



MVP Youth Flag Football
GAME RULES
Spring 2026 Edition - Version 2



OFFICIAL RULE BOOK

MVPFlagFootball.com



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RULES

II. Terminology

1. **Boundary Lines** - the outer perimeter lines around the field. They include the sidelines, and the rear end zone lines.
2. **Line of Scrimmage** - (LOS) an imaginary line running through the point of the football and across the width of the field.
3. **Line to Gain** - the line the offense must pass to get a first down or score.
4. **Rush Line** - an imaginary line running across the width of the field 7 yards (on the defensive side) from the Line of Scrimmage.
5. **Offense** - the squad with possession of the ball.
6. **Defense** - the squad opposing the offense to prevent them from advancing the ball.
7. **Passer** - the offensive player that throws the ball and may or may not be the QB.
8. **Rusher** - the defensive player assigned to rush the QB to prevent him/her from passing by pulling his/her flag or blocking the pass.
9. **Downs (1, 2, 3)** - the offensive squad has three attempts or “downs” to advance the ball. They must cross the Line to Gain to get another set of downs or to score.
10. **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.
11. **Dead Ball** - the period of time immediately before or after a play.
12. **Whistle** - the sound made by an official using a whistle that signifies the end of the play or a stop in the action for a timeout, half time or the end of the game.
13. **Inadvertent Whistle** - an official’s whistle that is performed in error.
14. **Charging** - the movement of the ball carrier directly at a defensive player who has established position on the field. This include lowering the head, making contact with the defender with a shoulder, chest or forearm.
15. **Flag Guarding** - an act by the ball carrier to prevent a defender from pulling the ball carriers flags be stiff arm, lowering elbow, hand, football or by blocking access to the runner’s flags.
16. **Shovel Pass** - a legal pass attempted behind the line of scrimmage by throwing the ball underhanded or pushing it towards a receiver in a shot put type manner.
17. **Lateral** - a backwards or sideways toss of the ball by the ball carrier to another player.
18. **Unsportsmanlike Conduct** - rude, confrontation or offensive behavior or language.



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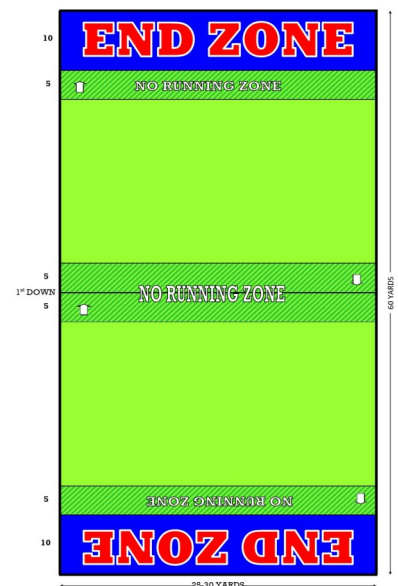
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III. General & Equipment

1. Practice is 2x per week until games start, then 1 practice week of games, with warm up before game.
2. The League provides each player with flag belts with 3 flags, and each team with a division appropriate footballs. Teams can also provide their own footballs for practice or game use.
3. All players must wear a protective mouthpiece. **THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS.**
4. All players must wear shoes. Cleats are allowed (football, soccer & baseball), cleats with exposed metal are not allowed and the player will be asked to sit out. No metal cleats.
5. Players may tape their forearms, hands and fingers.
6. Players may wear gloves, soft elbow pads, soft knee pads, wrist bands, head bands. Pads and Braces with hard plastic, or metal are **NOT** allowed.
7. Players must remove watches, earrings, necklaces, and other jewelry that the officials deem hazardous. Sunglasses and hats are OK.
8. Official MVP jerseys must be worn during play.
9. All players jerseys must be tucked into shorts if they hang below the belt line.
10. No shorts with pockets or belt-loops.
11. Footballs-
 - PEE WEE FOOTBALLS - K - 4th (PeeWee, Freshman & JV) - **GIRLS K-6th GRADE**
 - JUNIOR FOOTBALLS - BOYS/COED 5th-6th (Varsity) - **GIRLS 7th-8th**
 - YOUTH FOOTBALLS - BOYS/COED 7th-8th
 - Wilson K2 ball is OK for K—2nd only.
 - Brown Composite footballs—No white/Gray/Rubber

IV. Field

1. The recommended field size is 25 yards by 60 yards with two 10 yard end zones and a midfield line-to-gain. No-Running Zones precede each line-to-gain by 5 yards.
 - Field size may be modified depending on space available.
1. No Run Zones are in place to prevent teams from power running for touchdowns and 1st downs.
2. Stepping on the boundary lines is considered out of bounds.
3. Each offensive squad approaches only **TWO** No Run Zones in each drive (one zone 5 yards from Midfield to gain the 1st down, and the other 5 yards from the goal line to score a TD).





