

YMCA of Greater Omaha

Flag Football Rules

2010

PURPOSE OF THE LEAGUE

1. For every boy and girl in grades Kindergarten through 8th a chance to have fun playing football in game situations.
2. To teach football skills, starting at the youth's level of ability and progressing from there.
3. To teach boys and girls sportsmanship – how to accept winning and losing situations.
4. To promote new friendship, encourage working together as a team and provide for family interaction.

TEAM ORGANIZATIONS

All boys and girls register through open registration and are placed on teams at or near their neighborhood school. Specific requests for coaches and/or teammates are also accepted. Every child registered will be placed on a team. NOTE: The Youth Sports department does have final jurisdiction over team division and the number of players placed on each team.

LEAGUE INFORMATION

1. All boys and girls must register and have fees paid or have scholarships to be eligible.
2. The YMCA furnishes game equipment and officials. No practice footballs will be given out through the YMCA.
3. All players must wear a mouth guard. Any player not wearing a mouth guard will not be allowed to play
4. The YMCA goal is to give EVERY boy and girl, in grades kindergarten through 8th a chance to play flag football in every game. Our basic guideline is for each player to participate in approximately half of every game.

<u>Grade Divisions</u>	<u>Ball Size</u>
Kindergarten	Pee Wee
1 st & 2 nd Grade	PeeWee
3 rd & 4 th Grade	Junior
5 th & 6 th Grade	Junior
7 th & 8 th Grade	Youth

EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORM

1. The YMCA will furnish game footballs.
2. Players should not wear anything that is dangerous to them or others; i.e. watches, rings, necklaces, etc.
3. Game shirts are reversible red and black mesh jerseys. Players need to buy these jerseys at the time of registration.
4. Individual flag belts and flags will be given to each coach at the beginning of the season.
5. Footballs will not be provided for practices, teams must furnish their own.
6. Metal cleats are prohibited.
7. Players must wear a mouth guard while they are playing.

YMCA STAFF

YMCA personnel shall be present and visible at all games. If you encounter any problems or have questions, please contact the site supervisor, official or the Youth Sports Director. If you have a question or suggestion concerning the game or league, please present it before or after the game to the site supervisor, NOT during the game. This can be distracting to the coaches, players, officials, and other fans.

FAN CONDUCT AND SPORTSMANSHIP

All coaches, parents and spectators shall remain off the field. Fans should remember only positive comments are appropriate in a youth sport setting. Fans should also remember that vocal instructions during the game could be confusing to the young athletes. Please let the coach handle this. Many times you may see calls that the official make differently than what you would. They are in charge of the game and we ask that the decisions be left up to their judgement. Coaches are responsible for their fan's behavior. Know the YMCA's rules and policies. Be courteous to opposing players, officials, coaches, and fans. Enjoy the game! That's what our league is all about.

These rules will be enforced:

- Step 1 – Warning
- Step 2 – Spectator asked to leave

REFEREE

1. The referee has jurisdiction from the time he/she enters the area of the play until signaling the end of the game. The referee's decisions are final.
2. The referee shall enforce the rules of the game.
3. The referee can suspend or terminate a game whenever it is deemed necessary; for example interference by spectators or coaches.
4. The referee can caution a player and eject from play any player quality of violent conduct, use of foul or abusive language, or persistent infringement of the playing rules. That player must sit out the next game.
5. The referee shall officiate the coin toss for the choice of serve or side of court, to winner of toss.
6. Teams shall change sides at the completion of each game.

7. Prior to coin flip, referee will have a pre-game meeting with coaches/captains from both teams to discuss basic game rules/procedures.

PLAYING RULES

1. A coin toss determines first possession (teams switch possession at halftime)
2. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has three (3) plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has three (3) plays to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on its 5-yard line.
3. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its 5-yard line.
4. All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line.
5. Coaches will be allowed in the huddle.
6. Teams generally consist of 10 players (5 on the field with 5 substitutes)
7. Game time is forfeit time. A game may be started and played with 4 players.
8. Field Dimensions: Kind. & 1/2nd Grade: 20x40yds, 3rd Grade and up: 30x50yds
9. ALL PLAYERS MUST PLAY HALF OF EVERY GAME!
10. **No blitzing will be allowed if a team is up by more than 21 points.**

Timing/Overtime

1. Games are played with two 20 minute halves with a five minute halftime (No Overtime)
2. Clock stops on timeouts and at the official's discretion.
3. Each time the 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.
4. Each team has one 60-second and one 30-second time out per half.

Scoring

Touchdown:	6 points
Extra point:	1 point (played from 5-yard line, PASS ONLY) or 2 points (played from 12-yard line RUN or PASS)
Safety:	2 points

Running

1. The quarterback cannot run with the ball.
2. **K-4th Grades: Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Teams may use multiple handoffs, but they must be behind the line of scrimmage.**
3. **5-8th Grades: Direct handoffs and lateral/pitch are permitted only behind the line of scrimmage. Offense may use multiple handoffs, but are allowed only one lateral or pitch.**
4. **1st-8th Grades "No-running zones," located 5 yards from each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield, are designed to avoid short-yardage, power-running situations.**
5. The player who takes the handoff or pitch/lateral can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.

6. Once the ball has been handed off or pitched, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
7. Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player (no diving).
8. The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.

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. As in the NFL, only one player is allowed in motion at a time.
3. A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

Passing

1. All forward passes must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
2. Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
3. The quarterback has a seven-second "pass clock." If a pass is not thrown within seven seconds, play is dead, loss of down. Once the ball is handed off, the seven-second rule is no longer in effect. (Seven second rule not in effect when someone rushes the QB).
4. **K-2nd Grades: 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. Interceptions may not be returned by the defense.**
5. **3-8th Grades: Interceptions can be returned and possession starts from the point of the flag pull. An interception is the only change of possession that does not start on the 5-yard line.**

Dead Balls

1. The ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to one side, to start play.
2. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
3. Play is ruled "dead" when:
 - A. Ball carrier's flag is pulled.
 - B. Ball carrier steps out of bounds.
 - C. Touchdown or safety is scored.
 - D. Passer throws the ball from beyond the line of scrimmage.
 - E. Ball carrier's knee hits the ground.
 - F. Ball carrier's flag falls out.**Note:** There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground.

Rushing the Quarterback

1. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards 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. 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. A special marker, or the

referee, will designate seven yards from the line of scrimmage. Remember, no blocking or tackling is allowed.

Sportsmanship/Roughing

1. If the site supervisor or referee witness any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. **FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.**
2. Trash talking is illegal. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. (Trash talk is talk that may be offensive to officials, opposing players, teams, or spectators.) If trash talking occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the players or players will be ejected from the game.

Penalties

Defense:

Offsides (dead ball)	5 yards, repeat down
Interference down	10 yards and automatic first down
Illegal contact (holding, blocking, etc.) down	10 yards and automatic first down
Illegal flag pull (before receiver has ball) down	10 yards and automatic first down
Illegal rushing (From inside 7-yard marker) down	10 yards and automatic first down

Offense:

Illegal motion (more than one person moving, false start, etc.)	5 yards, repeat down
Illegal forward pass (pass received behind line of scrimmage)	5 yards and loss of down
Offensive pass interference (illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender)	10 yards and loss of down
Flag guarding of down	10 yards (from line of scrimmage) and loss of down
Delay of game (dead ball)	Clock stops, 10 yards and loss of down

1. Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage.
2. Only the team captain may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players cannot question judgement calls.
3. Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.