

Layton City Flag Football 2013



Rule Book



NFL Flag 5 on 5 League Rules – 2013 Seasons

GENERAL RULES

1. Captains and head coaches meet for the coin toss. The visiting team calls the toss.
2. The winner of the coin toss may choose to go on offense or defense. The loser of the coin toss chooses the end zone to defend. Teams may not defer. The team that starts the game on defense will start the second half on offense and vice versa.
3. The offensive team takes possession at its 5-yard line and has four (4) plays to cross midfield. If a team crosses midfield, it has four (4) plays to score a touchdown.
4. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield or score, the opposing team takes possession on its 5-yard line.
5. All possession changes except interceptions start on the offensive teams' 5-yard line.
6. Teams change ends for the 2nd half, and first possession goes to the loser of the toss.
7. Teams can play with no fewer than 4 players in all age divisions.
8. Equipment checks will be performed by the officials before the coin toss.

EQUIPMENT

1. Teams must use a standard size ball for the age group. 5-6 yr olds will use a Pee-Wee ball, 7-8 will use a junior size ball, and 9-11 will use an intermediate size ball (balls are given to teams at the beginning of the season).
2. The City provides each player with an Official NFL Flag belt which must be worn during games.
3. Flags must be worn on each side of the players' hips in line with the hip joint.
4. The League provides each player with an Official NFL Flag Football Jersey which must be worn during games. Home teams wear dark jerseys; visiting teams wear light jerseys. Unless it is physically impossible, jerseys must be tucked in at all times during games.
5. Pants or shorts with belt loops or pockets are discouraged but are allowable
6. Players must wear shoes. Cleats are allowed, however cleats with exposed metal or toe spikes are not allowed.
7. Players may tape their forearms, hands and fingers. Players may wear gloves, elbow pads, and kneepads. Braces with exposed metals are not allowed.
8. Players must remove all watches, earrings and any other jewelry that the officials deem hazardous.
9. All offensive players must have both flags on while on the field of play or face an Improper Equipment penalty (5 yards from the original line of scrimmage and loss of down). If the flag falls off while in the field of play, this penalty will not be assessed.

TEAMS AND ELIGIBILITY

1. All players must be registered with the league. Playing with unregistered players will result in immediate forfeiture.
2. Teams are required to report to their assigned field of play by the scheduled start time or face possible forfeiture.

REGULATION PLAY AND CLOCK

1. Games consist of two 20-minute halves. Halftime is 5-minutes. Teams change ends to begin the second half.
2. The clock runs during the first 18 minutes of each half unless a time-out is called.

3. During the last 2 minutes of each half, the clock stops when there is an incomplete pass, a penalty, change of possession, or when a ball-carrier runs out of bounds.
4. The offensive team has 30 seconds to snap the ball once it has been spotted. The offense may snap the ball at any time after the Line Judge has signaled the start of the 30 second snap count whether the defense is ready or not. The referee will warn the offensive team when there are 5 seconds left on the snap count clock.
5. Each team has two 60-second time outs per game, that's it; time outs do not replenish in the second half if you used both in the first half.
6. Officials can stop the clock at their discretion for an injury, animal on the field, etc. And will have ultimate control of the flow of the game.

OVERTIME

1. If the score is tied at the end of regulation, teams move into overtime.
2. Overtime is a one point or two point conversion competition. Teams will take turns attempting to score one or two point conversions until one team has scored more points than the other team and both teams have had a turn.
3. Captains will meet at midfield for a coin toss. Winner can choose whether to go on offense or defense first. The side of the field will be chosen by the official.
4. If the score remains tied after the first overtime period, the team that lost the overtime coin toss has the choice of offense or defense at the start of the second overtime. The choice of possession will alternate in each subsequent overtime period.
5. During overtime, an interception may be returned.
6. All applicable regulation period rules and penalties are in effect.
7. There are **no time-outs** in overtime.

COACHES

1. Coaches are volunteers whose role it is to help young people learn to play and enjoy football. Parents are encouraged to support their youth and their coach at all times.
2. Coaches in the 5-6 and 7-8 year age divisions are allowed on the field to assist players with their positions. At the snap, on-field coaches **must** be 5 yards behind their nearest player.
3. Coaches of all other age divisions may not come on to the field of play during a game unless a player is injured. Coaches who come on the field of play anytime during a game will be penalized. One sideline warning per game will be issued after which the following penalties will result:
 - A) coach on the field during live action = unsportsmanlike conduct
 - B) coach on the field during a dead ball = delay of game
4. Only three coaches per team are allowed on the sidelines. ONLY THE HEAD COACH CAN ADDRESS THE GAME OFFICIALS.

