot where the pass was intercepted or the kick was caught.
	2. a player who is either in the field of play or in his end zone, forces a loose ball from the field of play to or across his own goal line by his kick, pass, fumble, snap, muff or bat and provided that the ball becomes dead there in his team’s possession or the ball is out-of-bounds when it becomes dead on or behind their goal line. This does not apply to a legal forward pass that becomes incomplete
	3. a player on offense commits any foul for which the penalty is accepted and measurement is from a spot in his end zone or throws an illegal forward pass from his end zone and the penalty is declined in a situation which leaves him in possession at the spot of the illegal pass and with the ball having been forced in to the end zone by the passing team.
3. It is a touchback when any kick in flight is muffed and touches the ground behind R’s goal line (also see Rule 6.2). It is also a touchback when B intercepts a forward pass in their end zone and the ball becomes dead there in B’s possession (before B leaves the end zone).
4. The team whose goal line is involved should put the ball in play anywhere between in-bounds lines on its 10-yard line by a snap if a touchback; for a safety, the ball will be placed at the 10 yard line.

## Section 5 Tie Games and Overtime Procedure

If, at the end of a playoff game, the teams have identical scores, the tie will be resolved by one or more series of unlimited downs.

* 3 minute intermission
* Ball placed on the 20, team is eligible to obtain first downs
* No try will be made if the winner of the game has been determined
* Only non-player, unsportsmanlike, dead ball fouls or defensive fouls during a down which results in a successful touchdown or try-for-point are penalized from the succeeding spot.

All officials and team captains will meet at midfield for the coin toss after the intermission. The winner of the toss will be given a choice of defense, offense or designating the end of the field to start the overtime.

* Each team will be permitted one additional time-out for each extra overtime period in addition to those time-outs not used in the 2nd period.
* Each team is guaranteed one possession.
* One Scrimmage play per overtime series
* Each possession starts at the opponent’s 20-yard-line.
* Series alternate until one team has scored more points than the other, after two possessions each the score is still tied, teams must go for 2 points after scoring.
* The possessions alternate as follows: Series 1-3-5 etc.: Team A, followed by Team B; Series 2-4-6 etc.: Team B, followed by Team A.

The team scoring the greater number of points in the overtime wins.

# RULE 9 CONDUCT OF PLAYERS AND OTHERS

## Section 1 Helping the Runner

Helping the Runner – 5 yds

1. An offensive player shall not push, pull, or lift the runner.

###

## Section 2 Illegal Use of Hands and Holding and Blocking

1. An offensive player shall not use a blocking technique

Illegal Use of Hands – 5 yds

* 1. that is not permissible by Rule 2.3.1.

Interlocked Interfer. – 5 yds

* 1. grasp or encircle any teammate to form interlocked interference

Holding – 5 yds

* 1. use hands, arms or legs to hook, lock, clamp, grasp, encircle or hold in an effort to restrain an opponent
1. The defensive player shall not use a technique which
	1. not permissible by Rule 2.3.1.

Illegal Use of Hands – 5 yds

Illegal Use of Hands – 5 yds

* 1. use his hands to add momentum to charge of a teammate

Holding – 5 yds

* 1. use his hands or arms to hook, lock, clamp, grasp, encircle, or hold in an effort to restrain an opponent

Illegal Blocking –

5 yds

1. A defensive player may not intentionally push or block a runner who is near the sideline. A defensive player shall not intentionally hold, grasp, or obstruct the forward progress of a runner when trying to remove his flag (this includes tackling and body blocking). Grabbing for more than one flag by a defensive player may be considered illegal blocking if it appears that the deflagger is attempting to obstruct the forward progress of the runner.

Illegal Deflagging –

10 yds

1. No player shall intentionally deflag a player who is not a runner before the player makes contact with the ball

Flag Guarding – 5 yds

1. No runner shall obstruct an opponent with an extended (non-flexed at the elbow aka stiff-arm) hand and arm

Flag Guarding – 5

1. The runner shall not use his hand(s) including the ball below their waist to protect the flag(s). While making initial contact with opponent, the runner may not use his hand(s) below his waist to block an opponent.

