

2025 CYL Flag Football Rules

The purpose of the league is to teach kids the game of football. Unsportsmanlike conduct and behavior will not be tolerated. Anyone displaying this type of conduct/behavior will be warned. No parent may enter onto the field without permission from the official. If the warning is ignored, the person/persons will be asked to leave the game. If the person/persons continue to be a problem, they will be suspended from the league for the remainder of the season. This is a learning experience for the kids, not a contest to see how many touchdowns one child/team can score.

Playing Time

We cannot guarantee equal playing time for all participants, but a good faith effort will be made to ensure all players have opportunities on the field for both offense and defense. At minimum, each player must play at least 6 plays per half.

Sportsmanship

The defensive player must hand back the flag when pulled from an offensive player. Players will not throw flags on the ground after they make the pull. The first time this is done, a warning will be issued. The second offense will result in a 5-yard delay of game penalty. The third and any additional subsequent offenses will result in a 10-yard unsportsmanlike penalty. The offenses committed during a game are counted per team not per individual player. Celebrations for good plays are permissible, but players should not perform celebrations directly in the face/immediate vicinity of the opponent. For example, if a player scores a touchdown and steps away from the opponents and celebrates with his or her teammates that is fine; however, if a player does it over top or directly to an opponent a warning will be issued. The referee has discretion on deciding what is deemed unsportsmanlike.

Game

At the start of each game, captains from both teams shall meet at midfield for a coin toss to determine who shall start with the ball. The winner of the coin toss gets to decide taking possession or defense, to begin. The loser of the coin toss chooses the end zone to start play. Teams may not choose to defer to second half choice. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5 yard line. Rookie division will use the traditional 1st and 10. Pro division has 4 plays to make it to midfield for a first down. Then they have another 4 plays to make it to the endzone. If offense fails to get first down and or scores, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its 5 yard line. All possession changes start on the offense's 5 yard line. Teams change sides after the first half. Possession changes to the loser of the coin toss. If a flag inadvertently falls off on offense, if the player touches the ball, they are marked down at that spot. If a flag inadvertently falls off on defense, the player can still make a play, but if they intercept the ball they will be marked down at the spot.

Players and Positions

Offense

ROOKIE DIVISION: 7 on 7—unless one team has fewer than 6 players, then match that team's number of players (ex. If Team A has 6 players show up for a game and Team B has 5 players show up for a game, the number of players on the field will be 5 for each team). In the event of playing 5 on 5 there will no longer be a designated blocker or rusher.

PRO DIVISION: 7 on 7—unless one team has fewer than 7 players, then match that team's number of players (ex. If Team A has 8 players show up for a game and Team B has 6 players show up for a game, the number of players on the field will be 6 for each team.)

Offensive lineman must all line up in a 3-point stance Center must snap ball between the legs. During an Exchange--the ball hits the ground, dead ball/loss of down Pass Play---Offense will NOT be required to announce Pass Plays During a Pass—The Designated Rusher must be announced and line up behind “rush cone”. Only ONE RUSHER on Pass Plays. No other defensive player may cross the LOS to pull the flags of the quarterback until the ball has been passed. Blocking--- an offensive player blocking on the line of scrimmage during a pass or run may ONLY SHADOW BLOCK!!! **There should be no contact.** Do not teach to block with elbows up and out. NO HOLDING! *No Stiff-arms --- No stiff-arms of any kind, runners will be encouraged to carry the ball high and tight and use shifty hips or spin moves to evade defenders. 10 yard penalty replay down. False Starts--- when an offensive player moves before the snap; this is a dead ball, no play, and a 5 yard penalty replay down. Motion--- if you elect to have more than one player move before the snap outside the box, then they must be set for 1 second before the snap. If they do not set, then it is a dead ball, no play, replay down and a 5 yard penalty. If only 1 player is in motion before the snap, you may snap the ball with no penalty as long as player runs parallel to the LOS and not toward the LOS. Coaches may rotate players or subs to any position at any time. The Quarterback can roll out, but must pass, pitch, handoff or lateral while in the backfield. The QB CANNOT ADVANCE the ball for positive yards. QB can pitch the ball or handoff behind the line of scrimmage to a running back. Offense may use multiple handoffs or pitches, behind the line of scrimmage to gain yardage. All players are eligible to receive a pass. There needs to be at least 2 Offensive Lineman including the center. Ball carriers must make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position. If the position was established and runner runs over defensive player regardless of being accidental or not, the ball is dead at the spot. It is at the referee's discretion whether or not an offensive player's movement warrants a penalty

Passing Zone (Pro Division Only)

- Once the offense reaches the opponent's 10 yard line or closer, a passing zone will be in effect.
- The offense must pass in this zone.
- There will be no designated rusher in the passing zone

- The quarterback will have 7 seconds to throw a ball to a receiver without rushing pressure. After 7 seconds it is at the discretion of the defense to rush or not rush the quarterback. As many players (or none) may rush. The quarterback can only scramble away from the rushers; the quarterback is not permitted to advance the ball past the line of scrimmage as a runner.
- The offense must pass in this zone using the designated quarterback only.

