



Flag Football Rules



- A coin toss determines first possession.
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has three (3) plays to cross midfield, with the option to go for it on 4th down. Each team also has three (3) plays, and the option to go for it on 4th down to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on its 5-yard line. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its 5-yard line.
- All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line. Teams change sides after the first 20 minutes, but possession does not change and the clock does not stop.

PLAYERS/GAMES SCHEDULES

- Teams must field a **minimum of seven (7) players at all times.** **Note Rule Change:** The following age groups will play 9 on 9, 6-8 and 9-11. The 12-14 and 15-17 year old divisions will play with a minimum of 7 players on the field at all times.
- Teams consist of twelve (12) players (7 on the field with 5 substitutes).

TIMING/OVERTIME

- Games are played with a 50-minute running clock. **Note Game Time Change:** Games will 50 minutes instead of 40 minutes.
- **In the Playoffs:** A coin toss will determine who will have the 1st choice. The team will pick offense, defense, or goal to defend. The team losing the coin toss will decide the remaining choices. Once a goal has been established for overtime play, we will not switch sides of the field for any reason. Each team will receive the ball on the 20-yard line, and they will have 4 plays to score (1st down on the 20 yard line). If they score they will attempt either a 1 or 2-point conversion. If the score is tied at the end of the 1st overtime (both teams must have scored in overtime), we will play an additional overtime. In the second overtime, both teams upon scoring will have to attempt a two-point conversion. If a team does not score, we will mark their penetration with a beanbag on the sideline. If both teams fail to score in any overtime the winner will be determined by the deepest penetration.

DURING THE REGULAR SEASON THERE IS NO OVERTIME

- Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced. Each team has one (1) 60-second and one (1) 30-second time out per half.
- Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.

SCORING

- Touchdown: 6 points
 Extra Point: 1 point (played from 5-yard line) or
 1 point (kicked from 5-yard line) or
 2 points (played from 12-yard line)
 Safety: 2 points
 Field Goal: 3 points

SCORING - 6-8 YEAR OLD DIVISION

- In the 6-8 year old division the quarterback can run the ball at any time but must adhere to the following 2 rules:
 1. The quarterback cannot be in the run zone at any time
 2. The same quarterback cannot run more than once in any 4 downs
- **Field Goals - 6-8 -** An extra point must go 10 yards and must cross over the imaginary line directly below the cross bar of the field goal post. For 2 points the ball must go 15 yards.
- **Field Goals - All age divisions -** A team can attempt a field goal on any down from anywhere on the field. Remember if a team is on the opponent's 20 yard line it is a 20 yard field goal plus the 10 yard end zone or a 30 yard field goal!





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RUNNING

- **Note Rule Change:** In all age groups the quarterback can run with the ball once every 4 downs. A quarterback can hand the ball off or pitch the ball to another player. Offense may use multiple handoffs.
- **CENTER SNEAKS ARE ALLOWED. NOTE: THE BALL MUST TOUCH THE "QUARTERBACKS HANDS" BEFORE THE CENTER CAN RUN THE BALL.**
- **THE QUARTERBACK CAN LINE UP DIRECTLY BEHIND THE CENTER OR IN SHOTGUN FORMATION, ONLY!**
- "No-running zones", located 5 yards from each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield, are designed to avoid short-yardage, power-running situations.
- Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush. **Note:** The ball carrier must cross the line of scrimmage to constitute a run. **Reminder: The rusher can cross the line at anytime, as long as he or she starts from the rush marker.**
- Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player (no diving).
- The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet are when the flag is pulled, note where the ball is.

QUARTERBACK RUNNING - 6-8, 9-12 AND 13-17 YEAR OLD GROUPS

The quarterback is permitted to run the ball once every 4 downs. What constitutes a run is any player who has possession of the football and crosses over the line of scrimmage. Once a player, who has possession of the football crosses over the line of scrimmage, any player on defense can automatically rush into the offensive backfield.

