

Rules for All Flag Divisions

7 v 7 Flag Game Format

- Field is 30 yards wide and 50 yards long, including the 5-yard end zones.
- 2-3 games may run simultaneously.
- Games are 7 players vs 7 players - The offense will have a center who **IS** an eligible receiver and is their "7th" player. All players are eligible.

Scoring

- Touchdowns = 6 points
- Extra Point (5 yard line) = 1 pt
- Extra Point (10 yard line) = 2 pts
- No runs on extra points
- **MERCY RULE**

If a team is up by 30 or more they only have 2 downs to get a first down and then 2 downs to score until that point difference is trimmed below 30 pts. Then regular game rules apply.

The team that is behind by 30 or more points will start their offensive possession at the +10-yard line and get 4 downs to get a first down without suffering a turnover on the spot. (If they fail to get a first down, the opposing team will start the drive at their own 5. If the point difference is trimmed below 30 pts, then regular game rules apply.

Basic Rules (All Levels)

Clock:

- Two 20-minute running clock halves (*10-minute break at half*)
- Teams switch sides at halftime.
- TWO 30-second timeouts per half
- If a timeout is called after a touchdown, the clock will not start until the play after the conversion attempt
- The clock will **only stop for time-outs and injuries** (*it does not stop for incomplete passes, out of bounds, or change of possession*) unless it is the last minute of the game.
- **LAST 1 MINUTE OF THE GAME**
 1. The clock will stop in the final 1 minute of the game on these actions:
 - Incompletions
 - Out of Bounds
 - Change of Possession
 - Penalties. (If it's an offensive penalty the clock will start on the official unless dead-ball foul.)
 - Games cannot end on a defensive penalty.

Overtime Rules

- Overtime will take place with each team receiving a possession.
- Coin flip determines the choice of 1st or 2nd possession.
- Possession begins at the 10 yard to go line.
- If a touchdown is scored, a team can elect to go for a 1 or 2-point conversion.
- If there is more than one overtime period the teams must go for 2 each try.

Rules for All Flag Divisions

- If the defense intercepts the ball it's a change of possession starting at the 10-yard line unless the Defense returns it for a TD. The game could be over if the intercepting team was ahead in points in OT prior to playing Defense or if the intercepting team returns it for a TD on its 1st Defensive possession per OT.
- If the game is still tied, overtime will be repeated until there is a winner.
- The offensive team will get 2 downs to score from the +10-yard line
- Teams alternate first possession each overtime period

Possession and Ball Placement

- Coin flip determines the choice of possession or direction. (The winning team can elect to defer to the 2nd half)
- Each possession starts at the 5-yard line after scores and halftime.
- The offensive team has three downs to get a first down at mid-field, then 4 downs to score once they have crossed mid-field.
- If a team is on its own side of the field, they may choose to try and convert the 4th down OR use the punt option to make the other team start at their start line.
- If you fail to convert the 4th down on your side of the field, that will result in a turnover at the yard mark of the attempt's end result.
- Interceptions can be returned for a TD, if the intercepting team's flag is pulled before the end zone then possession will begin where the defender is flagged.
- If there is a bad snap, the ball is dead and placed at the LOS. There is NO loss of yardage.
- The ball is placed where a flag is pulled, not where the ball is when the flag is pulled. (Exception for a ball caught in the endzone - a defender cannot pull the flag and put it outside of the endzone - the player being in the endzone takes precedent)

Dead Balls, End of Play:

- Flag is pulled
 1. If a runner loses their flag then the opposing team must **touch** them down and the ball will be marked where the player was touched.
- Runner's knee touches the ground.
- Runner steps out of bounds.
- Runner dives; the ball is spotted where the runner left his feet.
- No fumbles
 1. A fumbled, or stripped ball is dead and placed at the spot of the fumble with the offensive team retaining possession.
- Laterals are allowed but if the ball hits the ground, the ball is spotted at that yard mark.
- Some penalties (See penalties section)

Pre-snap rules

- The defense must start 2 yds off the LOS.
 1. Defensive exception: if the ball is at the +1 then the defense can start at Goalline.
- Only one player can be in motion at a time. Shifts are permitted.
- No more than 3 receivers to one side of the quarterback.
- No runs inside the 5 from the End Zone
- Play clock varies by age group. (See Chart)
- Run(s) per 1st down vary by age group. (See Chart)

Rules for All Flag Divisions

- ONE Coach is allowed on the field for both offense and defense.
- The defensive coach must be off the field before the snap. (Not Peewee, See Chart.)
- If there is a bad snap, the ball is dead and placed at the LOS. There is NO loss of yardage.
- Additional pre-snap formation rules apply but vary by age. (See Chart)

Blocking and Tackling:

- Absolutely no tackling or blocking.
- Stationary picks are allowed.
- Both of the player's feet must be planted and they may not move to initiate contact with an opposing player.

