



JUST COMPETE RULES BOOK 7v7 (One Way Field)

Simplified Flag Football Rules

Based on 2025 CHSAA & NFHS Flag Football Rulebook

(One Way Field - two games on each half)

For reference on full rules please reference CHSAA 2025 Rulebook & NFHS Flag Football Rulebook (2025)

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● **FIELD DIMENSIONS AND SETUP**

- **Field Length:** 40 yards
- **Field Width:** 40 yards
- **End Zones:** 1 scoring end zone (10 yards deep) and 1 starting end zone (5 yards deep)
- **Field Size:** 60 yards including end zones
- **Ball Placement:** All possessions begin at the 40-yard line
- **Field Markings:** Zone Lines to Gain every 20 yards (20-yard zones)
- **Team Boxes:** 2 yards off sideline between 20-yard lines

● **ONE WAY FIELD EXPLANATION**

- **Definition:** The "One Way Field" setup means that all offensive plays are directed towards a single end zone, with each half of the field hosting a game moving in one direction only.
- **All offensive plays** must advance toward the designated scoring end zone.

● ONE WAY FIELD EXPLANATION Cont.

- **Gameplay Impact:** This unique setup allows for two simultaneous games to occur on each half of a standard field, with each team aiming to score in their designated end zone without switching directions at halftime or after scoring plays. All possessions begin at the 40-yard line.
- **Turnovers and Change of Possession:** Following a change of possession, the ball is placed at the 40-yard line.

● TEAM COMPOSITION AND EQUIPMENT

- **Players:** 7 players per team on the field
- **Minimum Players to Start:** 4 players
- **Ball:** Brown/White NFL Flag football (Youth size)

Note: Ball color (brown or white) is currently permitted. Just Compete leadership is evaluating standardization and may provide updated guidance in the future.

- **Uniforms:** Matching jerseys (no pockets), contrasting shorts/pants
- **Flag Belts:** NFL FLAG 2-pop flags, contrasting color to shorts and jerseys
- **Mouthguards:** Mandatory for all players
- **Shoes:** Cleats allowed (no metal or screw-ins)
- **Illegal Gear:** Jewelry, billed hats, bandanas, exposed drawstrings or pockets

● GAME DURATION AND TIMING

- **Total Game Time:** 48 minutes
- **Halves:** Two 24-minute halves (running clock)
 - Clock stops under 2 minutes for incompletions, out of bounds, injuries, change of possessions and scores
- **Halftime:** 3 minutes
- **Timeouts:** 3 per half per team (30 seconds)
- **2 Play Clock:** 25 seconds (40 seconds for middle school divisions only)

- **STARTING THE GAME**

- Coin toss determines possession or direction
- All possessions begin at the 40-yard line
- No kickoffs — possession starts from designated line (40-yard line)

- **PLAYING THE GAME**

- 4 downs to reach the next zone line-to-gain (every 20 yards)
- No minimum number of players on the line
- Snap must be received from at least 2 yards behind line of scrimmage
- One player in motion allowed
- Offense may pass or run the ball at any time

- **DEAD BALL DEFINITION**

The ball is considered dead and the play ends when any of the following occur:

- The ball carrier's **flag is pulled**
- The ball carrier steps out of bounds
- A forward pass is incomplete
- The ball touches the ground (fumble, lateral, or snap)
- A touchdown, safety, or Try is scored
- A penalty is called that stops the play
- The official blows the whistle

Spot of the Ball:

The ball will be spotted where the ball was when the play became dead, unless otherwise noted.

- **SCORING AND EXTRA POINTS**

- **Touchdown:** 6 points
- **Try from 3-yard line:** 1 point
- **Try from 10-yard line:** 2 points
- **Safety:** 2 points
- No field goals
- Defense cannot score on a Try

● QUARTERBACK AND RESTRICTIONS

- The quarterback has no restrictions
- The Quarterback may pass the ball or run the ball after receiving the snap.

● TURNOVERS AND DOWNS

- 4 downs to reach next zone or goal line
- Ball spotted at the center of field after each play
- Change of possession on failure to gain or interception
- Interceptions may be returned for a touchdown

● INTERCEPTION RETURN RULE

Upon an interception, the defense may advance the ball in the opposite direction of the offensive play toward the opposite end zone.

The play is considered live until:

- a. The ball carrier scores
- b. The ball carrier's **flag is pulled**, or
- c. A dead ball situation occurs (e.g., fumble out of bounds).

