



Red Lion Christian Youth Flag Football League Rules

2026 Red Lion Flag Football Game & Draft Rules

General Rules for All Ages (3-14)

- **Ages:** 3-14 years old.
- **Team Size:** Maximum of 7 offensive and 7 defensive players; minimum of 5 offensive and 5 defensive players (except 3-5 can play 4-on-4).
- **Equal Playing Time:** All players **should play at least 50% of each game.**
- **Blocking:** Stationary Screens are permitted (the player cannot be moving). All other blocking is prohibited for all ages.
- **Field Size:** Recommended 40 yards by 50 yards with 10-yard end zones and a midfield line-to-gain (20-yard line). A narrower field will be used for ages 3-7.
- **Game Start:** Captains meet at midfield for a coin toss; the winner chooses possession or defense. The offense starts at the 40-yard line.
- **Possession:** The offense has four plays to cross midfield (20-yard line) for a first down and four plays to score a touchdown. Possession changes start at the 40-yard line (except interceptions returned for a TD).
- **Scoring:** Touchdown = 6 points; PAT = 1 point (5-yard line, Ages 8-9 and older must pass) or 2 points (10-yard line, run or pass). A decision must be declared; changes require a timeout.
- **Timing:** 40-minute continuous clock (two 20-minute halves), stops for timeouts, and a 4-minute warning per half. The last 2 minutes of each half follow NFHS stoppage rules. Halftime is 5 minutes. Each team has two 30-second timeouts per half. Tie games end as ties (playoffs follow high school rules).
- **Equipment:** Mouthguards are recommended, league-provided flag belts (\$3 replacement) are required, rubber/plastic cleats are allowed (no metal), no jewelry is permitted, and official jerseys/shorts must be tucked in.
- **Coaches:** 1 offense or 1 defense coach on the field (except 3-5 and 6-7 allow 2). Only 2 coaches and a team mom on the sidelines. Spectators stay outside the fence.
- **Penalties:** Offensive and defensive penalties are 5 yards unless specified. Unsportsmanlike conduct, unnecessary roughness, or taunting results in a warning, then ejection, with automatic first down (defense) or loss of down (offense).
- **Live Ball/Dead Ball:** The play is live when the QB moves the ball upward, **or the ball is snapped.** Dead when the ball hits the ground, the flag is pulled, the runner steps out of bounds, the touchdown/PAT is scored, the knee/arm hits the ground, the flag falls, the runner is touched, or the pass clock expires. There are no fumbles—the ball is spotted where it hits the ground.
- **Flag Pulling:** Legal when the ball carrier has possession. No tackling, holding, or stripping the ball. Flag guarding (stiff arms, covering flags) is a penalty.
- **Unsportsmanlike Conduct:** Intentional tackling, rough play, or abusive language results in ejection after one warning. Applies to players, coaches, and fans.
- **Penalties:**
 - **Offensive:**
 - **5 yards:** Illegal motion, pass interference, screening, delay of game, flag guarding, charging.
 - **Loss of Down:** Any offense penalty that normally results in a 5-yard loss, when the ball is spotted on the 40-yard line or during a PAT attempt. (4.13.26)
 - **Defensive**
 - **5 yards:** Offsides, interference, illegal contact, illegal flag pull, illegal rushing.
 - **10 yards:** Roughing the passer
 - **Team (First Down/Loss of Down):** Unnecessary roughness, taunting, unsportsmanlike conduct.

Age Group: 3-5 Years

- **Team Size:** Can play 4-on-4 (minimum 4 offensive and 4 defensive players).
- **Ball in Play:** The play is live when the QB moves the ball upward, **or the ball is snapped**. Dropped snaps are dead, resulting in a loss of down.
- **QB Position:** Holds the ball at the offensive line of scrimmage (LOS).
- **No-Run Zones:** Removed (running allowed anywhere).
- **Passing:** The QB has a 7-second pass clock. If no pass, handoff, pitch, or lateral occurs, the play is dead, down is consumed, and the ball returns to LOS.
- **Running:** The QB cannot advance the ball. Handoffs, pitches, or laterals are allowed behind LOS; the runners cannot leave feet (diving/jumping is flag guarding).
- **Rushing the Passer is not allowed.** The defense must stay 5 yards off the LOS until the ball is handed off, pitched, or passed, at which point all may rush.
- **Receiving:** All players are eligible to receive passes. No motion allowed (counts as a false start). One foot inbounds for a catch.
- **Formations:** Minimum 4 players on the LOS. No motion permitted.
- **Special Rules:** All players must touch the ball at least once per game.
- **Coaches:** Up to 2 coaches are allowed on the field.

Age Group: 6-7 Years

- **Team Size:** Minimum 5 offensive and 5 defensive players; maximum 7 per side.
- **Ball in Play:** The play is live when the QB moves the ball upward, **or the ball is snapped**. Dropped snaps are dead, resulting in a loss of down.
- **QB Position:** Holds the ball at the offensive LOS.
- **No-Run Zones:** Removed (running allowed anywhere).
- **Passing:** The QB has a 9-second pass clock. If no pass, handoff, pitch, or lateral occurs, the play is dead, down is consumed, and the ball returns to LOS.
- **Running:** The QB cannot advance the ball. Handoffs, pitches, or laterals are allowed behind LOS; runners cannot leave their feet (diving/jumping is flag-guarding). Spinning is permitted if the feet stay on the ground.
- **Rushing the Passer is not allowed.** The defense must stay 5 yards off the LOS until the ball is handed off, pitched, or passed; at this point, all may rush.
- **Receiving:** All players are eligible to receive passes. One player may go in motion parallel to LOS (1 yard behind), with no motion toward LOS.
- **Formations:** Minimum 4 players on the LOS.
- **Coaches:** Up to 2 coaches are allowed on the field.