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V. Rosters

1. MVP is a 6 v 6 game.
2. Teams must field a minimum of 5 players at all times.
3. All players must be approved MVP roster, no pick up players.
4. **EVERYONE PLAYS! All Players need to play equal amounts of time.**
5. On 8 man roster each player will sit one quarter or even distribution of playing time

VI. Timing & Overtime

1. Games are played with four 10 minute running quarters (40 minutes), 1 minute water break between quarters and a 5 minute halftime.
2. Two 30 second time-outs per half. Time-outs do not carry over.
3. Each time the ball is spotted, the offensive team has 30 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay of game penalty is enforced.
4. Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
5. In the event of an injury the clock will stop and then restart when the injured player is removed from the field of play.
6. **Tied score at the end of regulation: (EXCEPT 1st-2nd and 3rd-4th GRADE DIVISIONS WHICH WILL REMAIN A TIE).**
 - Coin flip determines 1st or 2nd possession.
 - The ball is placed at the 10 yard line from the end zone.
 - Each team gets 3 plays to score a Touch Down.
 - If the teams scores then decide on 1 or 2 point conversion.
 - Each team gets 1 try, if game is still tied after OT period game ends in a tie *
 - All regulation period rules and penalties are in effect.
 - No time outs.
 - Interceptions end the possession and the ball is turned over to the opposing team or the game is over depending on the situation. Interceptions can be returned for touchdown.
 - ***In Post Season Playoffs, Championships and Tournaments** there must be a winner so there will be multiple OT periods until an outcome is reached.

VII. Scoring

1. Touchdown = 6 points
2. Point After Touchdown (PAT's cannot be returned for points) **NO PAT FOR KINDER**
 - 1 point (played from the 5 yard line—no run zone)
 - 2 points (played from the 10 yard line)
3. Safety = 2 points. When the ball carrier is downed in his/her own end zone.
4. Interceptions on PAT cannot be returned. Dead Ball



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VIII. Coaches

1. Coaches are typically volunteer parents or family members helping the players learn and enjoy the game. At times MVP will use hired coaches when parent coaches cannot be found.
2. Parents are requested to support the coaches at all times.
3. Coaches are allowed on the field to direct players according to need and division level.
4. Coaches are expected to adhere to the MVP philosophies, coaching guidelines and code of conduct.

IX. Dead Ball

1. The ball must be snapped between the legs, to start play.

Girls can snap the ball off to the side. GIRLS ONLY

1. Any official can whistle the play dead.
2. Play is ruled "dead" when:
 - The ball hits the ground.
 - The ball carrier's flag is pulled.
 - The ball carrier steps out of bounds.
 - A touchdown, PAT or safety is scored.
 - The ball carrier's knee hits the ground
 - The ball carrier's flag falls out.
 - The receiver catches the ball while in possession of only one flag.
 - The 6 second pass clock expires.
 - Inadvertent whistle.
4. In the case of an inadvertent whistle, the offense has two options:
 - Take the ball where the whistle blew / result of the play
 - Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage with no time concession.
5. A team is allowed to use a timeout to question an official's rule interpretation. If the rule is interpreted incorrectly, the time out will not be charged and the proper ruling will be enforced. If the ruling is correct the team will be charged a time out.
6. There are no fumbles...therefore NO STRIPPING OF THE BALL. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground.



