

**MOTYFCL**  
**Flag football High School Girls**  
**Division**



# Official playing guidelines-

Updated 3/1/2026

- **Ages: High School Girls**
  - The game is played having a maximum of: seven (7) offensive and seven (7) defensive players or a minimum of five (5) offensive and five (5) defensive players.
  - If one team only has 5 players and the opposing team has 7 or more players, they may play with 6 on the field making the game 5 v 6.
  - All players must play equal minutes.
  
- **I. Game**
  - At the start of each game, captains from both teams shall meet at midfield for the coin toss to determine who shall start with the ball.
  - The winner of the coin toss may choose to take the ball or defer.
  - The game is played on a 40 yard field.
  - A 35-second play clock will be used throughout the game.
  - The offensive team takes possession of the ball at the 40-yard line and has four (4) plays to cross midfield (20 yard line) for a first down. Once a team crosses midfield it has four (4) plays to score a touchdown.
  - If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on the 40-yard line.
  - If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from the 40-yard line.
  - All possession changes, start on the 40-yard line.
  - There is no kicking in this league. After a touchdown is scored a team may elect to try a conversion for one point from the 5 yard line or two points from the 10 yard line.
  - A 5 five second sack count will be enforced by the Referee. - Penalty: sack with no loss of yards Example: the Referee will verbally count “1001, 1002, 1003, 1004” followed by a whistle.
  - From the 5 yard line the sack count will remain 5 seconds and includes the 1 point extra point as well.
  - Each team will have 2 timeouts per game.
  - A 17 point “Slaughter Rule” will be in effect during the final two (2) minutes of the game during “StopTime”.
  
- **II. Terminology**
  - • **Boundary lines** – the outer perimeter lines around the field. They include the sidelines, and the rear end-zone lines.
  - • **Line Of Scrimmage** – the offensive line of scrimmage is an imaginary line running through the point of the football and across the width of the field. The line of scrimmage for the defense is an imaginary line five (5)

yards in advance of the offensive line of scrimmage.

- • **Line-To-Gain** – the line the offense must pass to get a first down or score.
  - • **Flag Guarding** – the deliberate guarding of the flags by the ball carrier to inhibit the defense from making a grab. Typically, a lowered and swinging, slapping arm motion, resulting in a penalty.
  - • **Offense** – the team with possession of the ball.
  - • **Defense** – the team opposing the offense to prevent them from advancing the ball.
  - • **Quarterback** – the offensive player that calls the signals to start the play.
  - • **Passer** – the offensive player that lines up behind the center.
  - • **Downs (1-2-3-4)** – the offensive squad has four attempts or “Downs” to advance the ball. They must cross the Mid-Field Line to get another set of downs or to score.
  - • **Live Ball** – the period of time that the play is in action. Live Ball Penalties are considered part of the play and must be enforced before the down is considered complete.
  - • **Dead Ball** – the period of time immediately before or after a play.
  - • **Whistle** – the sound made by an official using a whistle that signifies the end of the play or a stop in the action for timeout, half time, or the end of the game.
  - • **Inadvertent whistle** – an official’s whistle that is performed in error.
  - • **Charging** – the movement of the ball carrier directly at a defensive player who has established position on the field. This includes lowering the head, making contact with the defender with a shoulder, forearm or the chest, resulting in a penalty.
  - • **Shovel Pass** – a legal pass made by throwing the ball behind or beyond the line of scrimmage, underhand or pushing it towards a receiver in a shot put type manner.
  - • **Lateral or Pitch** – a backwards or sideways toss of the ball by the QB or ball carrier-behind the scrimmage only.
  - • **Unsportsmanlike Conduct** – rude, confrontational or offensive behavior or language- applies to players, coaches and spectators. This results in a penalty.
- **III. Live Ball/Dead Ball**
    - The play is live once the center snaps the ball
    - The official will indicate the neutral zone and line of scrimmage. It is an automatic dead ball foul if any player on defense or offense enters the neutral zone. In regard to the neutral zone, the official may give both teams a “courtesy” neutral zone notification to allow their players to move back beyond the line.
    - The defense may not mimic the offensive team signals, by trying to confuse the offensive players, while the quarterback is calling out signals to start the play.

- Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- Any official can whistle the play dead.
- Play is ruled “dead” when:
  - a. The ball hits the ground.
  - The ball carrier’s flag is pulled.
  - The ball carrier steps out of bounds.
  - A touchdown or PAT is scored.
  - The ball carrier’s knee or arm hits the ground.
  - The ball carrier’s flag falls out and the runner is touched by the opposing player.
  - The receiver catches the ball while in possession of one flag.
  - The 5 second or 4 second pass clock expires.
  - An inadvertent whistle is performed (at the spot where the ball was whistled dead).
    - In the case of an inadvertent whistle, the offense has two options:
      - Take the ball where the whistle blown made the play dead.
      - Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.
- *Note: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground.*

- **IV. Eligibility**

- All players must be registered through MOTYFCL and fall within the specified age or (grade range) assigned. Players may play up in age/grade, not down in age/ grade level.
- Players must play in at least 3 regular season games to be eligible for the playoffs. situations out of the ordinary such as but not limited to injury will be board discretion
- All players are required to play roughly half the game but not limited to a set number of plays

- **V. Equipment**

- Mouth Guard. Every player must wear a mouth-guard to each practice and each game. Kids will not be able to play without a mouth piece.
- Players must wear shoes. Cleats are allowed, however cleats with exposed metal are not allowed and must be removed.
- Players may tape their forearms, hands and fingers. Players may wear gloves.
- Players must remove all watches, necklaces, earrings, jewelry and any jewelry around the neck.
- Official MOT FLAG jerseys/shorts must be worn during games.
- Player’s jerseys must be tucked into the pants. Players must un bunch their flags at all times.

- **VI. Field**

- The recommended field size is 40 yards by 50 yards with a 10-yard end zones and a midfield line-to-gain. No-Running Zones precede the goal line by 5 yards.
- No Run Zone is in place to prevent teams from conducting power run plays with short yards to gain situations. While in the No Run Zones (a 5 yard imaginary zone before the end-zone), teams cannot run the ball in any fashion for positive yardage. All plays, including those that begin with a handoff, must end up as a pass play and will still have the 5 second pass clock.
- Stepping on the boundary line is considered out of bounds.

- **VII. Running.**

- G HS division may only run on 1st, 2nd , and 3rd down. 4th down is a pass only down.
- 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 precedes the other, the forward foot marks the spot.
- For Line-To-Gain and Goal Lines, the ball and one foot must cross the line.
- The quarterback can rollout, 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 hand-off behind the line of scrimmage to a running back on 1st, 2nd or 3rd down. There is no limit to the number of times the ball may be pitched, either lateral to or behind the ball carrier both behind and beyond the offensive line of scrimmage.
- 4th down must be a forward pass
- "No-Run Zone," located 5 yards before the end zone is designed to avoid short-yardage, power-running situations. (Reminder: Each offensive squad approaches only ONE No Run Zone in each drive - one 5 yards from the goal line to score a TD). When in the NO RUN ZONE the pass clock will remain 5 seconds.
- The player who takes the handoff or pitch can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage on 1st 2nd or 3rd down. 4th down needs to be a forward pass..
- Once the ball has been handed off or pitched all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. Diving, leaping, or jumping is considered flag guarding.
- Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a flag pull. Ball carrier cannot flag-guard.
- Runners may leave their feet if there is a clear indication that he/she has done so to avoid collision with another player without a flag guarding penalty enforced.

- Blocking or “screening” is NOT allowed at any time.
  - Offensive players not with the ball must stop their motion once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage. No running with the ball carrier as a shield.
  - 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.
- **VIII. Timing and Overtime**
    - Games are played on a 40 minute continuous clock, two 20 minute halves that stops only for timeouts and a four (4) minute warning per half.
    - During the last two (2) minutes of each half, the clock will be operated pursuant to NFHS rules stopping in situations conforming to when it would under NFHS rules. It is no longer a “running clock”.
    - Halftime is 5 minutes long.
    - Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 35 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced.
    - Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
    - Each team will have 2 time outs per game in ghs/jv/varsity and hs.
    - In the event of an injury, the clock will stop and restart after the injured player is removed from the field of play.
    - If the score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, the game will be determined a tie.
- **IX. Scoring**
    - Touchdown: **6 points**
    - PAT (Point After Touchdown) **1 point** (5-yard line) or **2 points** (10-yard line)
    - A team that scores a touchdown must declare whether they wish to attempt a 1-pt. conversion (from the 5-yard line) or a 2-pt. conversion (from the 10-yard line). Any change, once a decision is made to try for the extra point, requires a charged time out. The PAT decision cannot be changed after a penalty.
    - An interception results in a dead ball, loss of possession and 2 points being awarded to the defensive. The intercepting team will next put the ball in play at the 40 yard line. Exception: no points are awarded for intercepting a PAT.