The Deception Rule:

- Purpose: The *Deception Rule* is applied to define the integrity of the LOS and the development of the passing game for both offense and defense.
- Peewee: Defensive players can cross the line of scrimmage when a handoff, fake handoff, or backward pass has occurred.
 - Peewee level clarification: A second player must come near the QB to initiate the defense coming across. Peewee plays take a little more time to develop and often the QB is holding out the ball long before anyone is near them. In order to allow the offense to at least run some type of play, the defensive coaches need to "hold" their rush until a second player is near the QB.
- Junior and Senior: Defensive players can cross the line of scrimmage when any handoff, fake handoff, or backward pass has occurred.

Run Game Rules

- No Defensive Blitzes
- A play will be considered a run play, when **any part of the ball carrier crosses the line of scrimmage**, or if a player takes a hand-off from the quarterback and **any part of the ball carrier crosses the line of scrimmage**.
- *The QB can not directly run the ball UNLESS the defense breaks the LOS in line with the Deception Rule. Only then can the QB run, however this **will count** as a run play.*
- A play in which a player takes a hand-off from the quarterback, and then throws a forward pass from behind the LOS will be considered a pass play, and not count as a team's run play.
- A pass caught behind the LOS and then breaking the LOS will count as a run play (ex. shovel pass, bubble, screen. etc.) because the defense can not cross the LOS to defend the pass.
- The above reception does allow the defense to cross the LOS under the Deception Rule.

Pass Game Rules

- No Defensive Blitzes
- A reception is complete when the receiver catches the ball with at least **one** foot in bounds.
- The QB has to release the ball or attempt a legal run play within – **4-6 seconds** (See age chart, and Deception Rule)
- The sack count starts on the snap of the ball no matter what the offensive play is attempted.
- The sack clock is off when the QB gives up possession, even if the ball has not crossed the LOS because the defense can now cross the LOS.
- If the QB does not release the ball or attempt a legal run play, before time expires, the result of the play is a sack and the ball returns to the LOS.

Rules for All Flag Divisions

- A forward pass can be underhand or overhand as long as it is beyond the LOS.
- A player cannot throw the ball downfield if **any part of the player** crosses the LOS. This is a 5-yard penalty and loss of down.
- All grade levels have the option to throw a backward pass for a double pass play. This alerts the defense and activates the Deception Rule.
- A pass caught behind the LOS and then breaking the LOS will count as a run play because the defense can not cross the LOS to defend the pass. (shovel pass, bubble, screen, etc.) The reception does allow the defense to cross the LOS under the deception rule.
- Two forward passes will not be allowed on a play.

Age Specific Rules & Goals

AGE SPECIFIC RULE CHART:

Age Level	Play Clock	Sack Clock	Players on LOS	# of Runs per 1st down	Coaches on Field
Peewee (5-7)	45 seconds	6 seconds	Unlimited	Unlimited	1 on Def 1 on Off
Junior (8-10)	40 seconds	5 seconds	3 (Covered and uncovered rules apply)	2	1 on Off Def off (snap)
Senior (10-14)	35 seconds	4 seconds	3 (Covered and uncovered rules apply)	1	1 on Off Def off (Snap)

Play Clock:

- Peewee: 45-second play clock (within reason given the age group at times this needs to be flexible, but will be handled by the referee.)
- Junior: 40-second play clock (two warnings to be given per game, per team.)
- Senior: 35-second play clock (one warning to be given per game, per team.)

Sack Clock:

- Referee will audibly count off the sack clock until time has expired or the QB has released the ball or crossed the LOS on a legal run.
- Peewee - 6 seconds, Junior - 5 seconds, and Senior - 4 seconds.

Players on LOS/Illegal Formation:

- Peewee: Unlimited number of players on the LOS. Covered/uncovered rules do not apply.
- Junior and Senior:
 1. 3 Players must be on the Line of Scrimmage or an Illegal Formation will be called.
 2. The Center counts as 1 player on the LOS.
 3. If a player inside a receiver is on the LOS, that receiver is ineligible. If that player goes down the field it would result in an illegal formation penalty.