FLAGPULL AND TURNOVER RESULT

- If the defensive player is flagged before reaching the end zone during the return of an interception, the return attempt ends immediately, and possession is awarded to the defensive team as the new offensive team.
- All possessions begin at the 40-yard line following the return

● KICKING AND PUNTING RULES

- No kickoffs or punts
- All possessions begin at the 40-yard line

● PASSING AND RECEIVING

- Only one forward pass is allowed per down.
- One forward pass per down allowed behind the line of scrimmage
- All players are eligible receivers
- Backward passes are allowed behind or beyond the line of scrimmage, provided the ball does not hit the ground (live lateral).
- If a backward pass is dropped or hits the ground, the play is dead at the spot.

- **PASSING AND RECEIVING Cont.**

- One foot inbounds required for a catch
- Ball is dead if it hits the ground on a fumble, snap or pass
- Interceptions change possession immediately (See rule 9)

- **SCREEN / BLOCKING (No Contact Allowed)**

No blocking like tackle football: Players cannot push, grab, or use their body to stop a defender. Flag football is a non-contact sport, so blocking is not allowed.

- **Screens are allowed, but no contact:**
 - Think of it like basketball — you can set a screen, but you must **stay still** with feet set.
 - Arms must stay in (at your sides, chest, or back).
 - Do not lean, step into, or move toward a defender.
 - If a defender runs into a legal stationary screen it is considered incidental contact and the play keeps going.
 - A defender cannot run through a legal screen. They must make an attempt to avoid contact.
- **Positioning:**
 - Always leave at least **one step of space** so defenders have room to stop or change direction.
 - Keep legs shoulder-width apart (no extra-wide stances).
 - Stay on your feet — no diving, kneeling, or dropping low to block a path.
- **Defenders:**
 - Defenders have the right to move freely toward the ball carrier.
 - If you move or lean and create contact → it's a foul.
 - If a defender runs into a legal, stationary screen → it's incidental contact, play on.
- **Penalty:** Illegal screen/block = **10-yard penalty**. Repeated/intentional = **unsportsmanlike conduct**.

The Basics:

- Keep hands and arms at your side or behind your back.
- No pushing, grabbing, or using elbows, legs, or body to make contact.
- You can use your hands to stop a fall or keep your balance.
- Stay on your feet the whole time (no diving or dropping to your knees).

SCREEN / BLOCKING (No Contact Allowed) (cont.)

What You Can't Do When Screen Blocking

- Don't stick your arms out.
- Don't spread your legs too wide (keep them about shoulder-width apart).
- Don't block right up behind someone—stay at least one step back.
- Don't block too close to someone who's running—you have to give them space to stop or change direction.
- Once you're in position, don't move unless you're going the same way as the defender.
- *If you break these rules and cause contact, it's a personal foul.

Plain terms: Think of it like a basketball pick — you can get in the way, but you must stay still and avoid contact.

● **DEFENSIVE PLAY AND RUSHING**

- No contact at line – receivers must get free release
- No bump and run coverage
- Players may rush immediately from at least 1 yard off line
- Roughing the passer penalties apply
- All players must line up at least 1 yard off line of scrimmage

● **PENALTIES AND INFRACTIONS**

- Repeat down unless otherwise noted
- Offensive penalties behind the line replay the down
- ***Disqualifications and Associated 10-Yard Penalties:*** Flagrant unsportsmanlike conduct, severe ball spiking/kicking/throwing, extreme unsportsmanlike acts by players/non-players, intentionally contacting an official, flagrant personal fouls, tackling the runner, fighting, intentional flag belt tampering (loss of down for offense, automatic first down for defense).

● 5-YARD PENALTIES

Failure to wear required equipment	delay of game (Dead Ball)	illegally consuming time	illegal substitution	illegal procedure
false start (Dead Ball)	illegal snap (Dead Ball)	Encroachment (Dead Ball)	illegal motion	illegal formation
illegal shift	snap issues	Intentional Grounding (Loss of Down)	Illegal Forward Pass (Loss of Down if by the Offensive Team)	Intentionally Throwing a Backward Pass or Fumble Out-of-Bounds (Loss of Down if by the Offensive Team)
Helping the runner				

● 10-YARD PENALTIES

Illegal player equipment	multiple encroachment fouls between downs	offensive and defensive pass interference	unsportsmanlike conduct	spiking/kicking/throwing the ball during a dead ball
unnecessary contact	strip or attempt to strip the ball	Hurdling a player (personal foul)	contact before/after the ball is dead	diving/running into an opponent

*(Loss of Down if by the Offensive Team) (Automatic First Down if by the Defensive Team)

● 10-YARD PENALTIES (cont.)

