



# *Rules*

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## ***I. Rules***

- A. We are always trying to make Conroe Youth Flag Football the best league it can possibly be. Rules may be changed for the better of the league at any time by the league coordinator.
- B. The referee will determine who starts the game with the ball. They can choose to flip a coin with coach's or captains, or any way the referee would like to decide who gets ball first.
- C. Every player must play at least ½ of the game.
- D. The offense will take possession of the ball at its 10 or 15-yard line and has 4 downs to cross midfield. Once the team crosses midfield it has 4 downs to cross the 10 or 15 yard line. Once the team crosses the 10 or 15 yard line, it has 4 downs to score.
- E. On interceptions, the defender can return it for a touchdown or the ball will be placed where the defender's flag is pulled before reaching the endzone.
- F. Teams will change sides at halftime and whoever starts on offense in the first half will start on defense in the second half.

## ***II. Equipment***

- A. Each player will be provided a jersey for games. Shorts and shoes will be provided by the parents. Cleats are optional. Mouthguards are required to play.
- B. Coaches will be provided a bag of footballs, flags, a set of cones, and a set of rules.
- C. Jerseys must be tucked into their shorts, and flags must be 100% visible and off the outside of the clothing.

## ***III. Eligibility***

- A. All players must be registered before practicing or playing with team.

## ***IV. Rule Terminology Chart***

- A. Line-to-Gain: The line the offense must pass to get a first down or score
- B. Rush Line: An imaginary line running across the width of the field seven yards (into the defensive side) from the line of scrimmage.
- C. Downs (1-2-3-4): The offensive team has four attempts or "downs" to advance the ball. It must cross the line to gain to get another set of downs or to score.
- D. Live Ball: Refers to the period of time that the play is in action. Generally used in regard to penalties. Live ball penalties are considered part of the play and must be enforced before the down is considered complete.
- E. Dead Ball: Refers to the period of time immediately before or after a play.
- F. Charging: An illegal movement of the ball-carrier directly at a defensive player who has established position on the field. This includes lowering the head or initiating contact with a shoulder, forearm or the chest.

- G. Flag Guarding: An illegal act by the ball-carrier to prevent a defender from pulling the ball-carrier's flags by stiff arm, lowering elbow or head or by blocking access to the runner's flags with a hand or arm.
- H. Shovel Pass: A legal pitch attempted beyond the line of scrimmage.
- I. Lateral: A backward or sideways toss of the ball by the ball-carrier.
- J. Unsportsmanlike Conduct: A rude, confrontational or offensive behavior or language towards a player, coach, or referee.

## **V. *Field Dimensions***

- A. 60 yard total field for 6-7 year olds, 80 yard total field for 8 and up.
- B. 40 & 60 yards field of play, two 10-yard endzones.
- C. 30 yards wide for 6-7 year olds, 40 yards wide for 8 and up.
- D. Mid-field line 20 & 30-yard line.

## **VI. *Roster***

- A. Rosters will be constructed by the league coordinator at the start of the season.
- B. Teams will consist of 7-12 players.
- C. Teams must start the game with a minimum of 4 players when playing 5v5, 6 players when playing 7v7. In the event of an injury or shortage of players, a team may play with 4 or 6 players.
- D. All players will play at least half of every game; players will have the opportunity to play different positions

## **VII. *Game time***

- A. The game will consist of two 17 minute halves, running clock followed by the 7-play rule.
- B. There will be a 45-second play clock in between plays. Early in the season referees will be lenient with the play clock. Later in the season, referees will track more closely. The 6-7 year old division will be fairly lenient with play clock all season.
- C. Two 60-second timeouts will be given for each team per half.
- D. No overtime period.
- E. Officials can stop the clock at their own discretion.
- F. The clock will stop in the event of an injury.
- G. If either team is ahead by 28 points or more at the 10 minute mark in the second half, the referees will give the coach the option to end the game.
- H. 7 play rule – once the game reaches the 17 minute mark in the first or second half there are a total of 7 plays left for the end of the half, instead of the final 3 minutes.

## **VIII. *Scoring***

- A. Touchdown – 6 points
  - a. Rushing touchdown, receiving touchdown, interception returned for a touchdown.
- B. Extra point from 5yd line – 1 point
- C. 2 point conversion from 10 yd line
- D. Safety – 2 points
  - a. Occurs when the ball carrier is declared down in the endzone, by having their flag pulled, flag falling out, knee touches the ground, stepping out of the back of the endzone, or a fumble in the endzone.