Rules for All Flag Divisions

Number of Runs Allowed:

- **Peewee:** Unlimited runs are allowed.
- **Junior:** Each team begins their drive with 2 runs allowed. If the team gets a 1st down, the number of runs allowed resets to 2.
- **Senior:** Each team begins their drive with 1 run allowed. If the team gets a 1st down, the number of runs allowed resets to 1.

Coaches on the Field:

- **Peewee:**
 - ONE Coach is allowed on the field for both offense and defense. Defensive coach must make their best effort to not physically influence the result of the play.
- **Junior and Senior:**
 - ONE Coach is allowed on the field for both offense and defense.
 - The defensive coach must be off the field before the snap.
 - If the coach is not off the field, this will be called as too many players on the field. (See penalties section)

Age Level Goals:

- **Peewee:** In this division, we want to encourage the teams to start focusing on passing the ball more than running the ball. A slightly modified Deception Rule will be in effect to help with the integrity of the passing game for both offense and defense. We want the players to start applying proper QB, WR, and DB fundamentals in the passing game.
- **Junior and Senior:** In this division, we want to encourage the teams to start focusing on passing the ball more than running the ball. The Deception Rule will be in effect to help with the integrity of the passing game for both offense and defense. We want the players to start applying proper QB, WR, and DB fundamentals in the passing game.

Sideline Penalties:

- **Sideline Conduct Foul** - If a player/coach/parent engages in demeaning/intimidation/disrespectful language or gestures toward game and/or league officials the following process will occur.
 - **1. First Foul** - 5 yard penalty. This is the one and only warning for the team/coaches/players/parents. A league official will be notified that the foul has occurred.
 - **2. Second and all subsequent fouls** - The team/coach/player/parent will be removed from the field of play even if the warning given was not for that individual. A league official will be notified and complete the removal. The event will be reviewed by the executive board to see if further action is needed. (See Coaching Section Eligibility Regulations)
 - Refusal to leave the field of play in a reasonable amount of time will result in the forfeiture of the game for that team.
 - Continued behaviors from outside the field of play will result in unsportsmanlike conduct penalties for the associated team.

Rules for All Flag Divisions

Offense Penalties:

- **Offensive Pass Interference** – 10-yard penalty and replay the down
- **Illegal motion (2 men in motion)** – 5-yard penalty and replay the down
- **Illegal Formation** – 5-yard penalty and replay the down
- **Illegal Run** – 5-yard penalty and loss of down
- **False Start** – 5-yard penalty, replay the down
- **Illegal Forward Pass** – 5-yard penalty and loss of down
- **Blocking** – the ball is placed at the spot of the foul and loss of down
- **Leaping** – the ball is placed at the spot of the foul and loss of down
- **Flag Guarding (including stiff arms)** – 5-yard penalty from the spot of the foul and loss of down.
 - Flag Guarding is defined as: Runners shall not flag guard by using their hands, arms, or the ball to deny the opponent an opportunity to pull or remove the flags or flag belt. Flag guarding includes: Placing or swinging the hand or arm over the flag belt to prevent an opponent from removing the flags or flag belt.
- **Unsportsmanlike conduct** – 15-yard penalty (*possible ejection*)
- **Delay of Game** – the clock is stopped and a 5-yard penalty. The ball will not be moved back if the team is on the starting line. The game clock will stop until the ball is snapped.
- No Intentional Grounding Penalty

Defensive Penalties:

- **Defensive Pass Interference** – 10-yard penalty and replay down unless it's an offensive catch; Offense decides. *1st down can occur depending on the yardage.*
- **Illegal Contact (holding, jams, etc.)** – 5-yard penalty and replay down unless it's an offensive catch; Offense decides. *1st can occur depending on the yardage.*
- **Defensive Holding while pulling flag** – 5-yard penalty added to the end of the play and replay down. *1st down can occur depending on the yardage.*
- **Illegal Flag Pull (before the player has the ball)** – 5-yard penalty and replay down. *1st down can occur depending on the yardage.*
- **Offsides** – 5-yard penalty and replay down. *1st down can occur depending on the yardage.*
- **Too many players on the field** – 5-yard penalty and replay down. *1st down can occur depending on the yardage.*
- **Illegal Rushing (before a hand-off motion has occurred)** – 5-yard penalty and replay the down; offense decides depending on the result of the play. *1st down can occur depending on the yardage.*
- **Inadvertent tackle** – 5-yard penalty added to the end of the play and replay down.
- **Inadvertent tackle From Behind w/clear path to end zone** – Automatic Touchdown
- **Unsportsmanlike conduct** – 15-yard penalty and automatic 1st down (*possible ejection*)
- *Defensive Penalties inside the 10-yard line will result in half the distance to the Goalline if applicable.*