- **X. Current NFHS Football Rules shall govern play in the league with local exceptions as follows:**
  - A minimum of six (5) players are required by either team to compete in a game.
  - A maximum of 7 players may be on the field at any given time.
  - Running plays are only permitted on downs 1,2,3.
  - 4th down is pass only.
  - Two (2) of the five (5) eligible receivers must be on the line at the snap. If a snapper is used, three (3) players would be on the line.
  - Blocking of any type is not permitted. Receivers (down-field) ahead of the ball carrier must come to a full stop, as soon as possible, to avoid any potential blocking infractions.
  - “Bump and Run” pass coverage is not permitted. There must be no contact with an offensive receiver, unless the defender is making a legal attempt to intercept a pass.
  - There is no blitzing
  - Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. Diving, leaping, or jumping will be ruled down at the spot of the event.
    - Runners may leave their feet if there is a clear indication that he/she has done so to avoid collision with another player without a penalty
  - 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 precedes the other, the forward foot marks the spot.
    - For Line-To-Gain and Goal Lines, the ball and one foot must cross the line.
  
- **XI. Fumbles**
  - The ball remains live if there is a fumbled exchange between the center and quarterback or a fumble by the quarterback. The pass must still be thrown within the five second time limit.
  - All other fumbles are dead at the spot of the fumble (where possession was lost).
  - The offense retains possession of a fumble at the spot of the fumble
  
- **XII. Formations**
  - Zero-back, trips and spread formations are permitted and all NFHS pass eligibility rules will be enforced. If both ends are on the same side of the ball at time of snap, one of the ends is ineligible.
  - Substitutes must remain on the sideline until they replace a player on the field.
  - Quarterbacks may take a knee or spike the football in order to manage the game clock. Standard NFHS enforcement rules apply.

- Players may spin but may not leave their feet
- Movement by a player who runs toward the line of scrimmage while in motion is considered a false start.
- Only one player at a time may go in motion and must be positioned one yard behind and parallel to the line of scrimmage.
  
- **XIII. Penalties:**
  - Five (5) yard penalties:
    - Offensive pass interference
    - Ineligible player downfield
    - Encroachment
    - Illegal procedure
    - Defensive holding
  - Special Penalties
    - Defensive pass interference
    - From the 10-yard line and out - spot foul plus an automatic first down
    - From inside the ten yard line to the goal line – ball is placed at the ten yard line plus an automatic first down.
    - In the end zone - ball is placed at the one-yard line plus an automatic first
    - roughness - 15 yards. Flagrant unnecessary roughness will also result in an ejection.
    - Blocking - dead ball at the spot of the foul
    - Fighting – 15 yards, ejection and suspension for the remainder of the season
  
- **XIV. Coaches**
  - All coaches must complete a criminal background and Child Abuse Registry background to coach-No exceptions.
  - 1 coach is allowed on the field for offense and also defense but must stay 10 yards back after the play is called
  - Coaches are expected to adhere to MOT Flag Football philosophies, coaching guidelines and codes of conduct.
  - Only two coaches per team are allowed on the sidelines.
  
- **XV. Unsportsmanlike Conduct**
  - If the field-monitor or referee witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. The decision is made at the referee's discretion. No appeals will be permitted! FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.
  - Offensive or confrontational language is illegal. 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, players, coach, or fan will be ejected from the playing field.

- Players may not physically or verbally abuse any opponent or official.
- Ball carriers **MUST** make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position.
- Defenders are not allowed to run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.
- Fans must also adhere to good sportsmanship:
  - Yell to cheer on your players, not to harass officials or other teams.
  - Keep comments clean and profanity free.
  - Compliment **ALL** players, not just one child or team.
- All other rules not listed above or in our MOT flag rule book will follow the NFHS **RULES FOR HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL.**