## **IX. Coaches**

- A. Coaches may be on the field before the snap, but during the play need to move to the side. 6-7 year old coaches may be on field during play, but do not interfere. Interference will result in 10 yard penalty.

## **X. Live Ball/Dead Ball**

- A. The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead.
- B. Play is ruled dead when:
  - a. Ball carrier’s flag is pulled or falls off
  - b. Ball carrier steps out of bounds
  - c. Touchdown or safety
  - d. Ball carrier’s knee touched ground
  - e. The ball is fumbled and hits the ground
  - f. Incomplete pass
- C. A player who gains possession in the air is considered inbounds as long as one foot comes down in the field of play.
- D. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- E. In the event a player fumbles the ball and the ball hits the ground, the ball is dead.
- F. If the snap is fumbled and immediately picked up, the ball will remain live. If the ball is snapped and the ball is not immediately picked up, the ball is dead.
- G. A dead ball becomes ready for play once the referee:
  - a. If time is in, sounds his whistle and signals ready for play. The 35 second play clock begins on that whistle, Delay of Game (5 yards LOS) enforced if exceed time to put ball in play.
  - b. If time is out, sounds his whistle and either signals “start the clock” or “ready for play.”
- H. There will be free substitution as long as players being substituted for are off the field prior to the next snap OR player is out of the area of play and is departing the field in haste. "Sleepers" on substitutions will not be allowed on any play. No player may line up closer than 5 yards from the sideline unless he came out of the huddle

or unless he was on the field of play during the previous play and did not leave the field of play.

- I. Center must snap the ball between his legs.

## ***XI. Running***

- A. The quarterback cannot run with the ball past the line of scrimmage.
- B. A quarterback may pass, handoff, or immediately pitch or lateral the ball after receiving the ball from the center (i.e., one motion).
- C. Read Option plays where a player touches the ball and the QB keeps it and runs with the ball will not be allowed. The ball must completely leave the QB's hands.
- D. A player who receives a handoff or immediate pitch is allowed to pass the ball from behind the line of scrimmage, in addition to pitching or handing to another player.
- E. Stiff-arming is not allowed
- F. The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet are when the flag is pulled.
- G. 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.
- H. Flag guarding or charging will result in a penalty and loss of down.
- I. A defender may not push or knock a ball carrier out of bounds. A form of illegal deflagging. If the contact is excessive it will result in further penalty.

## ***XII. Passing***

- A. All passes must be from behind the line of scrimmage.
- B. The quarterback can make a backwards pass, but if the ball hits the ground on a backwards pass, the ball is dead at the spot the ball hit the ground. The receiver of a backwards pass may run or throw the ball as long as they stay behind the line of scrimmage.
- C. Shovel passes are allowed.
- D. Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the end of the run back.
- E. If the passer is beyond the L.O.S. when the football is released, an illegal Forward Pass has occurred and will result in a 5 yard penalty and loss of down.
- F. A lateral will be any pass thrown overhand or underhand perpendicular or away from the direction of advancement of team in possession. Forward laterals are treated as an illegal forward pass if beyond L.O.S.
- G. Quarterbacks have a 10 second clock to get the pass off. Play is dead after 10 seconds have elapsed.

### ***XIII. Blocking***

- A. Blocking to move players out of the way is prohibited and will be penalized.
- B. Players must keep both arms near their own chest and “get in the way” of the defender, not blocking to move them out of a spot.
- C. Blockers that are seen as trying to push defenders over or away from the player with the ball will be called for Charging and will be a 10 yard penalty from the LOS.

### ***XIV. Receiving***

- A. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
- B. 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 toward the line of scrimmage.
- C. A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.
- D. Interceptions are returnable but not on conversions after touchdowns.
- E. Pass Interference Rules shall apply to any pass made from behind the L.O.S., whether it is a forward pass or a lateral pass and applies to both offensive and defensive players. After the pass is in the air, neither the pass receiver nor the defender may touch, push, or hold the other player at the referee’s judgement until one of them touches the ball, or else offensive or defensive pass interference may be called.
- F. Defensive pass interference will be placed at the spot of the foul. Offensive pass interference will be a 10 yard penalty or half the distance to the goal.

### ***XV. Rushing the passer***

- A. All players who rush (aka blitz) the passer must be a minimum of 7 yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped.
- B. Once the ball is handed off, pitched, or thrown, the rushing line no longer is in effect and all defenders may cross the line of scrimmage.
- C. Players cannot cross the line of scrimmage, unless behind the rushing line at the snap, or unless the ball is handed off or thrown behind the line of scrimmage.