CONDUCT

1. Contact is limited to incidental contact that is a normal part of flag football.
2. Players are expected to behave in a civil manner. Flag slamming, flag throwing, or other uncivil acts will result in a verbal warning for the first offense and an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty for each subsequent offense.
3. Taunting, trash talking, cursing or other offensive language or behavior by players, coaches or their fans will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty for the first offense and forfeiture for the second offense.
4. Reckless play deemed by the referee to be potentially dangerous or harmful (e.g., tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, roughing, pushing, etc.) will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty. Two such acts committed by one player during a game will result in automatic ejection.

5. Play that is deemed by the referee to be intentionally malicious (e.g. clothes lining, blatant tackling with no effort to pull flags, etc.) will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty and immediate player ejection. Two such acts by one team during a game will result in immediate forfeiture and potential league sanctions.
6. Players, Teams or Coaches who are found to have intentionally cheated will be suspended indefinitely.
7. Players, Coaches, or Spectators who are ejected from a game, must vacate the premises. Failure to do so will result in game suspension and forfeiture.
8. Field Supervisors and Game Officials have the authority to suspend play and declare a forfeit if players, fans and/or coaches behave in a manner that is threatening or dangerous. One "Game suspension" warning will be issued.
9. In addition to the penalties assessed during a game, conduct violations may carry additional penalties associated with league participation, and will be determined by league and city officials.
10. **For safety reasons, spectators must be seated a minimum of 5 yards from the sidelines**

DEAD BALL

1. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
2. Play is ruled "dead" when:
 - A) The ball touches the ground.
 - B) Ball carrier's flag is pulled.
 - C) Ball carrier steps out of bounds.
 - D) Ball carrier's knee, elbow, hip or backside touches the ground.
 - E) When a touchdown or extra point is made.

SPOTTING THE BALL

1. The ball is spotted where the ball is at when the flag is pulled. The ball has to break the plane of the goal line for it to be considered a touchdown.
2. If a ball carrier's flag falls out while running, or if it otherwise becomes impossible to pull a players flag, that player can then be marked down by a defender placing both hands on the ball carrier. (two hand touch)
3. Defensive players that start a play without a flag can intercept a pass but cannot advance it. The ball is spotted where the interception occurred.
4. A team with a lead of 28 or more points cannot advance an interception. The ball will be spotted at the point of the interception and possession will be awarded to the intercepting team.
5. The play is ruled dead when the ball makes contact with the ground. In the case of a fumble or muffed snap, the ball is spotted at the forward-most grounded foot of the player who last touched it.
 - A) Example 1: a player fumbles the ball forward. The ball is spotted where the players forward-most grounded foot was at the time of the fumble, not where the ball lands.
 - B) Example 2: a player muffs a snap while standing in the end zone. The ball is spotted where the player's forward-most foot is at the time of the muff, not where the ball lands. This spot would result in a safety.
 - C) Example 3: a center hikes it over the head of the QB but the QB does not touch it. The ball is spotted at the forward most grounded foot of the center.

HIKING

1. The ball may either be snapped in between the center's legs or the center can turn and pitch it back to the quarterback, but the play will start when the ball moves, not when the quarterback gets the ball.
2. Center sneak plays are not allowed. Note: A center sneak is any play in which the ball is transferred immediately to the center from the player receiving the snap. A center must take at

least one step forward to receive a legal forward pass or one step backward to accept a legal handoff or pitch.

3. The ball can be hiked from the center to any offensive player.
4. The ball must be snapped from the spot where the referee places it.
5. Any number of offensive players may shift prior to the snap but only one player on offense is allowed in motion when the ball is being snapped. The player in motion must be moving parallel to the line of scrimmage or in a backward direction. All other players on offense must be set prior to the snap.

RUNNING

1. Any player receiving a hand-off or a pitch behind the line of scrimmage is eligible to run the ball.
Note: A pitch may be tossed or thrown underhand or overhand to a player standing in a spot behind the player pitching it.
Note: A hand-off is a direct exchange of the football from one player to another.
Note: When two or more hand-offs are performed in quick succession, in every case, the player handing the ball off must completely release the ball. Having a player simply touch the ball while it is in possession of another player does not constitute a hand-off.
2. A player receiving a backwards pitch or backwards throw can then attempt a forward pass and throw the ball down field, as long as they're still behind the line of scrimmage.
3. The player receiving the snap is eligible to run only after a rusher crosses the line of scrimmage. Running is never allowed when a play starts in a no-run zone.
4. Once the ball has been handed off or pitched, all defensive players are eligible to rush the ball carrier regardless of their position prior to the snap.
5. No pitches or handoffs are allowed once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage (no laterals).
6. (7 – 11 year olds) No-Run Zones are located 5 yards from each end zone (see Field Dimensions). A running play toward the goal line is not allowed when the ball is **spotted** in the No-Run zone. The only way to advance the ball from the No-Run zone is with a forward pass.
7. The rules relating to the No-Run Zone do not apply to the 5-6 year old age group.
8. If a player missing a flag takes a handoff, the player can be downed by a defensive player placing two hands on him/her. (two hand touch)
9. Unlimited amounts of spin moves are allowed by the ball carrier.