tackling the runner,	roughing the passer (Automatic First Down)	illegal offensive screen blocking	interlocked interference/holding	defensive use of hands
illegal flag belt removal	guarding the flag belt / flag guarding (Loss of Down)	stiff arm	obstructing/holding the runner	charging, batting a loose ball
illegal kicking	illegal participation	illegal substitute	pretended unfair substitution	Illegally Secured Flag Belt on a Touchdown **

*(Loss of Down if by the Offensive Team) (Automatic First Down if by the Defensive Team)

● SUBSTITUTIONS

- Allowed during any dead ball
- Players must enter and exit from their sideline
- Substitutions must not delay the game

● OVERTIME RULES

- Each team starts 1st & goal at the 10-yard line
- Each team gets a possession
- Continue alternating until a winner is determined
- Starting in 4th OT, teams must go for 2 on Try
- Each team gets one timeout during all of overtime

● SAFETY RULES

- No tackling, blocking, or stiff arms
- Flag must be clearly visible at all times
- Player is down if flag is removed or ball touches ground

- **SAFETY RULES Cont.**

- Concussions or injuries require player removal until cleared
- Illegal equipment must be removed before participation
- All players must follow sportsmanship guidelines

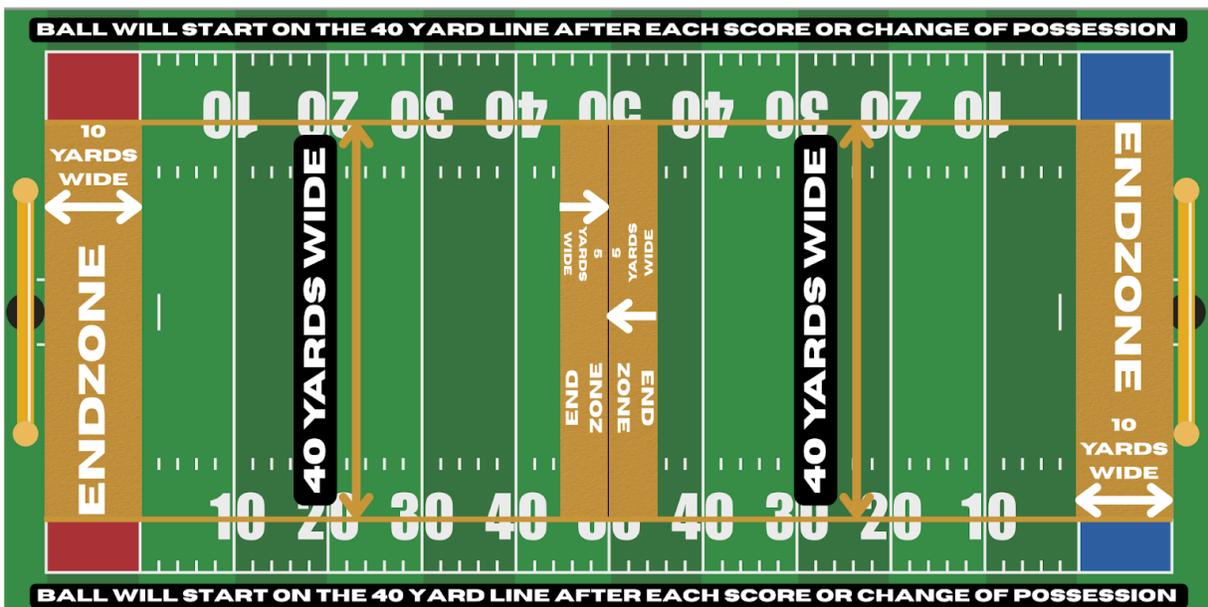
- **RUN SPREAD / MERCY RULE (42-POINT LEAD)**