Defense

NO TACKLING!!! If a player tackles, the player and coach will be given a verbal warning; if tackling continues the player may be suspended from the game. At any point the referee may issue a 10 yard penalty at their discretion for excessiveness even if a verbal warning has not yet been issued. Defense must be back 1 yard from the line of scrimmage before the ball is hiked. All defensive linemen must line up in a 3-point stance. The Linebackers must be back at least 2 yards. And must always wait for a handoff or pass to cross the line of scrimmage. Stripping the ball--- a defensive player must make an attempt to grab the offensive players' flags. **NO SLAPPING THE BALL!** If the ball hits the ground, it's a dead ball. Pass Rushing--- There should only be ONE Pass Rusher and that must be the Designated Rusher behind the "rush cone". Alignment--- a defensive player must line up no closer than 1 yard off the line of scrimmage on every down. The defense may make a play on the football in the backfield if no contact with any other player is involved. If there is a "fight" for the ball in the air between receiver and defender behind the L.O.S then the play is called dead and replay down. Interceptions are returnable.

Time Outs and Dead Balls

3 time-outs per HALF; 30 second time outs, injury time outs will be handled accordingly, time-outs can be used at any time during the game. Dead ball--occur during an incomplete pass, running out of bounds, ball carrier's flag being pulled, or flag falls out, or fumbles/dropped balls. Or the ball carrier's elbow or a knee touches the ground. There will be no ball returned off of fumbles/dropped balls; if the ball is fumbled/dropped, the ball will be down at that spot.

Timing and Overtime

20 minute halves (running clock) with 5 minute halftime. Each time a ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay of game penalty is enforced. Clock stops in the last 2 minutes of the second half, during time-outs, injuries, incomplete pass, scoring play, AND when a player goes out of bounds. Clock will also stop during last 2 minutes of second half to allow ref to move ball from one side of field to the other during change of possession. Clock will restart as soon as the ref blows whistle after placing ball and getting into position. Officials can stop the clock anytime at their discretion. In the event of an injury the clock will stop and then restart when the injured player is removed from the field of play. If the score is tied at the end of the 20 minutes, (2nd half) the game will be determined a tie (exception for playoffs).

Scoring

3 point Field Goal can be attempted on 4th down. Coach can elect to kick a Field Goal rather than making a final attempt for a 1st down. Tee is placed where the ball is spotted, the defense and offense lines up on the sideline, only the Kicker is on the field to attempt the Field Goal try. Field goal attempt is good if the ball makes it through the uprights or underneath the uprights. If the attempt hits the crossbar it will count as a successful attempt regardless of whether or not it bounces back into the endzone. Whether the kick scores or misses, the defense takes over at their own 5 yd line. Touchdown: 6 points. PAT (Point After Touchdown): A PAT kick can be attempted from the 5 yard line. Tee is placed on the 5 yard line, the defense and offense line up on the sideline, only the kicker is on the field to attempt PAT kick. PAT attempt is good if the ball makes it through the uprights or underneath the uprights. If the ball goes through the uprights, it will count as a 2 point conversion. If the ball goes underneath the uprights it will count as 1 point. If the attempt hits the crossbar it will count as a successful attempt (1 point) regardless of whether or not it bounces back into the endzone. A 2 point conversion can also be attempted from the 10 yard line as a pass/run play. Safety: 2 points to the defensive team and the ball is awarded to the defensive team at the opposite 5 yard line.

Downs

Four downs to advance the ball for a 1st down to continue the drive. To down a player with the ball, one of the flags must be taken off the ball carrier. If the ball carrier's knee or elbow touches the ground, then the ball carrier is down at that spot. If a flag falls off or if the ball carrier knocks off the flag accidentally, then the ball carrier is down at that spot. If the ball carrier runs out of bounds, the ball is down at that spot. If the ball carrier protects the flags from being taken, the ball is down at the spot (Note: Please have all players check their flags after every play to make sure they are still secured to their belts)

Penalties

Against the Offense--- the defensive team has the choice of the penalty in yards or play in downs. If the defense takes the penalty, the down remains the same; if the defense refuses the penalty, the down advances

Against the Defense--- the offensive team has the choice of the penalty or the play. Anytime a penalty is refused, the down advances; anytime a penalty is accepted, the down remains the same

Major Penalties--- Stiff-arms, holding, illegal pushing, tripping, charging, tackling, and unsportsmanlike conduct result in a 10 yard penalty

Minor Penalties--- false start, offsides, encroachment, illegal procedure, or formation result in a 5 yard penalty

Pass Interference---Spot of foul. Automatic First Down

Flag Guarding – 5 yd penalty from spot of foul AND loss of down. If the ball carrier crosses the First Down line and then flag guards all in the same play, it will be 5 yds from the violation spot and 2nd Down...even though they crossed the First down line.

“Rush Cone”

This year we are doing away with the wristband rule of having one designated blocker and rusher on the field at a time. Instead we will have one designated rusher on defense lined up behind a “rush cone”. The rusher can be in any stance they choose and line up as far behind the cone as they like but must not cross the rush cone before the ball is hiked. If this occurs it will be a 5 yard encroachment penalty on the defense and replay the down. The rusher can also line up parallel to the cone as long as they don’t cross the “cone line”. A ref should line up at the “cone line” and the L.O.S on every play. Rookie Division will have their rush cone placed 9 yards away from the L.O.S. Pro Division will have their rush cone placed 7 yards away from the L.O.S.

Mouth guards are mandatory and must be worn at all games and practices. No player will be allowed to play without this!

The Football Commissioner will have final judgment call on all plays in question.

These rules may change at any time per Football Commissioners Meeting.

