



Aim High Youth Sports

2021-2022 Rule Book

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RULES

I. Game

1. 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 visiting team shall call the toss.
2. The winner of the coin toss has the choice of offense or defense. The loser of the coin toss has the choice of direction. Teams may not choose to defer to the second half.
3. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line on Field 4 and the 20-yard line on Field 1 and has four (4) plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, they have four (4) plays to score a touchdown.
4. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team starts its drive from its own 5-yard line on Field 4 and 20-yard line on Field 1.
5. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession and the new offensive team starts its drive on its own 5-yard line on Field 4 and 20-yard line on Field 1.
6. All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line on Field 4 and 20-yard line on Field 1.
7. Teams change sides after the first half. Possession changes to the team that started the game on defense.
8. Mercy Rule- If winning team is up by 28 points at the **start of the 4th quarter**, the opposing team has one possession to score. If they fail to score the game will be recorded as the score as it is and games will go into scrimmage mode.
9. If a false start is committed while in the no run zone, you will still be considered in the no run zone. You cannot use a false start penalty to get out of the no run zone. Once you're in the zone you must make a forward pass and the player must cross midfield before you can run again.
10. K/1st, 2nd/3rd, and 4/5th play 7v7 on field size 80 x 40, 6th and 7th/8th play full field 7v7
11. Fielding - K/1st grade and 2nd/3rd grade: 1 coach allowed on field. 4th/5th grade and 6th - 8th grade: No coaches on field, coaches must coach from sidelines.
12. **Playtime – Play time will be monitored closely this season so please make sure everyone is getting equal playtime.**
13. Stat sheets will be required to be filled out for each game and dropped off at the tent or to an Aim High official. Stat sheets are required to monitor equal playing time.
14. Teams must stay on their side of the field. Players and Coaches cannot cross over to their opponent's sideline. This will result in a 10-yard penalty and Loss of down if occurs.

II. TERMINOLOGY

Boundary Lines- the outer perimeter lines around the field. They include the sidelines, and back of the end zone lines.

Line of Scrimmage- (LOS) an imaginary line running through the point of the football and across the width of the field.

Line-To-Gain- the line the offense must pass to get a first down or score.

Rush Line- an imaginary line running across the width of the field 7 yards (into the defensive side) from the line of scrimmage.

Offense- the squad with possession of the ball.

Defense- the squad opposing the offense to prevent them from advancing the ball.

Passer- the offensive player that throws the ball and may or may not be the quarterback.

Rusher- the defensive player assigned to rush the quarterback to prevent him/her from passing the ball by pulling his/her flags or by blocking the pass.

Downs (1-2-3-4)- the offensive squad has four attempts or “downs” to advance the ball. They must cross the line to gain to get another set of downs or to score.

Live Ball- refers to the period of time that the play is in action. Generally used regarding penalties, live ball penalties are considered part of the play and must be enforced before the down is considered complete.

Dead Ball- refers to the period of time immediately before or after a play.

Whistle- sound made by an official using a whistle that signifies the end of a play or a stop in the action for a timeout, half time, or the end of the game.

Inadvertent Whistle- officials 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.

Flag Guarding- an 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.

Shovel Pass- a legal pass attempted beyond the line of scrimmage by throwing the ball underhand or pushing it towards a receiver in a shot-put type of manner.

Lateral- a backwards or sideways toss of the ball by the ball carrier.

Unsportsmanlike Conduct- a rude, confrontational, or offensive behavior or language.

III. ELIGIBILITY

1. All players' legal guardians must agree to the online waiver form at NFLFLAG.com for their specific league before participating.

IV. EQUIPMENT

1. The League provides each player with a flag belt and NFL FLAG powered by USA Football NFL jersey. Teams will use the football provided by their league.
2. Players must wear shoes. Football cleats are encouraged; however, cleats with exposed metal are not allowed and must be removed.
3. Players may tape their forearms, hands, and fingers. Players may wear gloves, elbow pads, and kneepads. Braces with exposed metals are not allowed.
4. Players must remove all watches, earrings, and any other jewelry that the officials deem hazardous.
5. Official NFL FLAG powered by USA Football NFL jerseys must be worn during play.
6. Players Jerseys must be tucked into the pants if they hang below the belt line.
7. Shorts or Pants must not have Pockets (Pants or shorts with belt loops or pockets must be taped).
8. All players must wear a mouthpiece during game

V. FIELD

1. The field dimensions are 30 yards by 70 yards with two 10-yard end zones and a midfield line-to-gain on Field 4. The field dimensions are 50 yards by 120 yards with two 10-yard end zones and a midfield line-to-gain on Field 1.
2. No-Run zones proceed each line-to-gain by 5 yards and at both 5-yard lines. However, field size may vary based on field availability. No-Run zones are in place to prevent teams from conducting power run plays. While in the No-Run Zones, teams cannot run the ball in any fashion. All plays must be pass plays, even with a handoff.
3. Stepping on the boundary line is considered out of bounds.
4. Each offensive squad approaches only two No-Run Zones in each drive

(One zone 5 yards from midfield to gain the first down, and one zone 5 yards from the goal line to score a TD).