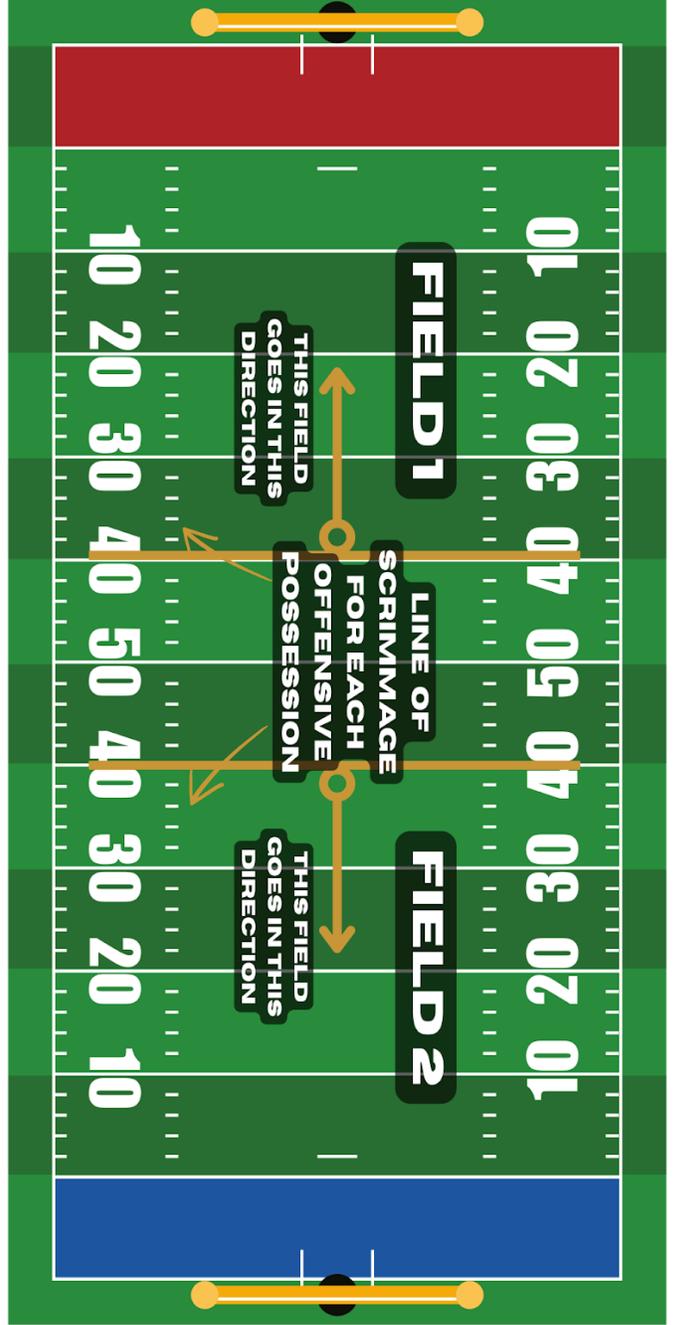
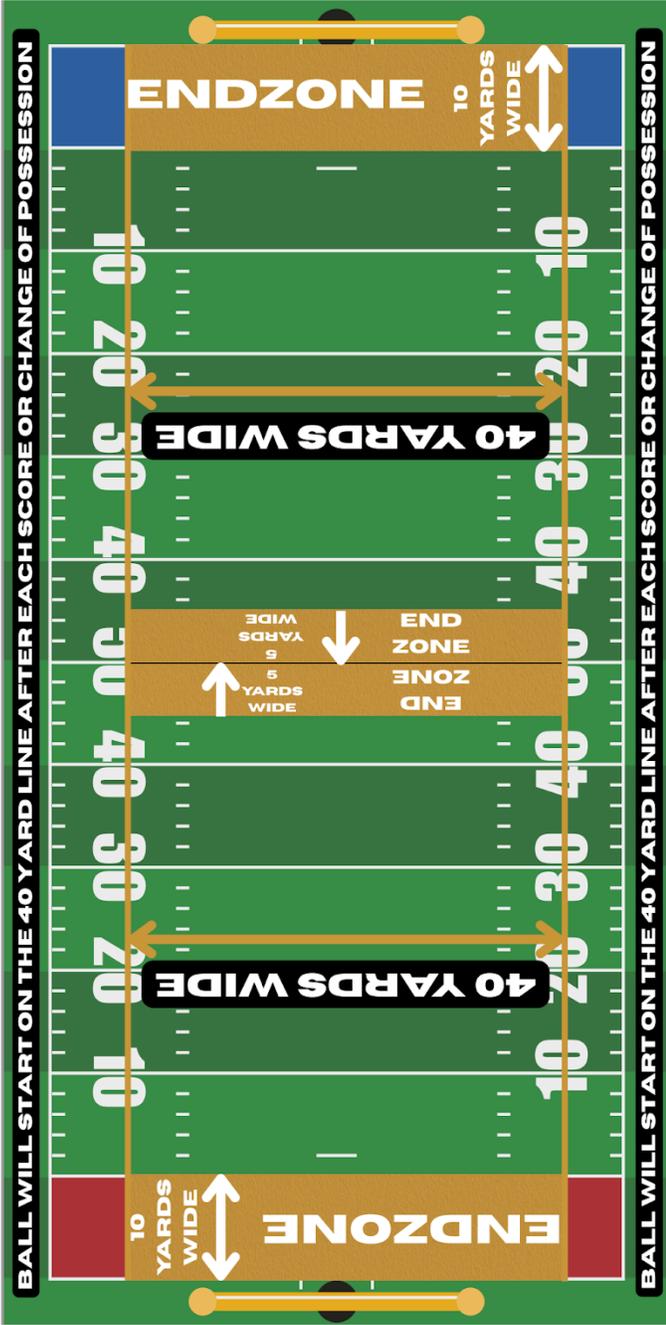
- **Activation:** If a team leads by **42 points or more**, the Run Spread Rule is in effect.
- **Game Clock:** The clock will continue to run (continuous clock) except for: timeouts, injuries, scores, or official stoppages.
- **Offensive Restrictions:**
 - The **Quarterback may not run the ball directly** after the snap.
 - The QB can only run if the ball is **handed off or lateraled first**.
- **Defensive Rush Rules:**
 - Defensive players may still rush the quarterback.
 - Rushers must start from a minimum of **7 yards behind the line of scrimmage**.
- **Purpose:** This rule ensures competitive balance, player safety, and sportsmanship in lopsided games.

