



2023 7-ON-7 RULES

A. GAME & FIELD SETUP

1. Games are played from the 40 yard line going in toward the nearest endzone
2. First downs will be marked by cones
 - a. Cone 1 at the 25 yard line
 - b. Cone 2 at the 10 yard line
3. Teams must arrive at least 15 minutes prior to start time, be stretched and ready to play when scheduled
4. 2 captains will be designated from each team at the beginning of the game
5. A coin toss will determine who receives the ball to start the game. The visiting team (or team that had to travel the farthest) will call heads or tails. The winner will start on offense, the loser will start the 2nd half on offense

B. EQUIPMENT

1. Players are permitted to wear standard football cleats with plastic, rubber, or screw-in cleats. No metal spikes are allowed
2. Each team will provide their own regulation sized ball similar to a standard youth-sized (age 12-14) composite football
3. Teams will wear alternating light/dark colored jerseys
4. **Mouthguards are required on the field at all times. Players without a mouthguard will not be allowed to play**

C. GAME LENGTH

1. Games are a total of 55 minutes with a running clock
2. Two 25 minute halves will be played with a 5 minute halftime
3. The clock will stop only for serious injury and timeouts
4. Each team has 3 timeouts for the entire game and can only carry 2 timeouts over into the second half.

D. OFFENSE

1. 7 players on offense including the pass-eligible center
2. The offense has a 25 second play clock that will start at the spot of the ball
3. The ball will be spotted at the 40 yard line to begin the game
4. Teams will have 4 downs to gain a 1st down
5. 1st downs can be achieved at the 25 yard line and 10 yard line
6. If the offense fails to secure a first down, the ball will be turned over to the opponent and placed at the 40 yard line. A team will never play a down further back than the 40 yard line
7. During play, the ball will be spotted where the ball carrier was touched with one or two hands by the defender
8. A ball carrier who falls to the ground untouched or catches a pass with their knee down will be considered down at that spot
9. Any center snap that touches the ground is a live ball and the sack count is in effect
10. QB has a 4-count to throw the ball before being considered sacked (1-back, 2-back, 3-back, 4-back, SACK!)
11. The referee will blow this whistle once the 4-count is up and the ball must leave the QB's hand before the whistle is blown
12. If the QB is sacked, the ball will be placed at the previous spot, not the spot of the sack
13. Run plays are not allowed. This includes the QB running past the line of scrimmage.
14. All passes must be forward passes – no double/backward passes nor pitch to a RB to pass
15. The QB can throw to a WR/RB behind the line of scrimmage as long as it's a forward pass

16. Offense must have at least 3 players on the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap – the center counts as 1 of the required 3
17. Direct snaps are not allowed to any player other than the QB
18. Only one player can be in motion at the snap of the ball and must be running parallel to or away from the line of scrimmage
19. Multiple players may shift prior to the snap, but must be set before a player goes in motion
20. After the catch, the receiver must attempt to avoid the defender. **A penalty will be assessed for lowering a shoulder or trying to attempt to force contact**
21. Only 1 foot needs to be inbounds with a controlled catch
22. **Blocking is not allowed. Intentional or unintentional blocking of a defender will result in a penalty**
23. Fumbles cannot be advanced nor recovered by the defense. If the ball carrier fumbles, the ball will be spotted at the point it touched the ground unless it is a forward fumble.
24. In the event of a forward fumble, the ball will be spotted where the ball carrier lost control of the ball
25. Players are not allowed to dive across the goal line to score a touchdown.
26. **Offensive team is responsible for retrieving and returning the ball to the previous spot**

E. DEFENSE

1. 7 players on Defense
2. Tackling
 - a. A legal tackle is defined as touching the ball carrier with 1 or 2 hands below the neck.
 - b. Excessive force by shoving, pushing, or striking the ball carrier will be penalized with a personal foul and ejection will be possible if deemed flagrant by the referee
3. Press Coverage is allowed for the initial 5 yards from the line of scrimmage, however excessive force can result in a personal foul and possible ejection. Contact after 5 yards will be penalized
4. No rush on the QB.
5. If the QB throws a pass behind the line of scrimmage, the defense is allowed to cross the line of scrimmage and touch the ball carrier
6. Interceptions will result in a dead ball change of possession spotted at the 40 yard line
7. Face guarding will be penalized. Defensive players must play the ball and not hinder the receiver's vision.