## ***XVI. Flag Pulling***

- A. The ball carrier is down and the ball is dead when either flag is detached from his belt or when the ball or either knee touches the ground. A defensive player may leave his feet to pull the offensive player's flag but may not make contact while doing so.
- B. Tackling is prohibited. Tackling is grasping or encircling the body of the ball carrier with a hand or arm.
- C. It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball-carrier's possession at any time.
- D. Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball-carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping the head, hand, arm or shoulder or intentionally covering the flags with the football jerseys.

## ***XVII. Formations***

- A. One player at a time may go in motion 1-yard behind and parallel to the line of scrimmage. No motion is allowed toward the line of scrimmage.
- B. Movement by a player who is set or a player who runs toward the line of scrimmage while in motion is considered a false start.
- C. Flag positions will be consisted of: 1 Quarterback, 1 Center, 1-3 Running backs, 1-3 Wide Receivers. Every position can catch the ball.

## ***XVIII. Punts***

- A. If a punt is to be made, the offense must announce it to the referee before the ball can be declared ready for play. Offense must declare within 10 seconds after asked by referee on 4th down play. (Penalty delay of game.) After offense declares, the referee will mark ball ready for play whereupon the offense will have 15 seconds to punt the ball.
- B. The ball will not be dead if it touches the ground before the punt is made even if muffed by the punter. After a punt has been declared, it must be made and neither team may cross the L.O.S. until the ball is kicked.
- C. The receiving team must be given an opportunity to field the punt in the air.
- D. The ball is dead when the ball comes to a complete stop, if on the ground.
- E. If the receiving team drops or muffs the punt, the ball is dead where it hits the ground.
- F. No fake punts or attempting to block the punt.
- G. 6-7 year old teams if choose to punt, ball goes to opposite 10 yard line.

## ***XIX. Player/Coach/Parent Conduct***



- A. Offensive or confrontational language is not allowed by players, parents, or coaches. 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 or players will be ejected from the game. Fans may be given one warning as well, but if harassing language towards referees, coaches, or players continues they may be asked to leave the park. Warning is not required if the referee, field supervisor, or league coordinator determines offence severe enough.
- B. If a coach, player, or fan is ever kicked out of a game, the league coordinator will review the incident to determine if further punishment is required which could result in suspension from practice, game(s), or removal from league without refund if necessary.
- C. This also applies to any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, or any unsportsmanlike act.
- D. Fans must also adhere to good sportsmanship as well:
  - a. Yell to cheer on your players, not to harass officials or other teams.
  - b. b. Keep comments clean and profanity free.
  - c. c. Compliment ALL players, not just one child or team.
- E. Fans are required to keep fields safe and kids friendly:
  - a. Keep younger kids and equipment such as coolers, chairs and tents a minimum of 10 yards off the field in the end zone area.
  - b. Dispose of ALL trash in designated trash cans.
  - c. Fans must stay 5 yards off the field at all times
- F. Unsportsmanlike conduct penalties:
  - a. Defense + 10 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
  - b. Offense - 10 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down.
- G. All fans must sit on the opposite side of the field as the coaches and players. The ONLY exceptions are for those allowed by field supervisor or referee.

## **XX. Penalty Chart**

<b>General Infraction</b>	<b>Penalty Yardage</b>	<b>Coach's Choice</b>
Clothing Covering Flag	5 yards	No
Improper Equipment	5 yards	No
Flag or Belt improperly positioned	5 yards	No
Flag improperly attached	5 yards	No
Delay of Game	5 yards	Yes
False Start	5 yards	No
Illegal Sub	5 yards	No
Unsportsmanlike conduct	10 yards	No
Encroachment	5 yards	Yes
Offsides	5 yards	Yes
Illegal advancement	5 yards	Yes
Illegal shift or motion	5 yards	Yes
Excessive contact	10 yards	No
Illegal forward pass	5 yards	Yes
Pass interference	10 yards or Spot Foul	Yes
Stiff arm	10 yards	No
Flag guarding	10 yards	No
Charging	10 yards	No
Failure to declare punt	5 yards	No
Illegal touching	5 yards	No
Illegal Rushing	5 yards	No
Illegal snap	5 yards	No
Tackling or pushing	10 yards	No
Illegal Deflagging	5 yards	No
Sideline interference	10 yards	No
Holding	10 yards from LOI	Yes
Attempting to strip ball	10 yards	no