Let's play safe, play hard, and Just Compete!

● FIELD MAP

- **Field Length:** 40 yards
- **Field Width:** 40 yards
- **End Zones:** 1 scoring end zone (10 yards deep) and 1 starting end zone (5 yards deep)
- **Total Field Length:** 60 yards including end zones
- **Ball Placement:** All possessions begin at the 40-yard line
- **Field Markings:** Zone Lines to Gain every 20 yards (20-yard zones)





Tournament Rules – 3 Game Minimum

- **Game Length**

- All games will consist of 2 halves of 18 minutes each.
- Halftime will be 2 minutes.
- The clock will run continuously except for official timeouts or injuries at the referee's discretion.

- **Pool Play (2 Games Each)**

- All teams play 2 pool games.
- Pool results determine seeding for bracket play.

- **Seeding Tiebreakers***

Tiebreakers are applied in order until the tie is broken:

1. Record (wins/losses/ties)
2. Head-to-head result (if applicable)
3. Points allowed (fewest)
4. Point differential (max +21 per game)
5. Coin toss

Bracket Play**

- After pool play, all teams are re-seeded into a single elimination bracket.
- Every team is guaranteed at least 1 bracket game.
- Bracket play continues until a champion is crowned.

Tournament Rules - Continued

Game Minimum Guarantee

- Each team plays at least 3 games (2 pool + 1 bracket).
- Teams that advance in the bracket will play more games.

***Note:** In the event of a multi-team tie, head-to-head is not used. Rankings will be determined by points allowed, then point differential. All rankings are calculated using the official tournament software.

****Note:** Plain terms: 2 pool games → then everyone moves into a single elimination bracket → minimum of 3 games guaranteed.

The tournament director has final authority on all rule interpretations.

JUST COMPETE 7v7 – REF QUICK GUIDE

● **FIELD / FLOW**

- All plays go one direction
- All possessions begin at the 40-yard line
- 4 downs to reach each 20-yard zone

● **LIVE / DEAD BALL**

Play is DEAD when:

- Flag is pulled
- Ball hits the ground
- Player goes out of bounds
- Score occurs
- Whistle blows

● **INTERCEPTIONS**

- Defense may return in the opposite direction
- Play continues until:
 - Score
 - Flag pull
 - Dead ball
- After return → ball resets to 40-yard line

REF QUICK GUIDE Continued

● SCORING

- **TD = 6**
- **Try (3 yd) = 1**
- **Try (10 yd) = 2**
- **Safety = 2**

● QB RULE

- **No restrictions**
- **Can run or pass immediately**

● RUSHING / DEFENSE

- **All defenders start 1 yard off line**
- **Can rush immediately**
- **No contact at line / no bumping**

● SCREEN / BLOCKING

- **NO contact**
- **Must be stationary**
- **Arms in, no leaning**
- **Think: basketball screen**

● PENALTY BASICS

- **5-yard = procedural**
- **10-yard = contact / major**
- **No tackling, no stiff arms**

REF QUICK GUIDE Continued

● MERCY RULE (42+)

- **Clock runs**
- **QB cannot run unless handed/lateraled**
- **Defense rush from 7 yards**

TIEBREAKERS (if asked)

- 1. Record**
- 2. Head-to-head**
- 3. Points allowed**
- 4. Point differential (+21 max)**

When in doubt, prioritize safety and fair play.