F. SCORING

1. **Scores will not be kept therefore there will be no overtime**
2. **There will be no Field Goal, Extra Point or Point After Touchdown plays**
3. After a touchdown, the ball will be placed at the 40 yard line and teams will switch offense to defense and defense to offense

G. PENALTIES

1. Pass Interference – Offensive/Defensive
 - a. Contact is made when the ball is in the air including pushing off of a player. Incidental contact will be tolerated and left up to the judgement of the referee.
2. Illegal Contact
 - a. Offensive – Pushing off to create space/picks made through crossing routes. Contact made beyond 5 yards from the line of scrimmage
 - b. Defensive – Contact made before the ball is in the air and after the 5 yard press coverage zone

3. Illegal Forward Pass
 - a. Pass thrown when the QB is beyond the line of scrimmage or a double/backward pass
4. Illegal Lateral
 - a. A ball that is pitched forward by the ball carrier past the line of scrimmage
5. Offsides
 - a. Defensive/Offensive – one or more players are lined up past the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped
6. Delay of Game
 - a. When the 25 second play clock expires before the ball is snapped
7. Illegal Formation (Offense)
 - a. Less than 3 players lined up on the line of scrimmage at the snap of the ball
8. False Start
 - a. Forward motion by an offensive player prior to the snap of the ball
9. Illegal Motion
 - a. Multiple offensive players in motion at the same time
10. Snap Infraction
 - a. The ball is snapped silently without a cadence or the ball is fake snapped and put back on the ground
11. Illegal Shift
 - a. A player not in motion is moving prior to the snap and is not set at the snap of the ball
12. Illegal Substitution
 - a. Anytime there are more than 7 players on Offense or Defense during a live play
13. Illegal Dive
 - a. It is illegal to dive to gain extra yardage
14. Illegal Blocking/Screening
 - a. Intentionally or unintentionally blocking defender(s) from reaching the ball carrier
15. Offensive Obstruction
 - a. As a ball carrier, intentionally attempting to or making contact with the defender; not trying to avoid contact but instigate it
16. Defensive Obstruction
 - a. Intentionally attempting to or making contact (other than 1-2 hand touch) with the ball carrier; not trying to avoid contact but instigate it
17. Unnecessary Roughness/Personal Foul (live ball)
 - a. Excessive force by shoving, pushing, striking, or targeting a player on Offense or Defense while the ball is in play
18. Unnecessary Roughness/Personal Foul (dead ball)
 - a. Excessive force by shoving, pushing, striking, or targeting a player on Offense or Defense after the play. This includes use of foul language to the opponent and/or referee

Penalty Table and Assessments

Penalty	Yardage	Where Assessed	Loss of Down
Offensive Pass Interference	15	Previous Spot	N (repeat down)
Defensive Pass Interference	15	Previous Spot	N (repeat down)
Offensive Illegal Contact	5	Previous Spot	N (repeat down)
Defensive Illegal Contact	5	Previous Spot	N (repeat down)
Illegal Forward Pass	5	Spot Foul	Y (loss of down)
Illegal Lateral	5	Spot Foul	Y (loss of down)
Offsides	5	Previous Spot	N (repeat down)
Delay of Game	5	Previous Spot	N (repeat down)
Illegal Formation	5	Previous Spot	N (repeat down)
False Start	5	Previous Spot	N (repeat down)
Illegal Motion	5	Previous Spot	N (repeat down)
Snap Infraction	5	Previous Spot	N (repeat down)
Illegal Shift	5	Previous Spot	N (repeat down)
Illegal Substitution	5	Previous Spot	N (repeat down)
Illegal Dive	5	Spot Foul	N (repeat down)
Illegal Blocking/Screening	10	End of the run or Spot Foul Whichever penalizes the offender worse	N (repeat down)
Offensive Obstruction	10	Spot Foul	N (repeat down)
Defensive Obstruction	10	End of the run or Spot Foul Whichever penalizes the offender worse	N (repeat down)
Unnecessary Roughness Personal Foul (live ball)	15	Succeeding Spot	N (repeat down)
Unnecessary Roughness Personal Foul (dead ball)	15	Previous Spot	N (repeat down)