

TSYFL- Flag Football Rules

Edt.1/15/15 Ages: 4,5,6 (Age as of July 31st)

The game is played having a maximum of: (11) offensive and (11) defensive players.

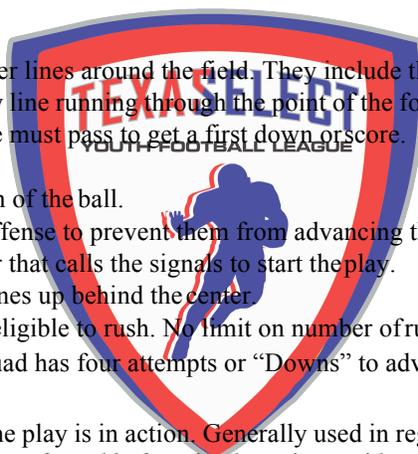
All referees calls are final. There will be ONE conversation regarding rule interpretation per half, per team, requested by the head coach only. This is a time out charged to the requesting team. Coaches will have the opportunity to ask for clarification at the half or after the game.

I. Game

1. At the start of each game, captains from both teams shall meet at midfield for the coin toss to determine who shall start with the ball.
2. The winner of the coin toss gets to decide taking possession or defense, to begin. The loser of the coin toss chooses the end zone to start play.
 - 2a. Teams may not choose to defer to second half choice.
3. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 45-yard line and has four (4) plays to make a first down. A first down is reached by moving the ball 10 yards.
4. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over..
5. Teams change sides after the first half. Possession changes to the loser of the coin toss.

II. Terminology

- **Boundary lines** – the outer perimeter lines around the field. They include the sidelines, and the rear end-zonelines.
- **Line Of Scrimmage** – an imaginary line running through the point of the football and across the width of the field.
- **Line-To-Gain** – the line the offense must pass to get a first down or score.
- **Rush Line** – Line of Scrimmage.
- **Offense** – the squad with possession of the ball.
- **Defense** – the squad opposing the offense to prevent them from advancing the ball.
- **Quarterback** – the offensive player that calls the signals to start the play.
- **Passer** – the offensive player that lines up behind the center
- **Rusher** – all defensive players are eligible to rush. No limit on number of rushers.
- **Downs (1-2-3-4)** – the offensive squad has four attempts or “Downs” to advance the ball. They must gain 10 yards to get another set of downs.
- **Live Ball** – the period of time that the play is in action. Generally used in regards to penalties, Live Ball Penalties are considered part of the play and must be enforced before the down is considered complete.
- **Dead Ball** – the period of time immediately before or after a play.
- **Whistle** – the sound made by an official using a whistle that signifies the end of the play or a stop in the action for timeout, half time or the end of the game.
- **Inadvertent whistle** – an official’s whistle that is performed in error.
- **Charging** – the movement of the ball carrier directly at a defensive player who has established position on the field. This includes lowering the head, making contact with the defender with a shoulder, forearm or the chest, resulting in a penalty.
- **Flag Guarding** – the deliberate guarding of the flags by the ball carrier to inhibit the defense from making a grab. Typically, a lowered and swinging, slapping arm motion, resulting in a penalty.
- **Shovel Pass** – a legal pass made by throwing the ball behind or beyond the line of scrimmage, underhand or pushing it towards a receiver in a shot put type manner.
- **Lateral or Pitch** – a backwards or sideways toss of the ball by the QB or ball carrier-behind the scrimmage only.
- **Unsportsmanlike Conduct** – rude, confrontational or offensive behavior or language- applies to players, coaches and spectators. This results in a penalty.



III. Eligibility

1. All players must be registered through TSYFL/USASNYFL and fall within the specified age range.
2. All players must present a waiver that is signed by a legal guardian or parent.

IV. Equipment

Mouth Guard. Every player must wear a mouth-guard to each practice and each game. Kids will not be able to play without a mouth piece.