KICKING- In the 9-12 year old division a team can elect to kick a one point conversion or a two point conversion, the following rule apply- the ball must clear the crossbar of the goal post for the point to be considered good. Note- in the 9-12 year old division to make a one point conversion the ball is placed at the ten yard line and for a two point conversion the ball is placed on the 15 yard line. In the 13-17 year old division a team has the same options shown above but the following rules apply- for a one point conversion the ball is placed on the 20 yard line and for a two point conversion the ball is placed on the 25 yard line.

RECEIVING

- All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
- **Note Rule Change:** Two players are permitted to move in motion at anytime.
- A player can be moving towards the line of scrimmage, or along the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped.
- A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

PASSING

- All passes must be forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage. **Note Rule Change:** Screen passes are legal.
- Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- The quarterback has a 7-second "pass clock". If a pass is not thrown within the 7 seconds, play is dead, loss of down. Once the ball is handed off, the 7-second rule no longer is in effect.
- Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception. Interceptions are the only change of possession that does not start on the 5-yard line. **Note:** If a team fails to make a first down or a touchdown, the ball will be spotted accordingly.

Interceptions: All interceptions can be returned, including extra point conversions. For example, if a team is going for a two-point conversion and the pass is intercepted and returned for a touchdown, the team returning the ball gets two





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points. If a team is only going for a one-point conversion and the pass is intercepted and returned, the team will get one point.

DEAD BALLS

- The ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to one side, to start play.
- Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- Play is ruled “dead” when:
 - **Ball carrier’s flag is pulled.**
 - **Ball carrier steps out of bounds.**
 - **Touchdown or safety is scored.**
 - **Ball carrier’s knee hits the ground.**
 - **Ball carrier’s flag falls out.**

Note: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground.

OFFENSE

Each team will have the choice after third down to either turn the ball over and the ball will be placed at the opponent’s 5 yard line or go for it on fourth down. If a team fails to make the first down or touchdown on fourth down the ball will be turned over on downs and spotted accordingly.

Effective 10/4/09 the Beehive Play used in past seasons will no longer be an eligible offensive play in Backyard Flag Football by any age division. Also, any play that emulates the Beehive will not be allowed as an offensive play by any team in any age division.

RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK

Note Rule Change: All players who rush the quarterback must be **a minimum of 10 yards from the line of scrimmage (6-8 & 9-11 year old division)** when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.

12-14 & 15-17 year olds only - All players who rush the quarterback must be **a minimum of 12 yards from the line of scrimmage** when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.

Once the ball is handed off, the 10-yard rule or the 12-yard rule is no longer in effect, and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage. A special marker will designate seven yards or ten yards from the line of scrimmage. Remember, no blocking or tackling is allowed.

SPORTSMANSHIP/ROUGHING

If the field-monitor or referee witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. **FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.**

Trash talking is illegal. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. (Trash talk is talk that may be offensive to officials, opposing players, teams, or spectators). If trash talking occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the player or players will be ejected from the game.

Coaches: **In the 6-8 year old division (only) two coaches are permitted on the field at anytime. In the 9-11 and 12-14 year old divisions’ one coach may be on the field as long as he or she is off the field at the time the ball is snapped. If not a 5-yard penalty will be called.**





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PLAYER OR PLAYERS IN MOTION

2 players can move simultaneously at anytime as long as they do not cross the line of scrimmage before the ball has been centered. A maximum of 2 players can move towards the line of scrimmage before the ball has been centered.

SUBSTITUTION RULE

If a coach is deemed not rotating a player in the lineup in a regular rotation, an official will blow the whistle and call a dead ball foul on the offensive or defensive team guilty of the infraction and a 15-yard penalty along with a loss of down will occur. **Note: Referees discretion!**

FLAG PULLING

When a player pulls a flag, the flag must be dropped on the ground and spotted at the point it was pulled. If a flag is pulled and thrown, a 5 yard penalty will be called from the spot of the foul.

PENALTIES

The referee will call all penalties.

