

MCR NFL Flag Football



Youth League Rules/Guidelines



NFL Flag Official Playing Rules will govern play with the exception listed below. The rule contradiction from the NFL Flag rule book and page number are listed where applicable.

Game

- The offense has 4 downs to obtain a first down which is ten yards from where the ball is made ready for play before the first down of a new series. **(Rule 1.3, page 3)**
- If the offensive team goes for it on 4th down and does not cross the line to gain, the opposing team will start its possession from that spot. **(Rule 1.3.e, page 3)**
- Games will consist of two teams comprised of seven players each. Offenses must have a minimum of one player (the center) and up to six players on the line of scrimmage. The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage. **(Rule XV.1, page 15)**

Field

- Field dimension will be 25 yards wide by 70 yards with two 10-yard endzones. **(Clarification of IV.1, page 6)**
- No-Run zones will only be located five yards prior to the endzone in the offense's direction. **(Rule IV.1, page 6, & Rule X.5, page 11)**
- For 9U and 8U, No-Run zones are eliminated. Teams may run anywhere on the field.

Timing and Overtime

- Regular Season Games are played on a 40-minute continuous clock with two 20-minute halves, unless one team gains a 35-point advantage which will end the game. **(Rule VI.1, page 8)**
- Halftime is five (5) minutes. **(Rule VI.2, page 8)**
- In the event of a tie score at the end of the second half, there will be one overtime period. If teams remain tied after the first overtime, then the officials will declare the game a tie. **(Rule VI.7.c-d, page 8)**

Unsportsmanlike Conduct

- Unsportsmanlike conduct penalties **(Rule XVII.iv-v, page 16)**:
 - Defense +15 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
 - Offense -15yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
- Any Unsportsmanlike Act/Taunting is a decision made at the referee's discretion. No appeals will be considered.

Aged Based Guidelines (page 17)

- For 8U and 9U: One Coach for each team is permitted on the field pre and post snap to help their players, but post snap at a safe distance to plays completion.
- For all age groups, the following rules will be used:
 - Players may rush the passer **(See Rule XIII)**
 - Defenders may line up on the line of scrimmage, no contact may be made at snap.

Flag Football Penalties

When the referee throws a flag on the ground during the play, they're indicating that a penalty has occurred. The referees call all flag football penalties and determine judgment calls, such as contact resulting from normal run of play. To keep the game moving accordingly, only the head coach may inquire about flag football rule clarifications and interpretations.

Defensive Spot Fouls

All flag football penalties are assessed from the line of scrimmage, except for spot fouls. Spot fouls are penalties that are assessed from the spot on the field where the foul occurred.

Type	Description	Yardage
Defensive pass interference	The player significantly hinders an eligible receiver's opportunity to catch the ball	Automatic first down
Holding/Illegal Contact	The player restrains another player who is not in possession of the ball	+5 yards and automatic first down
Stripping	A player smacks or grabs the football out of the ball-carrier's possession	+5 yards and automatic first down

Offensive Spot Fouls

Offensive spot fouls are also assessed from the spot on the field where the foul occurred. All of these flag football penalties result in a loss of down. But any loss of down on the third down results in a turnover, with the other team taking possession.

Type	Description	Yardage
Screening, blocking or running with the ball	The player uses physical attempts to gain yardage by obstructing the path of their opponent	-5 yards and loss of down
Charging	The player challenges their opponent for space without using their arms or elbows	-5 yards and loss of down
Flag guarding	The ball-carrier intentionally obstructs the defender's access to their flag	-5 yards and loss of down
Holding/Illegal Contact	The player restrains another player who is not in possession of the ball	-5 yards and loss of down

Defensive Flag Football Penalties

You'll find that many defensive penalties are behavior-oriented and can take on several definitions. Unsportsmanlike conduct, for example, can include any physical acts, like intentional tackling, elbows, or cheap shots, as well as verbal, such as confrontational language. Referees can also penalize fans who aren't keeping the field safe and player-friendly. Penalties are designed to teach youth players the importance of respect and good sportsmanship.

Type	Description	Yardage
Unnecessary roughness	Using methods beyond what is necessary to pull the flag off the opponent	+15 yards and automatic first down
Unsportsmanlike conduct	Examples include excessive celebration, using abusive language, punching or kicking an opponent	+15 yards and automatic first down
Offside	A player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped	+5 yards from the line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Illegal rush	The rusher is not lined up at least seven yards off the line of scrimmage	+5 yards from the line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Illegal flag pull	A player intentionally pulls a flag off of an opponent before they have full possession of the ball	+5 yards from the line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Roughing the passer	A player makes contact with the passer after they've thrown a forward pass	+5 yards from the line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Taunting	A type of unsportsmanlike conduct where the player purposely creates ill will between teams	+15 yards from the line of scrimmage and automatic first down

Offensive Flag Football Penalties

Similar to defensive flag football penalties, offensive flag football penalties include infractions for unsportsmanlike behavior, whether it's physical or verbal. On offense, there are also penalties for improper movements on the line of scrimmage, such as moving before the play starts or delaying the game. Delay-of-games penalties are enforced after one warning. Here's a list of offensive flag football penalties:

Type	Description	Yardage
Unnecessary roughness	Using methods beyond what is necessary to pull the flag off the opponent	-15 yards and loss of down
Unsportsmanlike conduct	Examples include excessive celebration, using abusive language, punching or kicking an opponent	-15 yards and loss of down
Offside/false start	An offensive player moves in a way that indicates the start of the play before the ball is snapped	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal forward pass	A player throws the ball forward once they are past the line of scrimmage	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Pass interference	The eligible receiver significantly hinders the defensive player's opportunity to intercept the ball	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal motion	Players shifting and not coming to a complete stop before the ball is snapped	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Delay of game	Team fails to snap the ball and put it in play	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Impeding the rusher	The rusher's path or line is occupied by a moving offensive player	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal procedure	A technical rules violation, such as illegal formation	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down