



Youth Flag Football Rules

Playing The Game:

- A coin toss determines the first possession.
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at the 40-yard line (U8, U10) and its 5-yard line (U14) and has four (4) plays to achieve a new set of downs (first down) or score a touchdown.
- To achieve a first down the offense must cross the 20-yard line (U8, U10) and midfield (U14).
- Once a team crosses midfield, it has four (4) plays to score a touchdown.
- If the offense fails to achieve a first down, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on the 40-yard line (U8, U10) and its 5-yard line (U14).
- If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on the 40-yard line (U8, U10) and its 5-yard line (U14).
- All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offensive 40-yard line (U8, U10) and 5-yard line (U14).
- If the defensive team scores a safety, they will receive 2 points and take possession of the ball at their 5-yard line (U14 only).

Alignment:

- Defense- U8 has to be lined up 5 yards off the ball. U10 and U14 can line up anywhere as long as they are not off sides.
- Offense- All divisions must have 5 players on the line of scrimmage with 3 of those players lining up within 5 yards of the center or quarterback (QB) stand.

Players/Game Schedules:

- Teams must field 7 players at all times, unless the coaches agree on less. Both teams must have equal number of players on the field during play.
- Each player will need to play a minimum of 2 quarters or 50% of game time.
- Teams will play 6 regular season games followed by a single elimination tournament. U8 will not play a tournament.

Timing/Overtime:

- U14 will play 4-10 minute quarters (5-minute halftime). U8 and U10 will play 2-20 minute halves (5-minute halftime).
- Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
- Team that wins the coin toss will get to choose to go for 1 point (5-yard line) or 2 points (12-yard line). If team chooses 2 points and converts, the second team must convert a 2-point conversion (12-yard line) to continue the game. However, if they choose to go for 1 point the other team can win if they convert a 2-point play (and vice-versa). If they don't convert, the team that went for 1 (5-yard line) and converted is declared the winner. (After 1st overtime, game will end in tie besides the playoffs. In the playoffs, after the 3rd OT, every team will be required to go for 2 points.
- Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive ONE (1) warning before a delay of game penalty is called.
- The clock only stops on timeouts... 1 timeout per half... No timeouts in U8.

Scoring:

- Score will not be kept for U8.
- Touchdowns = 6 points.
- Extra point = 1 point (5-yard line) or 2 points (12-yard line).
- Safety 2 points:
 - Safeties are NOT allowed in U8 and U10. Instead, loss of down occurs and ball will be replaced at the line of scrimmage.
 - If the defensive team scores a safety, they will receive 2 points and take possession of the ball at their 5-yard line (U14 only).

Runs (Handoffs, Pitches & Tosses):

- U8: 3 handoffs allowed per series.
- U10: 1 handoff allowed per series.
- U14: NO handoffs allowed, ONLY passing.

Laterals:

- Backwards pitch or handoff beyond the line of scrimmage. A fumble behind the line of scrimmage is live. A fumble beyond the line of scrimmage is a dead ball.

Receiving:

- All players can receive passes (Including the QB if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
- Only one player in motion at a time
- A player must have one foot inbound when making a reception

Passing:

- All passes must be forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage
- The QB has a seven-second "pass clock" if the ball is not passed, the play is dead and loss of down.
- U8-U10 will use a quarterback (QB) stand.
- U14 will use a regular or shotgun snap to start the play.
- Interceptions:
 - Interceptions will result in the change of possession and the defense will take possession at the 20-yard line.
 - Interceptions in the U14 league are returnable.

Blocking:

- Shield blocking only for all leagues.

Dead Balls:

- The ball must be snapped between the legs (14U).
- Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- Play is ruled "dead" when:
 - Ball carrier flag is pulled.
 - Ball carrier steps out of bounds.
 - Touchdown or safety is scored.
 - Interceptions (U8, U10).
 - Fumbles.
 - Ball carrier knee hits the ground.
 - Ball carrier flag falls out.
 - If flag falls (regardless of fault) its considered down.

Rushing the QB:

- There are no QB blitzes or QB runs in any division.

Sportsmanship/Roughing:

- If the League Supervisor or referee witness any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike conduct, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. **FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.**
- Offensive language/trash talk from players or coaches to other opposing players and coaches, officials, or spectators will not be tolerated.

Penalties:

- The referee will call all penalties.
- Only the coach may ask the referee about the rule clarification.
- Games cannot end on a defensive penalty unless the offense declines it.

Defensive Penalties:

1. **Offside** = 5 yards and automatic first down.
2. **Interference** = 10 yards and automatic first down.
3. **Illegal contact** = 10 yards and automatic first down (holding, blocking, pushing, etc.).
4. **Illegal flag pull** = 10 yards and automatic first down (before receiver has ball).
5. **Delay of game** = 10 yards and loss of down.

Offense:

1. **Illegal motion** = 5 yards and loss of down.
2. **Illegal forward pass** = 5 yards and loss of down (pass received behind line of scrimmage or a pass thrown in front of line of scrimmage).
3. **Offensive pass interference** = 10 yards and loss of down (illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender).
4. **Flag guarding** = 10 yards (from line of scrimmage) and loss of down.
5. **Delay of game** = 10 yards and loss of down.
6. **Clipping** = 15 yards and loss of down (block into the back of the opponent).
7. **Straight Arm** = 5 yards (extended to ward off an opponent).
8. **Lowering Head** = 5 yards (ball carrier may not run over a defensive player).

Equipment:

- No** metal cleats allowed.
- Mouthpieces required.
- Players must wear uniforms provided by the Columbus Parks Department during game play.
- All players must wear a set of flags (provided by the parks department).
- Footballs will be provided by the parks departments.