VI. ROSTERS

1. Home teams wear dark colors; visiting team wears light color jerseys.
2. Teams must consist of at least 5 players and maximum of 12-14 players.
3. Teams must start a game with a minimum of 5 players.

VII. TIMING AND OVERTIME

1. Games are played on a 40-minute continuous clock with 4 10-minute quarters with 60 seconds in between each quarter.
2. The clock stops only for timeouts and injuries. It also stops on every incompleteness and out of bounds play in the final two minutes of the game.
3. Halftime is 3 minutes long.
4. 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.
5. Each team has 2 30-second timeouts per half.
6. Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
7. In the event of an injury the clock will stop and then restart when the injured player is removed from the field of play.
8. If the score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, the game should be determined as a tie.
9. In tournament or playoff situations, an overtime (OT) Period will be used to determine a winner. OT Format is as follows:
 - a) Each team is allowed a minimum of one possession. The only exception is if the first offensive team throws an interception and the intercepting team scores.
 - b) First possession choice goes to the winner of regulation coin toss.
 - c) Each team gets a minimum of one possession.
 - d) All regulation period rules and penalties are in effect.
 - e) There are no time-outs.
 - f) Each team will be scored based on points scored.

Change of possession

- Change of possession takes place when Team A 's forward progress is halted on downs or scores a touchdown.
- Team B takes possession on the same 50-yard line as Team A and advances in the same direction. Team B begins on the 50-yard line regardless of whether Team A's possession ended in an interception.

Multiple OT periods

First OT Period – shown above:

- Scoring teams can go for 1- or 2-point PAT.

Second OT Period:

- First possession goes to loser of regulation coin toss
- Scoring teams must go for 2-point PAT

VIII. SCORING

1. Touchdown: 6 Points
2. PAT (Point After Touchdown): 1 point (5-yard line) or 2 points (12-yard line), NOTE: 1 point PAT is pass only, 2-point PAT can be run or pass. On field 1, a one-point extra point can be kicked at the 5-yard line and 2 points can be taken at the 12 yard line can be run or pass.
3. Safety: 2 Points- a safety occurs when the ball carrier is declared down in his/her own end zone. They can be called down when their flags are pulled by a defensive player, their flag falls out, they step out of bounds, or they hit the ground with their knee or arm. A safety also occurs when there is an offensive penalty in the end zone.
4. Mercy Rule: If winning team is up by 28 points, the opposing team has one possession to score. If they fail to score the game will be recorded as the score that it is and game will go into scrimmage mode.
5. Scrimmage Mode: The losing team gets the ball for up to three possessions. Each possession lasts until the team scores or fails to achieve the Line-To-Gain. Points do not count in final score. After three possessions the game is over.
6. Field Goals (Field 1 only): Field goals can not be returned by the opposing team. You can only block a field goal if you jump straight up behind the line of scrimmage. There will be no rushing during the field goal. The placeholder must catch the ball then put his knee down to hold the ball for the kicker. Field goals are worth 3 points.

IX. COACHES

1. Coaches are typically volunteer parents or family members helping the players learn and enjoy the game. Parents are encouraged to always support the coach.
2. Coaches are allowed on the field to direct players according to need and division.
3. Coaches are expected to adhere to NFL FLAG powered by USA Football philosophies, coaching guidelines, and codes of conduct.

X. LIVE BALL/DEAD BALL

1. The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead.
2. 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. Regarding the neutral zone, the official may give both teams a “courtesy” neutral zone notification to allow their players to move back behind the line of scrimmage.
3. A player who gains possession in the air is considered in bounds as long as one foot comes down in the field of play.
4. 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. This will result in an unsportsmanlike penalty.
5. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
6. Any official can whistle the play dead.
7. Play is ruled “dead” when:
 - a) The ball hits the ground
 - b) The ball carriers’ flag is pulled
 - c) The ball carrier steps out of bounds
 - d) A touchdown, PAT, or safety is scored
 - e) The ball carrier’s knee or arm hits the ground
 - f) The receiver catches the ball while in possession of one or more flags
 - g) The 7-second pass clock expires
 - h) Inadvertent whistle

NOTE: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball carrier’s feet were at the time of the fumble.
8. In the case of an inadvertent whistle, the offense has two options:
 - Take the ball where it was when the whistle blew, and the down is consumed.
 - Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.
9. A team is allowed to use a time out to question an official’s rule interpretation. If the official’s ruling is correct, the team will be charged a time out. If the rule is interpreted incorrectly, the time out will not be charged, and the proper ruling will be enforced. Officials should all agree upon any controversial call-in order to give each team the full benefit of each call.