1. Football sizes: For 4-5-6yo (K-2) All balls must be properly inflated and approved by the referee.
2. Each Organization provides each player with **flag belts (Velcro -2 strips only, affixed with 2 metal circular buckles.)** NO plastic pull away belts, no suction type. Flags must be a minimum of 2 inches wide and 15 inches long. Flags may be any color, but must contrast from the color of pant or short worn.
3. Players must wear shoes. Cleats are allowed, however cleats with exposed metal are not allowed and must be removed.
4. Players may tape their forearms, hands and fingers. Players may wear gloves, elbow pads, and kneepads.
5. Players must remove all watches, necklaces, earrings and any other jewelry.
6. FLAG jerseys or Tees must be worn during play and tucked in.
7. Player's jerseys must be tucked into the pants.
8. Pants or shorts without loops and pockets only.

V. Field

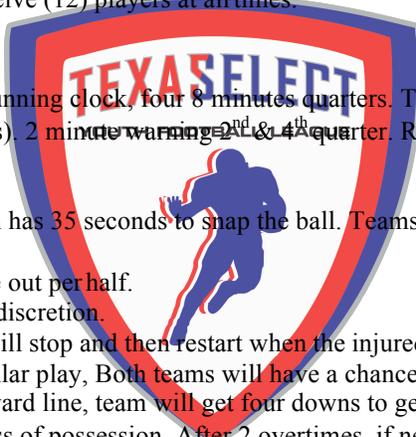
1. The field size is regular regulation tackle football field (52 yards by 100 yards with two 10-yard endzones).
2. Stepping on the boundary line is considered out of bounds.

VI. Rosters

1. **All players must be registered and approved to play by TSYFL and conform to age-requirements.**
2. Teams must field a minimum of twelve (12) players at all times.

VII. Timing and Overtime

1. Games are played on a 32 minute running clock, four 8 minutes quarters. The clock stops only for timeouts, and touchdowns. No clock on extra point(s). 2 minute warnings at 2nd & 4th quarter. Regular clock last 2 minutes of 2nd & 3rd quarter.
2. Halftime is 5 minutes long.
3. Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 35 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced.
4. Each team has three 30-second time out per half.
5. Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
6. In the event of an injury the clock will stop and then restart when the injured player is removed from the field of play.
7. If the score is tied at the end of regular play, Both teams will have a chance on offense. Teams will flip for possession of the ball. Ball will be placed at the 12 yard line, team will get four downs to get a first down or score. Failure to gain first down or score or a turnover will be loss of possession. After 2 overtimes, if neither team has scored, the 3rd over time will be decided by furthest penetration if if neither team scores.



VIII. Scoring

1. Touchdown: **6 points**
2. PAT (Point After Touchdown) **1 point** (5-yard line) or **2 points** (12-yard line).
3. Safety: **2 points to the defensive team and the ball is awarded to the defensive team at the opposite 5 yard field.**
 - a. A Safety occurs when the ball carrier is declared down in his/her own end zone. They can be called down when their flags are pulled by a defensive player, their flag falls out, they step out of bounds or they hit the ground with their knee or arm. A Safety also occurs when there is an offensive penalty in the end zone.
4. A team that scores a touchdown must declare whether they wish to attempt a 1-pt. conversion (from the 5-yard line) or a 2-pt. conversion (from the 12-yard line). Any change, once a decision is made to try for the extra point, requires a charged time out. The PAT decision cannot be changed after a penalty.

IX. Coaches

1. **All coaches must certify through USA Football and pass a criminal background and Child Abuse Registry background to coach-No exceptions.**
 - 1a. **All coaches must read and sign the "Coaches Ethics" form.**
2. Only 1 offense or 1 defense coach is allowed on the field to direct players for their squad.
4. Coaches are expected to adhere to TSYFL, USA Football, and USA Select National Youth Football League philosophies, coaching guidelines and codes of conduct.
5. **Only 5 coaches plus 2 others (Non-Coaches) per team are allowed on the sidelines.**