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X. Running

1. **Kinder, 1st-2nd, PeeWee (K-1) & Freshman (K-2nd) Division = Unlimited Runs**
2. **3rd-8th (also Junior Varsity & Varsity) Divisions = ONE run each side of the field.**
3. **1st-2nd / K-2 / Freshman Divisions - Unlimited Running, but must pass the ball in the NO RUN ZONES**
4. The quarterback cannot run past the line of scrimmage with the ball.
5. The quarterback is determined by the first person that touches the ball from center.
6. 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 proceeds the other, the forward foot marks the spot.
7. Handoffs, laterals, shovel passes, pitches are allowed as per the NFL rules.
8. **SHOVEL PASS IS A FORWARD PASS**
9. **LATERAL OR PITCH STARTS AS A RUN (can be a passed if behind the LOS)**
10. Center Sneaks are allowed as long as goes from center to QB and wrapped around to hand off to center. Not back through the legs.
11. No-Running Zone is located approx. 5 yards from each end zone (as marked), and approx. 5 yards on either side of midfield (as marked).
12. **The player who takes the handoff, lateral or pitch, can throw the ball from behind the LOS.**
13. Once the ball has been handed off, lateraled or pitched, all defensive players are eligible to rush across the line of scrimmage.
14. **Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball (diving for the marker). Diving, leaping, or jumping over players is illegal and will be marked as flag guarding.**
15. Spinning and jumping side to side (juke) is allowed, **NO HURDLING DOWN PLAYERS.**
16. No Blocking, Moving Screens, escorts or *PICKS* at any time.
17. Offensive players without the ball must run opposite of ball carrier (decoy) and avoid defenders (blocking or pick) ahead of the runner or off to the opposite side, and avoid any defensive player. No running with the ball carrier.
18. Flag Obstruction - All jerseys **MUST** be tucked in before play begins. The flags must be at the players hips and free from obstruction.
19. **LAST MAN STANDING:** If there is no one between the ball carrier and the end zone and the defensive player holds, tackles, or pushes as a result to stop the offensive player from scoring this will award the runner a touchdown.



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XI. Passing

1. All passes by QB or player throwing a forward pass, must be made from behind the line of scrimmage.
2. **The QB has 6 second “pass clock”. If a pass is not thrown with the Pass Clock time, the play is dead, loss of down, ball spotted back at the original LOS.**
3. Once the ball leaves the QB’s hand the six second rule is no longer in effect.
4. A pitch or lateral can start as a Run, **BUT** the player may pass the ball behind the LOS.
5. **DOUBLE PASS:** The first “pass” must be behind the QB, the 2nd pass must be behind the LOS. If the intended receiver does not catch the pass, it will be ruled a dead ball where the ball hit the ground (similar to a dropped ball)
6. Shovel passes are allowed. Shovel passes are a forward pass.
7. **ANY PASS OR PITCH THAT GOES FORWARD IS A PASS.**
8. Interceptions may be returned for a TD. If not returned for a TD, the ball is placed at the point the ball is marked dead.
9. Interceptions cannot be returned for a score on a PAT.
10. No blocking downfield.

XII. Receiving

1. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the QB if the ball had been handed off or lateral behind the line of scrimmage as per the NFL rules).
2. Only one man is allowed to go in motion at a time. No motion towards the line of scrimmage.
3. The receiving player must have at least one foot in bounds when making a reception.
4. In the case of simultaneous reception by both an offensive player and defensive player, the possession will remain with the offense.
5. Any pass can be caught behind the LOS

XIII. Formations

1. The offensive must have 3 players including the center on the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped.
2. **One player may go in motion at a time parallel to the line of scrimmage or away.**
3. **At least 1 player must be on each side of the Center.**
4. No motion is allowed towards the line of scrimmage.
5. Movement by a player towards the line of scrimmage or beyond it is considered a false start.
6. Center snaps must be one movement.
7. Center snaps must be through the legs (BOYS) GIRLS off to the side.