PASSING

1. All forward passes must be received beyond the line of scrimmage. Note: A forward pass is any ball tossed or thrown overhand or underhand to a player standing in front of the player throwing it.
2. Once a legal forward pass is completed, no other passes, pitches or handoffs are allowed.
3. A player receiving a backwards pitch or backwards throw can then attempt a forward pass and throw the ball down field, as long as they're still behind the line of scrimmage.
4. Shovel passes are allowed and subject to all the rules pertaining to forward passes.
5. The quarterback has 7 seconds to handoff or pass the ball. After 7 seconds, a penalty flag will be thrown but play will continue until the ball is dead. If a rusher crosses the line of scrimmage, the 7-second clock will continue until the quarterback passes the ball, hands it off, or runs across the line of scrimmage.
6. Interceptions may be advanced including those made during extra point attempts and during overtime with one exception. Interceptions can be made but not returned when the point differential is 28 points or greater. The intercepting team is awarded possession at the spot of the interception.

RECEIVING

1. All players are eligible to receive forward passes or pitches.
2. If a player missing a flag catches the ball, the player can be downed by a defensive player placing both hands on him/her. (two hand touch)
3. A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

4. An offensive player who voluntarily runs out of bounds during live action may not return to the field of play until the ball is dead.
5. An offensive player who is forced out of bounds during live action by contact with a defender may return to the field of play during live action without penalty.
6. If a defensive player pulls a receivers flag prior to a legal reception of a pitch or forward pass, the defense will be flagged for Illegal Flag Pull but the play will not be whistled dead. If the receiver catches the pass or pitch, the play will remain live until the receivers other flag is pulled. If both flags are pulled illegally and the catch is made, the play remains live until a defender touches the ball carrier with two hands (penalty will be assessed after the play).
7. When a pass is thrown, any player from either team has a right to catch the ball. If in the attempt to catch the ball, a player hinders an opposing player by physical contact (pushing, shoving, slapping, etc), pass interference will result. Referees will determine incidental contact that is a normal part of flag football.
8. If a ball is simultaneously caught by 2 opposing players, possession will be awarded to the offense with the ball being dead at the spot.

RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK

1. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. An official on the field will stand seven yards from the line of scrimmage. Any player who wants to rush the quarterback must start behind that official.
2. The rusher is allowed a direct line to the quarterback as long as he rushes from at least two yards to the left or the right of the 7-yard rushing line marked by the official. Contact with or deliberate attempts to impede the rusher will be ruled offensive blocking.
3. A defender rushing the quarterback from a point within 2 yards to the left or right of the 7-yard rushing line marked by the official (i.e. up the middle) may not interfere with a receiver. Contact with or attempts to impede a receiver will be ruled defensive holding.
4. Any number of players can rush the quarterback.
5. Rushers may jump to block a pass but may not make contact with the QB.
6. If a rusher leaves the rush line prior to the snap, he/she may return to the rush line, reset and then legally rush the quarterback.
7. Once the ball is handed off or pitched, the seven-yard rushing rule is no longer in effect, and all defenders are eligible to rush.
8. The player receiving the snap is eligible to run when the rusher crosses the line of scrimmage except in the No-Run zone. If the rusher crossing the line is not an 'eligible rusher' (didn't start behind the 7 yard line) the play will continue, the referee will throw a flag, the player receiving the snap can pass or run. The penalty will be assessed after the play and can be declined by the offense in case of advantage.

SCORING

1. Touchdowns are worth 6 points.
2. Extra Points are worth 1 point from 5-yard line or 2 points from 12-yard line.
3. A Safety is worth 2 points.
4. The defense may return an interception including extra point attempts during regulation and overtime. An interception returned for a score on an extra point attempt is always worth 2 points. The exception is when the defensive team is ahead by 28 or more points in which case the ball is spotted at the point of interception.

RULES VIOLATIONS

1. All penalties will be assessed at the end of the play.
2. Spinning is allowed.
3. Diving or leaping to advance the ball is not allowed. If a player dives or leaps, the ball will be marked where the player left his feet.