Defense:

- **Offsides** 5 yards
- **Pass Interference** 10 yards from scrimmage or the spot where the foul occurred, whichever is greater and automatic first down
- **Illegal Contact (holding, blocking, etc.)** 10 yards
- **Illegal Flag Pull (before receiver has ball)** 10 yards and automatic first down
- **Illegal Rushing (starting rush from inside 7-yard marker)** 10 yards and automatic first down
- **Unsportsmanlike Conduct (live ball)** 10 yards/from spot of ball
- **Unsportsmanlike Conduct (dead ball)** 10 yards from previous spot
- **Steal/Strike/Attempt to Steal Ball** 10 yards from spot of foul
- **Trip an Opponent** 10 yards from spot of foul
- **Contact with Opponent on Ground** 10 yards from spot of foul
- **Throwing Runner to Ground** 10 yards from spot of foul
- **Hurdle another Player** 10 yards from spot of foul
- **Drive or Run into Player** 10 yards from spot of foul
- **Clipping** 10 yards from spot of foul
- **Tackling** 10 yards from spot of foul
- **Roughing the Passer** 10 yards plus automatic first down from the previous spot
- **Illegal Use of Hands** 10 yards from spot of foul

Offense:

- **Illegal Motion (more than two players moving, false start, etc.)** 5 yards and loss of down
- **Illegal Forward Pass (pass received behind line of scrimmage)** 5 yards and loss of down
- **Offensive Pass Interference (illegal pick play, pushing, off/away defender)** 10 yards and loss of down
- **Illegal Use of Hands** 10 yards from spot of foul unless it is behind the line
- **Flag Guarding** This penalty is a spot foul. "10 yard penalty from the spot of the foul and loss of down."
- **Delay of Game** Clock stops, 10 yards and loss of down
- **Encroachment (dead or live ball)** 5 yards from previous spot
- **False Start (dead ball)** 5 yards from previous spot
- **Illegal Snap (dead ball)** 5 yards from previous spot





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- **Player Out of Bounds when Ball is Snapped** 5 yards from previous spot
- **Illegal Shift** 5 yards from previous spot
- **Intentional Grounding** 5 yards from previous spot
- **Helping the Runner** 5 yards and loss of down from spot of foul
- 5 yards from spot of foul

- If the offensive team incurs a penalty while in the “No Run Zone” and penalty yards are enforced the “No Run Zone” rule stays in effect. This rule prevents an offensive team from deliberately taking a penalty to take them out of the no run zone.
- If a defensive penalty is called on the defensive team and the penalty yards put the offensive team into the “No Run Zone” the no run zone does not apply. Note: The offensive team is not penalized by being put into the no run zone, as a direct result of a penalty against the defense.
- Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, except pass interference or flag guarding. The offense and defense has the right to decline a penalty.
- Only the team captain may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players cannot question judgment calls.
- Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.

ATTIRE

- A protective mouth piece must be worn during the games
- All flag must be worn on top of the game jersey – they cannot be worn under your game jersey during the game
- Towels may be worn – but they must be tucked in
- No jewelry
- No metal cleats
- **Players are not allowed to cut the length of the team jersey provided**

NOTE: THERE ARE NO KICKOFFS AND NO BLOCKING IS ALLOWED.

NOTE: PLAYERS ARE ALLOWED TO WEAR TOWELS, BUT ALL TOWELS MUST BE TUCKED IN!

MERCY RULE: IF A TEAM IS UP BY 19 POINTS WITH 2 MINUTES REMAINING, THE GAME WILL BE CALLED.

Playoff Stipulation

If a team forfeits a game or does not have a minimum of 7 players in the final week of regular season games, they automatically surrender their right to participate in the Playoffs!

Backyard Sports implemented this rule to prevent teams that do not have a chance to move up or down in the standings from acting in this manner and then expecting to jump into the Playoffs without any consequences.