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XIV. The Game

1. The start of the game captains from each team will meet for a coin toss to determine who shall start the game with the first possession. The visiting team gets the choice to call the toss.
2. The winner of the coin toss gets the choice of first possession or to defer to 2nd half and the choice of the end zone to defend.
3. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5 yard line and has 3 plays to cross midfield for a 1st down. Once a team crosses midfield, it has 4 plays to score a touchdown.
4. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on its 5 yard line.
5. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its 5 yard line.
6. All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offenses 5 yard line.
7. Interceptions may be returned from point of catch to a defensive touchdown. Offense takes over at point the defensive players flag is pulled.
8. Teams change sides after halftime. Possession changes to loser of coin toss
9. Teams must field a minimum of 5 players at all times.
10. EVERYONE PLAYS - each player will sit one quarter or substitution patterns that will give every player equal time on the field, don't get into a "win at all costs" mindset. This is youth flag football for fun and development.
11. **NON CONTACT PLAY.** No Jamming or Contact at the LOS between the DB an WR.
12. There are NO Kickoffs, NO Punts.
13. There are NO turnover on fumbles. The ball is spotted where it hits the ground.
14. If the Flag falls off during the play, the ball is spotted where the FLAG FALLS OFF.
15. COACHES ON THE FIELD OF PLAY:
 - *Kinder, 1st-2nd, PeeWee (K-1st), Freshman (K-2nd): 2 Coaches max.*
 - 3rd-4th Grade (JV) : **1 Coach on the field**
 - 5th-6th & 7th-8th Grade (Varsity): **Sidelines only.**
 - On field coaches MUST remain a minimum of 10 yards from the active play to avoid any interference with the action.
 - 5th-8th: After the play a coach may step 2-3 steps onto the field to move away from sideline, but at the snap, must be off the field of play.
16. Rules questions issues/violations: If there is a question, call a time out. Refer to the rule in the rulebook. If the Referee has issue with the reference in the rulebook, call over the Head Referee or the Site Manager for Rule Clarification. If the coaches concern is valid, the timeout will be given back. If not, it will be loss of time out. Parents cannot argue or talk to referees.



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XIV. The Game (continued)

16. SUBJECTIVE RULES - Those not defined in the Rule Book. Spot of Ball, and other calls.
17. PROTESTS: All problems/issues will be handled by the officials and site supervisors on the field and their decisions are final. There are NO Protests.
18. **MERCY RULE** - if a team is up by 30 or more points they only have 2 downs to get a first down and 2 downs to score until the point difference is below 30 points.
 - **Losing team may add a 7th player to their defense until the point differential is lowered below 30 points.**
 - Team winning is not allowed to rush the passer
 - **League Commissioner may cut final quarter to 8 minutes in 30+ game**

XV. Rushing the Quarterback

1. **Kinders/PeeWee do not rush the QB.**
2. **1st-2nd, 3rd-4th, 5th-6th, 7th-8th (Freshman, JV, Varsity) all can rush the QB**
3. All players who rush the QB must be a minimum of 7 yards from the line of scrimmage (as marked by the referee) when the ball is snapped.
4. Any number of players can rush the QB
5. Players not rushing may defend the line of scrimmage or pass coverage.
6. Once the ball has left the QB hands the seven yard rule is no longer in effect, and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
7. The referee will mark the 7 yards with a special marker, no part of the rushing defender may be ahead of the marker...**BEHIND THE MARKER.**
8. If a rusher leaves early they may return to the rush line, reset and then legally rush the QB.
9. If a rusher leaves early, and the ball is handed off before they cross the line of scrimmage they may cross the line of scrimmage legally.
10. Players rushing the QB may attempt to block a pass, however, **NO CONTACT** can be made with the QB's arm in any way while in the throwing motion.
11. Teams are not required to rush the QB.

XVI. Flag Pulling

1. Defenders can dive to pull flags, but cannot tackle, hold or run through ball carriers.
2. A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off a player who is not in possession of the ball.
3. Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping of the head, hand, arm, or shoulder, or intentionally covering the flags with the football or jersey.
4. Stripping the ball is not allowed.



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XVII. Sportsmanship

1. MVP Youth Flag Football recreational flag football program and is a 6 on 6 flag football game filled with fun and action. This is a **non contact** coed & Girls division league where sportsmanship, fun and a good family time is the goal.
2. **UNSPORTSMANLIKE / FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!**
3. **CONDUCT - Trash talking will not be tolerated.** Officials have the right to determine offensive language. (Trash talk is talk that may be offensive to officials, opposing players, teams or spectators). Coaches are responsible for players and parents. Harassment, arguing, or racial comments in any way with referees, opposing players, league personnel will not be tolerated. The Unsportsmanlike conduct Penalty process will be followed.
4. **UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT PENALTY:** If Trash talk, harassment, offensive language occurs, the referee may give one warning and if it continues, there will be a flag and penalty assessed to the offending team. The player(s), coach(s) or fan(s) will be ejected from the game and asked to leave the premises, to the parking lot. The game will not continue until the ejected party has left the premises. If they do not leave, the referee will forfeit the game immediately and award the WIN to the opposing team.
5. **SPORTSMANSHIP:** Any player/coach/fan who verbally threatens an official, staff member before, during or after a game shall be suspended immediately from playing for the night and a time determined by the league office. Any player/coach/fan who physically abuses (push, strike, touch, spits) or threatens a league official, opposing player, parent or coach shall be immediately banned from the league and can be legally prosecuted for Battery.
6. Anyone ejected from a game (player, coach, fan) for any reason, will not be allowed on the fields for the next game. If they are ejected a 2nd time during the season, they will not be allowed on the premises for the next TWO games and are subject to dismissal from the league with **NO REFUND.**
7. If the field Official/Referee, field monitor or League Commissioner witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the Staff member can assess an Unsportsmanlike Penalty. The penalty if called is a dead ball at point of infraction and automatic 1st down. It will ALWAYS benefit the other team.
8. Any player found to be registered falsely in a lower division than their grade will be removed from the roster and the team disqualified for that game that player played in.
9. Ball carriers MUST make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position.
10. Defenders are not allowed to run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.
11. Fans must cheer for your players, and show good sportsmanship.
12. Fans cheer good plays by both teams, look for areas of praise in everyone.
13. Keep the fields safe, keep chairs and coolers a safe distance from the sidelines.
14. **Have fun enjoy the game.**