4. Blocking is allowed, but the blocker may not run into or grab the defender in any way. The blocker may not extend his/her arms to impede the defender. No pushing, 'trucking', or grabbing is allowed.
5. Any player that steps out of bounds during play must return to the field of play immediately or be penalized for illegal participation.
6. Any player that comes onto the field from out of bounds after the play has begun will be penalized for illegal participation.
7. Referees will determine incidental contact that results from normal play.
8. The head coach (or the on-field coaches in the 5-6, and 7-8 year old divisions) may ask the referee for a rules clarification or interpretation but the request must come immediately after the play in question. Any stoppage of play by a coach to question a call or rule pertaining to a play other than the one just played will result in a delay of game penalty.
9. Players may not question calls. Coaches may not question judgment calls.
10. Penalties may be declined.
11. In the case of offensive and defensive penalties occurring on the same play, the down will be replayed unless one of the infractions was a personal foul. In that case, the personal foul would take precedence over the non-personal foul. Example: A defender interferes with a pass and, following the whistle; the offensive player turns and pushes the defensive player in anger. While both the defense and offense are flagged respectively for pass interference and unsportsmanlike conduct, the offense alone would then be penalized for the personal foul of unsportsmanlike conduct.
12. Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.
13. If a team calls a time-out when it has none left, the official will acknowledge the timeout request but a penalty will be assessed. For the losing team, the penalty is 5 yards and 15 seconds run off the clock. If the game clock has less than 15 seconds when such a time-out is called, the game clock will expire and will result in either half-time or game over. For the winning team, the penalty is 5 yards.
14. The ball may not be stripped from runner.
15. Flag guarding is when the player with the ball intentionally guards his/her flag by hitting or slapping the defensive players hand away from their flag. Flag guarding can also be hiding the flags under an un-tucked shirt, or tying the flags to the belt so they don't come off.

INADVERTENT WHISTLE

1. In the case of an inadvertent whistle, the offense has two options:
 - A) Take the ball at the spot where the whistle blew.
 - B) Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.
2. If a personal foul is committed during or immediately after a play whistled dead by an inadvertent whistle, the penalty for the personal foul would take precedence over the inadvertent whistle ruling.

GENERAL PENALTIES

1. Roughing/Unsportsmanlike conduct = 10 yards from end of play.
2. Delay of game = 5 yards from the original line of scrimmage.
3. Too many players on the field = 5 yards from line of scrimmage.
4. Illegal pitch = 5 yards from original line of scrimmage or point of infraction if beyond the line of scrimmage.
5. Improper Equipment = 5 yards from the original line of scrimmage and loss of down.

Note: When the listed penalty yardage is in excess of half the distance between the goal line and the spot from where the penalty yardage is to begin, the penalty will be "Half the distance to the goal line." Example: The original line of scrimmage is 7 yards from the goal line. The defense is flagged for being off-sides. The ball will be moved toward the goal and spotted at the 3 1/2 yard mark.

OFFENSIVE PENALTIES

ALL OFFENSIVE PENALTIES RESULT IN AN AUTOMATIC LOSS OF DOWN

Note: Loss of Down means no repeating of down. An offensive penalty on 1st down costs the offensive team yardage plus the 1st down play during which the penalty occurred. The next play run by the offense would be 2nd down. Penalties on 2nd down are followed by a 3rd down play. Penalties on 4th down plays result in a change of possession.

1. Illegal Hike/Illegal Motion/False Start = 5 yards from the original line of scrimmage.
2. Illegal Run in No-Run Zone = 5 yards from original line of scrimmage.
3. Illegal Forward Pass = 5 yards from the original line of scrimmage.
4. Offensive Pass Interference = 10 yards from the original line of scrimmage.
5. Flag Guarding/Blocking = 10 yards from spot of foul.
6. Center Sneak = 5 yards from the original line of scrimmage.
7. Failure to pass within 7 seconds = Loss of down only.
8. Illegal participation (player enters the field of play after the ball has been snapped) = 5 yard from the original line of scrimmage and loss of down.

DEFENSIVE PENALTIES

ALL DEFENSIVE PENALTIES RESULT IN AN AUTOMATIC FIRST DOWN

1. Offside/Illegal Rush = 5 yards from the original line of scrimmage.
2. Pass Interference = Ball placed at spot of the foul. In the case of pass interference in the end zone, the ball will be spotted 1 yard from the goal line.
3. Face guarding = Ball placed at spot of the foul. In the case of face guarding in the end zone, the ball will be spotted 1 yard from the goal line.
4. Holding/Illegal Contact/Illegal Flag Pull = 10 yards from the original line of scrimmage.
5. Holding an offensive player with the ball = 10 yards from the spot of the foul.
6. Roughing the passer = 10 yards from end of play.
7. Illegal participation (player enters the field of play after the ball has been snapped) = 5 yard from the original line of scrimmage and automatic first down.

FIELD DIMENSIONS:

7 – 11 year olds: the fields are 30 yards by 70 yards (provided field space allows) with two 10-yard end zones. Every field will have a midfield line-to-gain with no-running zones preceding the end zones by 5 yards.

5-6 year olds: the fields are 30 yards by 50 yards (provided field space allows) with two 10-yard end zones. Every field will have a midfield line-to-gain with no-running zones preceding the end zones by 5 yards.