XI. RUNNING

1. The ball is spotted where the runner's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball carrier has the ball. The player's front foot will measure forward progress.
2. The quarterback cannot directly run with the ball. The quarterback does have the ability to scramble in the backfield but cannot advance the ball beyond the line of scrimmage. The quarterback is the offensive player that receives the snap.
3. Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Hand offs may be in front, behind, or to the side of the offensive player, but must be behind the line of scrimmage. The offense may use multiple handoffs.
4. "No-Run Zones," located 5 yards before each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield are designed to avoid short-yardage power-running situations. Teams are not allowed to run in these zones if the subsequent line is live.
5. The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
6. Once the ball has been handed off in front, behind or to the side of the quarterback, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
7. Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. Diving, leaping, or jumping to avoid flag pull is considered flag guarding.
8. Spinning is allowed, but players may not leave their feet to avoid a flag pull. Jumping in the air in a forward motion to advance the ball, while attempting to avoid a flag pull, is not allowed. Lateral moves to the left or right are permitted.
9. Runners may leave their feet if there is a clear indication that he/she has done so to avoid collision with another player without flag guarding penalty enforced.
10. No blocking or "screening" is allowed at any time.
11. Offensive players must stop their motion once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage. No running with the ball carrier.
12. Flag Obstruction – All jerseys MUST be tucked in before the play begins as well as the belt, if belt is pulled it constitutes a flag pull. The flags must be on the player's hips and free from obstruction. Deliberately obstructed flags will be considered flag guarding.

XII. PASSING

1. A pass/toss can be thrown behind the line of scrimmage. The only time it cannot be thrown behind the line of scrimmage is in the no run zone in which the ball must go at least one yard in front of the line of scrimmage.
2. Absolutely NO laterals or pitches of any kind beyond the line of scrimmage.
3. Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.

4. The quarterback has a ten-second "pass clock" on Field 4 and a seven-second "pass clock" on Field 1. Once the time has expired, the quarterback will be "sack". Once the ball is handed off, the seven-second rule no longer is in effect.
5. If the QB is standing in the end zone at the end of the seven-second clock, the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage (LOS)

XIII. RECEIVING

1. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
2. 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 towards the line of scrimmage.
3. A player must have a least one foot inbounds when making a reception.
4. In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.
5. Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception. Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start on the 5-yard line.
6. Interceptions are returnable for an extra point on the point after touchdown (PAT).

XIV. RUSHING THE PASSER

1. All players who rush the passer must be minimum of seven yards, ten yards if you are playing full field, from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.
2. Once the ball is handed off, the seven-yard rule no longer is in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.

3. A special marker, or the referee, will designate a rush line seven yards from the line of scrimmage. Defensive players should verify they are in the correct position with the official on every play.
4. A legal rush is:
 - a) Any rush from a point 7 yards from the defensive line of scrimmage.
 - b) Any rush from anywhere on the field AFTER the ball has been handed off by the quarterback.
 - c) If a rusher leaves the rush line early (breaks the 7-yard area), they may return to the rush line, reset and then legally rush the quarterback.
 - d) If a rusher leaves the rush line early and the ball is handed off before they cross the line of scrimmage, they may legally rush the quarterback.

5. A penalty may be called if:

1. The rusher leaves the rush line before the snap crosses the line of scrimmage before a handoff or pass-illegal rush.
2. Any defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped-offside
3. Any defensive player, not lined up at the rush line crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is passed or handed off-illegal rush

*Special circumstances:

1. Teams are not required to rush the quarterback, seven-second clock in effect.
2. Teams are not required to identify their rusher before they play, however, if they do send a rusher, the rusher must verify with the official that they are in the correct position.
3. If rusher leaves the seven-yard line before the snap, he/she may immediately drop back to act as defender with no offside penalty enforced.

6. Players rushing the quarterback may attempt to block a pass; however, NO contact can be made with the quarterback in any way. Blocking the pass or attempting to block the pass and then making contact with the passer will result in a roughing the passer penalty.