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XVIII. Ranking & Seeding

The following criteria will be used for Conference place and Playoff seeding:

1. Wins/Losses/Ties (1/0/.5)
2. Head to Head competition
3. Points Allowed
4. Coin flip

XVIV. Penalties

• **GENERAL:**

1. The referee will call all penalties.
2. Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.
3. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, except as noted (spot fouls).
4. Only the team captain or head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarifications and interpretations. Players cannot question judgment calls.
5. Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.
6. Penalties are assessed Live Ball then Dead Ball. Live Ball penalties must be assessed before play is considered completed.
7. Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.

• **5 YARD PENALTIES**

1. Illegal Equipment
2. Offside
3. Illegal motion (more than one person moving, false start, etc)
4. Illegal forward pass (throwing a pass beyond the line of scrimmage).
5. Screening, blocking or running with the ball carrier.
6. Delay of game
7. Defense illegal contact (holding, blocking etc)
8. Defense illegal flag pull (before receiver has ball)
9. Defense illegal rushing (starting rush from inside 7-yard marker)

• **10 YARD PENALTIES**

1. Offensive pass interference (illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender)
2. Roughing the passer
3. Taunting
4. Unsportsmanlike conduct.

• **SPOT FOULS**

1. Flag guarding10 yards & loss of down
2. Charging10 yards & loss of down
3. Defensive pass interference Automatic first down
4. Stripping 10 yards & 1st down
5. Unnecessary roughness5 yards & loss of down
6. Screening, blocking, running with the ball carrier10 yards & first down



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XVIII. Penalties

• **DEFENSE**

- 1. Offside 5 yards from LOS & automatic 1st down
- 2. Illegal contact 5 yards from LOS & automatic 1st down
- 3. Illegal flag pulling 5 yards from LOS & automatic 1st down
- 4. Illegal flag pulling 5 yards from LOS & automatic 1st down
- 5. Illegal rushing 5 yards from LOS & automatic 1st down
- 6. Roughing the passer 10 yards from LOS & 1st down
- 7. Unnecessary Roughness Spot foul, 10 yards & 1st down
- 8. Stripping Spot foul, 10 yards & 1st down
- 9. Defensive pass interference Spot foul & 1st down
- 10. Intentional Early Flag Pull Spot Foul from catch, 10 yards, & 1st down
- 11. Last Man Standing Automatic Touchdown

• **OFFENSE**

- 1. Illegal motion 5 yards from LOS & loss of down
- 2. Illegal forward pass 5 yards from LOS & loss of down
- 3. Offensive pass interference 5 yards from LOS & loss of down
- 4. Flag guarding Spot foul, 10 yards & loss of down
- 5. Screening, Blocking or running with the ball carrier Spot foul, 5 yards & loss of down
- 6. Charging Spot foul, 10 yards & loss of down
- 7. Delay of game 5 yards from LOS & loss of down
- 8. Offensive Unnecessary Roughness Spot foul, 10 yards & loss of down
- 9. Offside 5 yards from LOS & loss of down
- 10. Running in the "No Run Zone" Dead ball, 5 yards & loss of down
- 11. 7 second Violation Dead ball, 5 yards & loss of down

HAVE FUN AND ENJOY THE SEASON