Age Group: 8-9 Years

- **Team Size:** Minimum 5 offensive and 5 defensive players; maximum 7 per side.
- **Field Size:** 40 yards by 50 yards with a 10-yard end zone and a midfield line-to-gain (20-yard line).
- **Ball in Play:** The play is live when the QB moves the ball upward, **or the ball is snapped**. Dropped snaps are dead, resulting in a loss of down.

- **QB Position:** Holds the ball at the offensive LOS.
 - **No-Run Zones:** 5 yards before the end zone. All plays (including handoffs) must end as a forward pass from behind the LOS. The pass clock is 7 seconds.
 - **Passing:** The QB has a 7-second pass clock (7 seconds anywhere, not adjusted in No-Run Zones). If no pass, handoff, pitch, or lateral occurs, the play is dead, down is consumed, and the ball returns to LOS.
 - **Running:** QB cannot advance the ball. Handoffs, pitches, or laterals are allowed behind LOS; the runners cannot leave their feet (diving/jumping is flag-guarding). Spinning is permitted if the feet stay on the ground.
 - **Rushing the Passer:** Not allowed. The defense must stay 5 yards off the LOS until the ball is handed off, pitched, or passed; then, all may rush.
 - **Receiving:** All players are eligible to receive passes. One player may go in motion parallel to LOS (1 yard behind), with no motion toward LOS.
 - **Formations:** Minimum 4 players on the LOS.
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Age Group: 10-11 Years

- **Team Size:** Minimum 5 offensive and 5 defensive players; maximum 7 per side.
 - **Ball in Play:** The play is live when the QB moves the ball upward, **or the ball is snapped**. Dropped snaps are dead, resulting in a loss of down.
 - **QB Position:** Holds the ball at the offensive LOS.
 - **No-Run Zones:** 5 yards before the end zone. All plays (including handoffs) must end as a forward pass from behind the LOS. The pass clock is 5 seconds in No-Run Zones.
 - **Passing:** QB has a 7-second pass clock (5 seconds in No-Run Zones). If no pass, handoff, pitch, or lateral occurs, the play is dead, down is consumed, and the ball returns to LOS.
 - **Running:** QB cannot advance unless blitzed (see Rushing). Handoffs, pitches, or laterals are allowed behind LOS; the runners cannot leave their feet (diving/jumping is flag-guarding). Spinning is permitted if the feet stay on the ground.
 - **Rushing the Passer:** Allowed from 10 yards beyond the LOS when the ball is snapped. Any number can rush from 10 yards back. If blitzed, the QB can run. All defenders may rush from anywhere once the ball is handed off, pitched, or passed. No rushing in No-Run Zones (5-second clock applies).
 - **Receiving:** All players are eligible to receive passes. One player may go in motion parallel to LOS (1 yard behind), with no motion toward LOS.
 - **Formations:** Minimum 4 players on the LOS.
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Age Group: 12-14 Years (JV/Varsity)

- **Team Size:** Minimum 5 offensive and 5 defensive players; maximum 7 per side.
- **Ball in Play:** The play is live when the QB moves the ball upward, **or the ball is snapped**. Dropped snaps are dead, resulting in a loss of down.
- **QB Position:** Can line up approximately 5 yards off the offensive LOS.
- **No-Run Zones:** 5 yards before the end zone. All plays (including handoffs) must end as a forward pass from behind LOS. The pass clock is 5 seconds in No-Run Zones.
- **Passing:** The QB has a 7-second pass clock (5 seconds in No-Run Zones). If no pass, handoff, pitch, or lateral occurs, play is dead, down is consumed, and the ball returns to LOS.

- **Running:** The QB can run at any time (no blitz required). Handoffs, pitches, or laterals are allowed behind LOS; runners cannot leave their feet (diving/jumping is flag-guarding). Spinning is permitted if the feet stay on the ground.
 - **Rushing the Passer:** Allowed from 5 yards beyond LOS (defensive LOS) when the ball is snapped. Any number can rush. All defenders may rush from anywhere once the ball is snapped. No rushing in No-Run Zones (5-second clock applies).
 - **Receiving:** All players are eligible to receive passes. One player may move parallel to LOS (1 yard behind), but there is no motion toward LOS.
 - **Formations:** Minimum 4 players on the LOS. There is no wildcat restriction (QB can run freely).
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Player Selection, Draft, and Lottery Guidelines

The Player Combine is a mandatory requirement for all participants in the Red Lion league. It serves as the primary tool for evaluating player skill levels and ensuring fair, balanced team placement across the league.

Key Policies:

- **Mandatory Combine Attendance:** All players must attend the combine to be eligible for the draft. Every player who participates in the combine is guaranteed a roster spot on a team.
- **Sibling Protection:** The league provides sibling protection to keep brothers and sisters on the same team whenever possible, for families' convenience.
- **Team Placement Authority:** To maintain competitive balance, players and families may not choose their team or coach. The draft and placement decisions made by the league are final. All players are expected to play for the team that selects them.
- **Players Who Miss the Combine:** Any player who does not attend the combine will be placed on a team at random by league administration. These players are not guaranteed their preferred position or equal playing time considerations.
- **Refusal of Assigned Team:** If a player or their family refuses to accept the team or coach assigned through the draft process, the league will issue a full refund of the registration fee. However, the player will become ineligible to participate for the remainder of the current season.
- **Post-Draft Team Change Requests:** Requests to change teams after the draft are generally not permitted. Exceptions will be considered only under extraordinary circumstances and will require formal written approval from league administration.