Flag Guarding – 5

Low

1. The runner shall not hurdle or lower his head to interfere with being deflagged. A runner may not lower his head more than halfway between his waist and shoulders. A runner may not charge into a potential deflagger.

NOTE: A runner may spin to avoid being deflagged.

5 yds

C

Illegal Blocking –

5 yds

1. No player may block an opponent below the waist.

Tripping – 10 yds

1. No player may trip an opponent.
2. The center must be given ample opportunity, before being blocked, to regain his balance after snapping the ball.

Illegal Use of Hands – 5 yds

1. No player may intentionally strip the ball from the runner.

Illegal Blocking –

5 yds

1. Two-on-one blocking is limited to the expanded neutral zone and behind it

NOTE: The only way to “tackle” a runner is by deflagging. Any contact with a runner must be an attempt to deflag.

## Section 3 Illegal Personal Contact

Flagrant Personal

Fouls -

Mandatory disqualification for the rest of the game & the team’s next game

1. No player shall commit a flagrant foul. These include: striking an opponent with a fist, locked hand, forearm, elbow, knee or foot or wearing any illegal equipment that is unsafe to opponents.

NOTE: Fighting causes all fighters to be ejected regardless of whom started the fight.

Misconduct towards an Official – 10 yds

1. No player shall physically or verbally afflict an official. When in question, the act is considered a flagrant harrying or intimidation.

NOTE: If flagrant, mandatory disqualification for the rest of the game and the team’s next game. A team may forfeit a game if it allows a disqualified player to become a player. Ejected players must leave the playing area.

Personal Fouls –

10 yds & see Note

1. No player shall position himself on the shoulders of a teammate to gain an advantage; hide the ball under a jersey; tackle a runner; charge in to an opponent or make any other contact, physical or verbal, that an official determines is unnecessary and incites roughness. The runner shall not deliberately run in to a defensive player.

NOTE: At the official’s discretion, a player may be ejected for 4 or 8 downs for those acts considered major but not flagrant.

Roughing the Passer – 10 yds and an automatic first down

1. When attempting to block a pass, the defensive players must make a definite effort to avoid charging into a passer who has thrown or is throwing a legal forward pass or a passer who is fading back or standing still because he is considered out of play after the pass. A defensive player may not forcibly contact the passer’s arm above the elbow (from the elbow to the shoulder).

\*\*\*Note: When a defensive player is attempting to remove the flag from the QB reasonable contact is permitted.

## Section 4 Non-contact Unsportsmanlike Conduct by Players

1. No player may act in an unsportsmanlike manner during the game or intermission. Examples include:
	1. abusive or insulting language or gestures
	2. baiting acts or words or insignia worn which engenders ill will
	3. using disconcerting acts or words prior to the snap in an attempt to interfere with A’s signal or movements
	4. intentionally kicking at any player or the ball (other than a kick) or intentionally swinging an arm or fist at any player

Unsportsmanlike Acts – 10 yds (enforced from the succeeding spot) & mandatory removal from game for (a) & (d)

* 1. leaving the field between plays or using a “hide out play” by placing a player or players near the sideline to gain an advantage unless replaced or unless with the permission of the referee
	2. failing to place the ball, after if becomes dead, on the ground or immediately return it to a nearby official
	3. spiking the ball or throwing the ball in the air or from the field of play
	4. attempting to substitute a suspended player
	5. taunting an opponent

## Section 5 Illegal Participation

Illegal Participation – 10 yds

1. Unless blocked or pushed out-of-bounds, no player shall participate by touching the ball or hindering an opponent after having been out-of-bounds during the down.

Illegal Participation – 10 yds

1. No replaced player or substitute shall hinder an opponent, touch the ball, influence the play or otherwise participate.
2. It is illegal participation when:
	1. 8 or more players participate at the snap
	2. an injured player is not replaced for at least one down unless a half-time occurs

Illegal Participation – 10 yds

* 1. using a replaced player or substitute in a substitution or pretend substitution to deceive opponents at or immediately before a snap

Allowing a Disqualified

Player – possible game forfeit

* 1. for a disqualified player to reenter the game

## Section 6 Illegal Kicking or Batting

1. No player shall intentionally kick the ball other than as a punt.
2. No player shall bat a loose ball other than a pass or a fumble in flight or a low scrimmage in flight which he is attempting to block in the expanded neutral zone. A backward pass behind the line-of-scrimmage and in flight shall not be batted forward by the passing team.

