

Flag Football

The following are the flag football rules adopted by Clinton, Desmet, Hellgate, Lone Rock, Potomac, Seeley Lake, Philipsburg, and Clark Fork:

*Official eight man rules will govern as played by the Montana High School Association. Exceptions as noted below:

1. Field dimensions = 40 x 80 yards.
2. The offensive and defensive teams will each have 9 players.
3. Length of game = four 10 minute quarters. Clock will continue to run except for official time-outs, touchdowns, injury, team time-outs (3 per half) and penalties. During the last 2 minutes of each half, the clock will be stopped for incomplete passes and plays run out of bounds in addition to the time stopped for the reasons stated above. (Coaches may discuss this rule and make a game-time decision *or ahead of time* with mutual agreement) *A 30 Second play clock (from when the ball is ready for play) will be instituted in the last two minutes of each half.*
4. Three time-outs per half.
5. Non-Lineman offensive blocking must be done by hand or shoulder contact keeping arms partially extended from body. Full extension = 15 yard penalty.
 - Offensive Lineman can extend their arms to block from the line of scrimmage until they are three (3) yards downfield.
6. Five (5) offensive players must be on the line of scrimmage. Less than 5 = 5 yard penalty.
7. No 3 or 4 stance on line of scrimmage.
8. Shoulders of pennied linemen must be parallel to the line of scrimmage.
9. Restraining line = 35 yard line for receiving team. There must be at least 3 men between 35 and 40 yard lines.
10. Kickoff from 30 yard line. Ball must travel at least 15 yards.
11. Kickoff into end zone = touch back and brought back to 15 yard line.
12. Kickoffs that go out of bounds = either re-kick with no penalty or taken at point where the ball goes out of bounds.
13. No on-side kicks on kickoffs.

14. Muffed punts and kickoffs can be advanced by receiving team only. Muffed punts and kickoffs can be recovered by kickoff team, but not advanced.
15. No rushing on punts. Punts must be declared. Defensive team must have 4 players on the line of scrimmage at punt. Muffed snaps on a declared punt can be picked up and kicked.
16. Safeties = 2 points for defense. Free kick from 15 yard line by offense. Restraining line for defense = 25 yard line.
17. Flag pulling – ball carrier is stopped when flag is pulled.
18. Flag dimensions = 17 x 2 inches. Flag material = plastic with cloth backing fastened with a velcro strip or ‘plug’ flags. This is a change from previous years. Belt ends tucked in.
19. Jerseys/shirts = tucked in with flag belt over clothes.
20. Loss of flags – if a player handles ball without flags, the down ends immediately.
21. Deliberate pulling of flag of non-ball carrying player = unsportsmanlike conduct.
22. Encroachment = any player to break the line of scrimmage, either offense or defense. Play stops and penalty is 5 yards. Neither offense nor defense may cross until ball is snapped. This does not apply to the center’s positioning of head and moving ball to accommodate the hike.
23. Intentional grounding = 10 yard penalty point of foul and loss of down.
24. Passing and pulling flag – if passer’s arm is in forward movement for a pass, the ball is dead if the flag is pulled. He must be rid of the ball.
25. Ball carrier must avoid the defender. He may not run through the defender. Penalty = 15 yards from the point of foul.
26. Ball carrier can jump or step over a prone player.
27. Ball carrier can spin to avoid flag pulling, but every spin must include a lateral move. Penalty = ball dead at point of foul.
28. Ball carrier cannot leave the ground or jump to avoid flag pulling. (15 yards from point of foul)
29. Ball carrier may not stiff arm - Penalty = 15 yards from point of foul.
30. Ball carrier cannot protect the flag (doing something with his free hand to keep a defender from pulling his flag). (Penalty = 5 yards from point of foul)
31. If a ball carrier’s knee touches the ground, the play ends at that point.
32. A defensive player may not hold, push, tackle, or run through the ball carrier. (Penalty = 15 yards from point of foul)

33. A defensive player may not intentionally “strip the ball” from the offensive player.
34. Downfield blocking is permitted for running players.
35. Downfield blocking is permitted within 3 yards of scrimmage on pass plays. After that, it is only permitted once the pass is caught. Penalty = 15 yards from the line of scrimmage.
36. Fumbles at the line of scrimmage and anywhere else are dead balls at the point of fumble and the down counts.
37. Backward passes are considered laterals and therefore, if dropped, a fumble occurs and the ball is dead at that point and the down counts.
38. Two point conversions only after a touchdown.
39. Shoes = tennis, running, turf with soft rubber cleats, soccer shoes. No hard football type shoes allowed. Coaches must coordinate this on the field to settle disputes.
40. Tie Breakers (NFHS RULES); not Sudden Death!
41. Eligible receivers = six players not wearing pennies. Pennied interior linemen cannot be receivers, although tipped passes may be caught and advanced by any player.
42. Offensive holding = Penalty – 10 yards from line of scrimmage.
43. Jerseys should be of contrasting colors.
44. Game results should not be published in newspapers.
45. Official football is the intermediate size.
46. No jewelry of any kind or place on body will be allowed for games. Hats are not to be worn.
47. A sportsmanship trophy will be voted on by players from all teams. Criteria is team sportsmanship - getting along, fair play, clean ball playing. The Copper League Manager will determine this award.

FLAG FOOTBALL RULES AND PENALTIES SUMMARY

5 YARD PENALTIES:

Encroachment----- Offense and Defense
Off-sides-----Offense and Defense
Protecting the flag-----Offense and Defense
<5 men on the line of scrimmage-----Offense
Intentional grounding-----Offense (pt. of foul, loss of down)

10 YARD PENALTIES:

Holding-----Offense

15 YARD PENALTIES:

Full extension of arms (see rule #5 for specifics) -----Offense

Leaving feet (Blockers) -----Offense

Ball Carrier-

1. Running through defense
2. Leaving the ground and jumping to avoid flag pulling
3. Stiff arming

Tackler-

1. Holding, pushing, tackling, or running through ball carrier

Downfield Blocking-----Offense

(Past 3 yards on a pass before ball is thrown)

Unsportsmanlike Conduct-----Line of scrimmage

Loss of down, player may be ejected

Clipping-----Offense (point of foul)

Pass Interference-----15 Yard Penalty from (No Face Guarding) LOS

Spin without a lateral move-----Ball dead at point of foul