7. The offense cannot impede the rusher in any way. The rusher has the right to a clear path to the quarterback, regardless of where they line up prior to the snap. If a moving offensive player occupies the "path or line", then it is the offense's responsibility to avoid the rusher. Any disruption to the rusher's path and/or contact will result in an impeding the rusher penalty. If the offensive player does not move after the snap, then it is the rusher's responsibility to go around the offensive player and to avoid contact.

8. A sack occurs if the quarterback's flags are pulled behind the line of scrimmage. The ball is placed where the quarterback's feet are when flag is pulled.

9. A safety is awarded if the sack takes place in the offensive team's end zone

XV. FLAG PULLING

1. A legal flag pull takes place when the ball carrier is in full possession of the ball.
2. Defenders can dive to pull flags, but cannot tackle, hold, or run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.
3. It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull from the ball carrier's possession at any time.
4. If a player's flag inadvertently falls off during the play, he/she must be touched in order for the play to come to an end. If not touched, the player can run all the way to the end zone.
5. A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off a player who is not in possession of the ball.
6. 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 jersey.

XVI. FORMATIONS

1. Offense must have a minimum of one player on the line of scrimmage (the center) and up to four players on the line of scrimmage. The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.
 - a) One player at a time may go in motion 1-yard behind and parallel to the line of scrimmage.
 - b) No motion is allowed towards the line of scrimmage.
2. Offensive players must come to a complete stop for one second before the ball is snapped unless he/she is the only player in motion.
3. 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.
4. The center must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion between his/her legs to a player in the backfield, and the ball must completely leave his/her hands.

XVII. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

1. 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 considered. **FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!**
2. 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 or players will be ejected from the game.
3. Players may not physically or verbally abuse any opponent, coach or official.
4. Ball carriers **MUST** make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position.
5. Defenders are not allowed to run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.
6. Fans must also adhere to good sportsmanship as well:
 - a) Yell to cheer on your players, not to harass officials or other teams.
 - b) Keep comments clean and profanity free.
 - c) Compliment **ALL** players, not just one child or team.
7. 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) Stay in the end zone area, not between fields.

XVII. PENALTIES

General

1. The referee will call all penalties.
2. Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.
3. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, except as noted.
4. Only the team captain or head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players may not question judgment calls.
5. Games may not end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.
6. Penalties are assessed live ball then dead ball. Live ball penalties must be assessed before play is considered complete.
7. Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.

ii. Spot fouls:

Defensive Pass interference	Automatic first down
Holding	+5 yards & Automatic first down
Stripping	+10 yards & Automatic first down
Defensive unnecessary roughness	+10 yards & Automatic first down
Screening, blocking, or running with the ball carrier	-5 yards & loss of down
Charging	-10 yards & loss of down
Flag Guarding	-10 yards & loss of down
Offensive unnecessary roughness	-10 yards & loss of down

iii. Defensive Penalties:

Offside	+5 yards from LOS – Defensive Off sides are a 5-yard penalty. Offense will replay the down. This will be a Dead ball foul.
Illegal Rush	+5 yards from LOS & Automatic first down
Illegal Flag Pull	+5 yards from LOS & Automatic first down
Roughing the passer	+10 yards from LOS & Automatic first down
Taunting	+10 yards from LOS & Automatic first down. If a touch down is scored during a taunting play the touch down will count and the ball will be placed on the 30-yard line.
Defensive Pass Interference	SPOT FOUL, Automatic first down
Holding	SPOT FOUL, +5 yards & Automatic first down
Stripping	SPOT FOUL, +10 yards & Automatic first down
Defensive Unnecessary Roughness	SPOT FOUL, +10 yards & Automatic first down

iv. Offensive Penalties:

Offside/False Start	-5 yards from line of scrimmage & Replay the
Illegal Forward pass	-5 yards from line of scrimmage & Loss of down
Offensive Pass Interference	-5 yards from line of scrimmage & Loss of down
Illegal Motion (more than one person moving)	-5 yards from line of scrimmage & Loss of down.
Delay of Game	-5 yards from line of scrimmage & Loss of down. 30 seconds to snap the ball.
Impeding the Rusher	-5 yards from LOS & Loss of down
Screening, Blocking, or Running with the Ball Carrier	- SPOT FOUL, -5 yards & Loss of down
Charging	- SPOT FOUL, -10 yards & Loss of down
Flag Guarding	- SPOT FOUL, -10 yards & Loss of down
Offensive Unnecessary Roughness	- SPOT FOUL, -10 yards & Loss of down