Illegal Kicking or

Batting – 10 yds

NOTE: Any pass in flight may be batted in any direction, unless it is a backward pass behind the line-of-scrimmage batted forward by the passing team.

1. A ball in player possession may not be batted by any player.

## Section 7 Non-contact Unsportsmanlike Conduct by Non-Players

1. No coach, substitute, trainer or other team attendant shall act in an unsportsmanlike manner during the game or intermission. Examples are:
	1. using profanity, insulting or vulgar language or gestures
	2. attempting to influence or indicating an objection to a decision of an official

Non-Player Fouls – 10 yds

* 1. disrespectfully addressing an official
	2. failing to be ready to start either half
	3. be on the field except as a substitute or replaced player
	4. abusively or derisively harrying an opponent

Non-Player Fouls – 5 yds, if repeated infractions occur, 10 yds and/or disqualification.

* 1. be outside the team box but not on the field
1. A non-player shall not be outside his team box except to become a player. Attendants and coaches may not enter the field except during a time-out or unless sanctioned by the referee.

## Section 8 Unfair Acts

Unfair Acts –

Referee enforces any penalty he considers equitable, incl. the award of a score.

1. No player or non-player shall hinder play by an obviously unfair act which has no specific rule coverage. Neither team shall commit any act which, in the opinion of the referee, tends to make a travesty of the game.

NOTE: Repeated fouls will cause the game to be forfeited.

## Section 9 Protests and Suspensions

Incorrect Challenge –

1 timeout or personal foul for 10 yds

1. The Team A or B captain may elect to challenge an official’s penalty enforcement any time a penalty has been called. A captain may not challenge an official’s actual call, only the enforcement of that call. If a team incorrectly challenges the enforcement of a penalty, it will be assessed one timeout. If there are no timeouts, the captain will be assessed a personal foul and the team penalized 10 yards.
2. The “Protest and Suspension Committee” shall consist of five members: the League Commissioner, the Assistant League Commissioner, the Referee Coordinator, the Director of Member Development, and the Captains’ Representative. Any member of the committee may recuse himself if he believes there to be a conflict of interest. Additionally, 4 of the 5 committee members may insist that the 5th member recuse himself if they believe there to be a conflict of interest. A recused member(s) will be replaced by an appointee(s) selected unanimously by the Board. This committee will adjudicate protests and suspensions initiated by a formal, written request by any member of the League affected by the incident in question. Rules administration; game scores; and player and non-player behavior, attitude, and conduct; as well as other matters, may be protested. The protest must be written and submitted to the Committee within 48 hours from the event being protested. The protest must include the nature of the grievance and the resolution sought. The initiator of the request as well as any named individuals within the request shall be asked to present their sides of the incident to the Committee. The Committee shall also invite any other parties it feels might be pertinent to their decision making. The Committee shall reach, by majority decision and as separate considerations, the determination of responsibility or fault of the incident and an appropriate response.

# RULE 10 PENALTY ENFORCEMENT

## Section 1 Procedure after a Foul

1. When a foul occurs during a live ball, the referee shall, at the end of the down, notify both captains. He shall inform the captain of the offended team regarding the rights of penalty acceptance or declination and shall indicate to him the number of the ensuing down, distance to be gained and status of the ball for each available choice. The distance penalty for any foul may be declined. If the penalty is declined or this is a double foul, there is no loss of distance. In case of a double foul, the captains are not consulted since the penalties offset. The captain’s choice may not be revoked.
2. When a foul occurs during a dead ball between downs or prior to a snap, the official shall not permit the ball to become live. The referee shall notify the captains and the captain of the offended team will be presented with the options and the effect of acceptance or declination on the down and distance to be gained. The captain may accept or decline the penalty.
3. When a live ball foul by one team is followed by a dead ball foul by the opponent, the penalties are administered separately and in the order of occurrence.
4. When the same team commits a live ball foul followed by one or more dead ball fouls, all fouls may be penalized.