X. Live Ball/Dead Ball

1. The play is live when the ball passes through or next to the center's legs. Dropped snaps are a dead ball and loss of down.
2. The official will indicate the neutral zone and line of scrimmage. It is an automatic dead ball foul if any player on defense or offense enters the neutral zone. In regards to the neutral zone, the official may give both teams a "courtesy" neutral zone notification to allow their players to move back beyond the line.
3. The defense may not mimic the offensive team signals, by trying to confuse the offensive players, while the quarterback is calling out signals to start the play.
4. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
5. Any official can whistle the play dead.
6. Play is ruled "dead" when:
 - a. The ball hits the ground.
 - b. The ball carrier's flag is pulled.
 - c. The ball carrier steps out of bounds.
 - d. A touchdown, PAT or safety is scored.
 - e. The ball carrier's knee or arm hits the ground.
 - f. The ball carrier's flag falls out.
 - g. The receiver catches the ball while in possession of one flag.
 - h. The ball carrier's flag belt is turned to where the flags are in front and back.
 - i. An inadvertent whistle is performed (at the spot where the ball was whistled dead).
7. In the case of an inadvertent whistle, the offense has two options:
 - a. Take the ball where the whistle blown made the play dead.
 - b. Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.

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

XI. Running

1. The ball is spotted where the runner's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball carrier has the ball. If one foot precedes the other, the forward foot marks the spot.
 - a. For Line-To-Gain and Goal Lines, the ball AND feet must cross the line.
2. The quarterback can rollout, pass, pitch, handoff or lateral while in the backfield. The QB CAN ADVANCE the ball for positive yards.
3. QB can pitch the ball or hand off behind the line of scrimmage to a running back. Offense may use multiple handoffs or pitches, behind the line of scrimmage.
6. The player who takes the handoff or pitch can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
7. Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. Diving, leaping or jumping is considered flag guarding.
8. Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a flagpull. Ball carrier cannot flag-guard.
9. Runners may leave their feet if there is a clear indication that he/she has done so to avoid collision with another player without a flag guarding penalty enforced.
10. **Hand blocking and "screening" is allowed on the line, but no shoving.**
11. Flag Obstruction – All jerseys MUST be tucked in before play begins. The flags must be on the player's hips and free from obstruction. Deliberately obstructed flags will be considered flag guarding.

XII. Passing

1. All passes must be from behind the line of scrimmage, thrown forward or behind the line of scrimmage.
2. Shovel passes are allowed, and received behind or beyond the line of scrimmage.

XIII. Receiving

1. Receivers and Back players are eligible to receive passes.
2. Only one player is allowed in motion at a time. All motion must be parallel to the line of scrimmage and no motion is permitted towards the line of scrimmage.
3. A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.
4. In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.
5. Interceptions can be returned and result in a change the possession.

- Interceptions on an extra point either (1) or (2) points that is ran back for a touchdown count towards the opposing team's score in the same amount as the points attempted.

XIV. Rushing the Passer

- Rushing can only begin once the ball has left the center's hands.** 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, lateral, pitched, or passed, all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage to pull a flag.
- Defensive players should verify they are in the correct position with the official on every play, where possible
- A legal rush begins when the ball leaves the center's hands.
 - Any player can rush from a point beyond the LOS.
- A penalty will be called if:
 - The rusher crosses the scrimmage line before the ball has passed through or next to the center's legs.
 - Any defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped – Off-sides (5 yards LOS)
- Special circumstances:
 - Teams are not required to rush the quarterback.
 - Teams are not required to identify their rusher before the play.
- Players rushing the Quarterback may attempt to block a pass. However, NO contact can be made with the quarterback in any way, except to pull a flag.
- Offense can impede the rusher. The defense may attempt to block a pass provided they do not strike the passer.
- Blocking the pass and then striking the passer will result in a 5-yard penalty
- A Sack occurs if the QB's flags are pulled behind the line of scrimmage. The ball is placed where the QB's feet are when the flag is pulled.
 - A Safety is awarded if the sack takes place in the offensive team's end zone.