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Game Cancellations

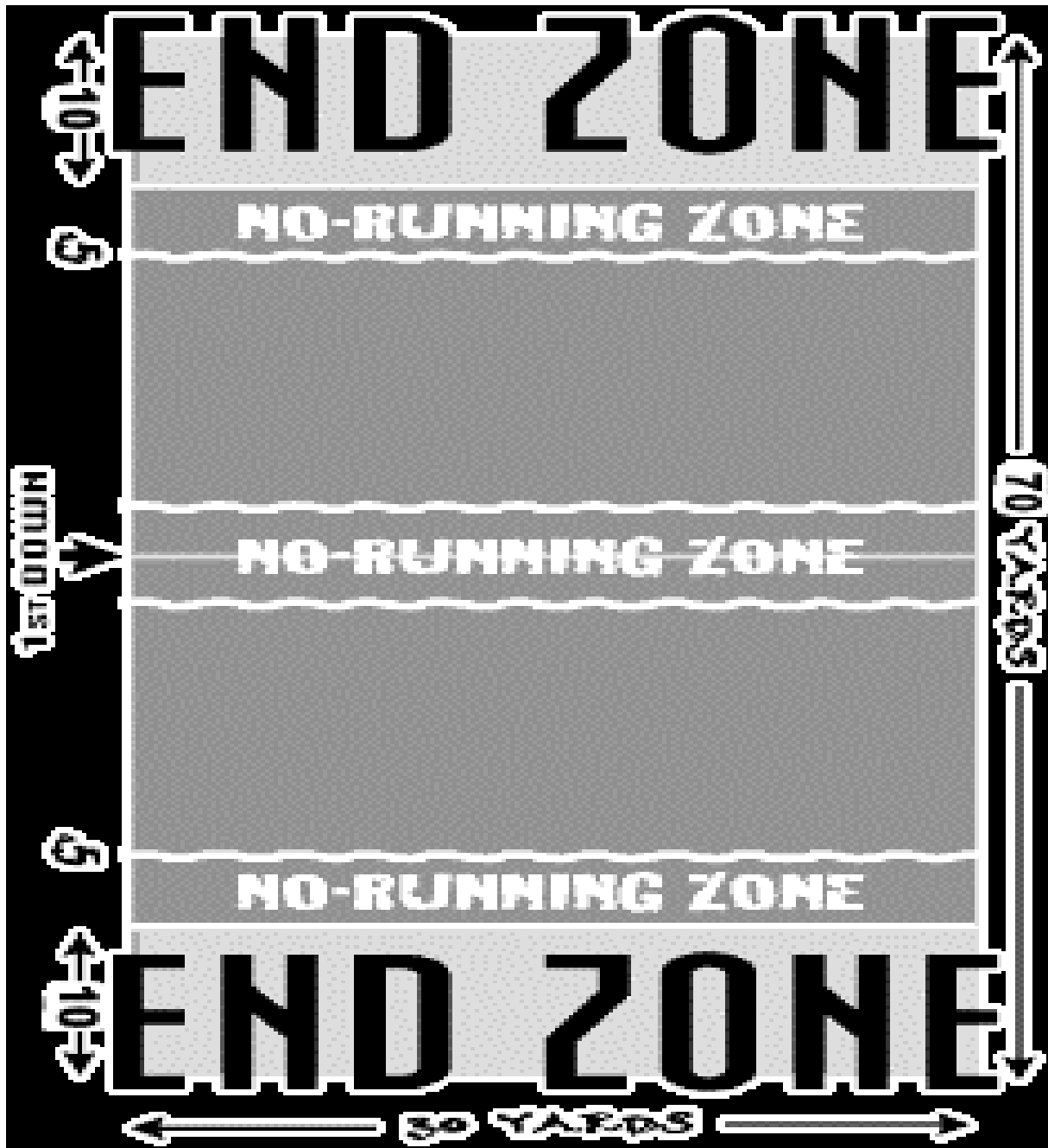
Backyard Sports reserves the right to cancel any game due to field, weather or unforeseen medical conditions and permit issues at any time during the regular season. We set out to play 8 regular season games plus the playoffs and do our best to get all of the games played. If there is a cancellation we will do everything in our power to make up the cancelled game(s). In the event we cannot accomplish this task, the game(s) will be cancelled and not made up.

Thank you.





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