## Section 2 Double and Multiple Fouls

1. It is a double foul if both teams commit fouls, other than unsportsmanlike, during the same live ball period during which there is no change of team possession; there is a change of team possession and the team in possession at the end of the down fouls prior to the final change of possession; or there is a change of possession and the team in final possession accepts the penalty for its opponents foul. The penalties cancel and the down is replayed.
2. If each team fouls during a down in which there is a change of possession, the team last gaining possession may retain the ball, provided its foul is not prior to the final change of possession and it declined the penalty for its opponent’s foul, other than unsportsmanlike.
3. When two or more live ball fouls (multiple fouls) are committed by the same team, only one penalty may be measured, except when foul(s) for unsportsmanlike conduct occurs. In such cases, the penalty (or penalties) for unsportsmanlike conduct is administered from the succeeding spot as established by the acceptance or declination of the penalty for the previous foul. When only one penalty is to be administered, the offended captain may choose which one it shall be, or he may decline all penalties.
4. Penalties for dead ball fouls are administered separately and in the order of their occurrence. A dead ball foul is not coupled with a live ball foul or another dead ball foul to create a double or multiple foul.
5. A foul during a try is not paired with a dead ball foul to create a double or multiple foul.

## Section 3 Types of Play and Basic Enforcement Spots

1. If a foul occurs during a down, the basic enforcement spot is fixed by the type of play. There are two types of play: loose ball play and a running play. Loose ball play is action during a scrimmage kick; legal forward pass; a backward pass or fumble made by A from on or behind its scrimmage line. A loose ball also includes the run or runs which precede such a legal forward pass, kick, or fumble. A running play is any action not included in loose ball play.
2. If a foul occurs during loose ball play, the basic enforcement spot is the previous spot.
3. If a foul occurs during a running play, the basic enforcement spot is the spot where the related run ends. The run ends where the player loses possession if his run is followed by a fumble or pass. If the runner does not lose possession, his run ends where the ball becomes dead.

## Section 4 Administering Penalties

1. The penalty for any dead ball foul, any non-player foul or an unsportsmanlike foul is administered from the succeeding spot (the 3 or 5 yard line after a touchdown).
2. The penalty for a foul that occurs simultaneously with a snap is administered from the previous spot.
3. The penalty for a foul during a running play or loose ball play is administered from the basic spot unless the foul is by the offense and occurs behind the basic spot. In that case, it is administered from the spot of the foul.
4. Any live ball foul is penalized according to the all-but-one enforcement principle (see below) except:
	1. a foul which occurs simultaneously with the snap
	2. a foul by the opponents of the scoring team during a down which results in a successful touchdown or try-for-point
	3. fair catch interference, which is penalized from the previous spot or from the spot of the foul

## Section 5 Special Enforcements

1. A measurement cannot take the ball more than half the distance from the enforcement spot to the offending team’s goal line. If the ordinary distance penalty is greater than this, the ball is placed halfway from the spot of enforcement to the goal line.
2. For fair catch interference, the offended team may choose a 10-yard penalty from the previous spot with K retaining the ball and the down being replayed or the offending team may accept an awarded fair catch after the enforcement of a 10-yard penalty from the spot of the foul.
3. If the offensive team throws an illegal forward pass from its end zone or commits any other foul for which the penalty is accepted and measurement is from on or behind the goal line, it is a safety. For a defensive team foul, if the enforcement spot is on or behind the offended team’s goal line, any measurement is from the goal line.
4. If there is a foul during a down which results in a successful touchdown or try-for-point, the penalty must be declined for the score to count.
5. A disqualified player must always be removed.
6. The referee’s decision to forfeit a game is always final.

#

**Fall 2015 Rule Changes**

**Rule:** New possession after a safety is now at the 10-yard line; previously was a free kick.

**Rational:**  Speed up the game.

**Rule:**  Mercy Rule If a team is ahead by 36 points at the 5-minute point or 25 points at 2 minutes or under point the game is over.

**Rational:**  More compassionate perspective