XV. Flag Pulling

- A legal flag pull takes place when the ball carrier is in full possession of the ball.
- Defenders ~~cannot~~ tackle or hold or interfere with the ball carrier in the pursuit of pulling a flag.
- It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball carrier's possession at any time.
- Any player whose flag or flags fall off cannot be eligible to make a defensive or offensive play.**
- If the ball-carrier's flag, while carrying the ball, inadvertently falls off during the play, the play is dead at that point. Specifically, if a running back is in the process of receiving a hand-off without a flag, that play is called dead. If a pass receiver's flags fall off while running a pass pattern and catches the ball, the play is called dead the catch nullified.
- A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off of players who are not in possession of the ball.
- Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping of head, hand, arm, or shoulder, or intentionally covering flags with the football or jersey.

XVI. Formations

- An offensive team must have a minimum of seven players on the line of scrimmage. The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage, behind the center or in a 'shot-gun' distance.
 - Only one player at a time may go in motion and must be positioned one yard behind and parallel to the line of scrimmage.
 - No motion is allowed towards the line of scrimmage.
- No handoffs are allowed back to the center from the quarterback during the set formation.
 - Hiking: 5-6yo, may side swipe to the QB, or under the legs.
- Movement by a player who runs toward the line of scrimmage while in motion is considered a false start.
- The center must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion between or side of his/her legs to the QB only.
- No 3-point stance

XVII. Unsportsmanlike Conduct

- If the field-monitor or referee witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. The decision is made at the referee's discretion. FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.
- Offensive or confrontational language is illegal. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If offensive or confrontational language occurs, the referee will give one warning. **If it continues, the player, players, coach, or fan will be ejected from the playing field.**
- Players may not physically or verbally abuse any opponent or official.
- Ball carriers MUST make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position.
- Defenders are not allowed to run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.

6. Fans must also adhere to good sportsmanship:
 - a. Yell to cheer on your players, not to harass officials or other teams.
 - b. Keep comments clean and profanity free.
 - c. Compliment ALL players, not just one child or team.
7. Fans are required to keep fields safe and kids friendly:
 - a. Keep younger kids and equipment such as coolers, chairs and tents away from the sidelines.
 - b. Stay in the end zone area, not between fields at Inverness Elementary.

Penalties

Offensive All penalties are assessed for 5 Yards.

- Illegal Equipment
- Illegal motion (more than one person moving, false start, etc.)
- Offensive-pass interference (illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender)
- Delay of game (after the ball is spotted, exceeding the 30 second limit)
- Flag guarding (hindering the pull of a flag by the ball carrier)

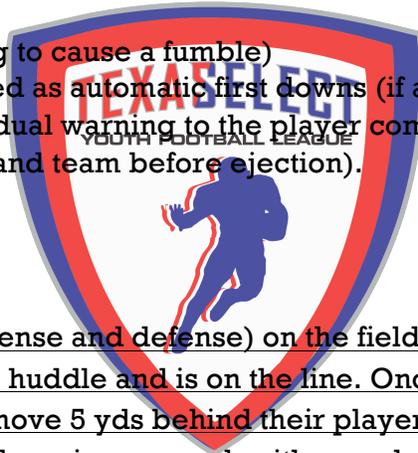
Defense All penalties are assessed for 5 Yards.

- Off-sides
- Interference
- Illegal contact (Holding, blocking, etc)
- Defense Illegal flag pull (before receiver has ball)
- Roughing the passer

Stripping the ball (attempting to cause a fumble)

Team – Below penalties are assessed as automatic first downs (if against defense) or loss of down (if against offense) and carry an individual warning to the player committing the penalty (one warning to the player and team before ejection).

- Unnecessary Roughness
- Taunting
- Unsportsmanlike conduct



Added Rule: Each coach (offense and defense) on the field will not move or speak to a player once the offense has broke from the huddle and is on the line. Once the offense is on the line, both offense and defense coaches must move 5 yds behind their player who is furthest back. The on field coaches are NOT to run with the ball carrier or speak with any player or Ref while the ball is live.

These rules are in addition to any and all TSYFL/USASNYFL Administrative and Organizational Rules.

Revised March /2020