

Winter Flag Football

Brevard Flag Football Rules

BFF Flag

- This is a recreational league. No official score will be kept. No standings will be kept. There are no playoffs and no Super Bowl. This league is strictly for fun.
- **Absolutely no blocking or tackling is allowed.**
- Each team must supply at least one volunteer referee for a minimum of two referees in a game. If a team does not have a referee, then the coach will be that team's referee. Each team is encouraged to provide 2 referees for a maximum of 4 referees/game.
- A coin toss determines first possession. After half time, the other team gets first possession. The loser of the coin toss determines which end zone it will defend for the first offensive possession.
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has 3 (three) plays to cross mid-field. Once a team crosses mid-field, it has three (three) 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.
- Once a team crosses midfield, and gets 3 new plays, if then the defense pushes the offense back across midfield, and then the offense crosses midfield again. The offense **does not** get 3 new plays.
- If the offensive team fails to cross mid-field, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its 5-yard line.
- All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line.
- The offense will start their possession at the closest end of the field. In a tough defensive game, a lot of time is spent walking from one end of the field to the other.
- In the 6-8 year old division, one (1) coach is allowed in the offensive huddle and one (1) coach is allowed in the defensive huddle. The coach in the huddle may use pre-drawn plays, no white boards are allowed.
- No coaches are allowed on the field during a game for 9-11 or 12-14 divisions except during time outs or injuries.
- On a change of possession, the offense will wait to snap the ball until the defense is ready. This is to allow for substitutions to uphold the mandatory play rule.
- Teams will use footballs provided by Brevard Flag Football for games. **No Exceptions.**
- Coaches of the first game on each field are responsible for placing pylons and cones (setup). Coaches of the last game on each field are responsible for picking up pylons and cones and placing them in the aisle between the fields.
- At the request of either coach or board member, the parents will aggregate on one side of the field and the players and coaches on the other or opposite side of the field.

Game Day Start & End Times

- Games are required to start and end on time. This is essential to assure that the team following you is provided appropriate time to prepare for the game and also to allow the traffic and parking to transition.

Players/Game Schedules

- Teams consist of approximately 10 players (6 on the field with 4 substitutes but may be moved to 7 v 7 due to the size of the roster – please check with your commissioner)
- Teams will field a maximum of 6 players.
- If one team cannot field the 6 players, that team may borrow players from the opposing team so that 6 players on the field can be met for both teams.
- If neither team can field 6 players, then they may play with 5 or 4 players. If neither team can field at least 4 players, then the game may be rescheduled at the President's discretion.
- Each player shall play a minimum of 2 quarters on defense, and 2 quarters on offense. If a player plays both ways in 1 quarter, that will count as 1 quarter of defense, and 1 quarter of offense of playing time.
- No coach will reschedule a game.
- No games will be rescheduled due to a head coaches' absence. A parent or assistant coach will coach the team in the head coaches' absence.
- No games will be rescheduled due to absence of players.
- Games canceled due to inclement weather will be rescheduled only at the President's discretion.
- In other words, you have to play the provided schedule – no exceptions – if you opt to pursue changing a game without the President's authorization you do so at your own risk as this is not a league game and you will not be covered by our insurance.

Field

- The field is approximately 70 yards by 30 yards.
- The end zones are approximately 10 yards deep.
- We may use 6-7 fields.

Timing

- Games are played as 4 (four) quarters. Each quarter will be 12 minutes with a running clock. 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.
- Each team has 1 (one) 60 second time out per half.
- Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.

Scoring

- Touchdown: 0
- Extra point: extra points will not be played.
- Safety: 0

Since we are not keeping official score, extra points will not be played.

Overtime

- There is no overtime. There is no official score.

Running

- The quarterback is defined as the player that receives the ball from the center.
- The quarterback cannot run the ball past the line of scrimmage directly after he receives the snap. If the QB attempts to run the ball past the line of scrimmage, the ball is down at the same spot, and it is a loss of down. If the QB hands off the ball, or laterals to another player, and then receives the ball on a subsequent hand-off or lateral, then the QB may run the ball past the line of scrimmage.
- The offense may use multiple hand-offs or laterals.
- A lateral is defined as a pass or pitch to a player equal to or behind the person lateraling the ball. If a lateral is dropped, it is a fumble and the ball is dead where it lands.
- The player that takes the hand-off can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
- Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush, regardless of where they lined up.
- The center is not permitted to receive a hand-off from the quarterback between his/her legs after snapping the ball. The quarterback must take obvious, definitive possession of the ball without it being touched by the center while the ball is in the quarterback's possession. However, the quarterback is permitted to hand the ball around to the center while the center is behind the line of scrimmage and this is considered a hand-off. This rule is to make the play where the quarterback simply touches the ball and returns the ball to the center while the center is still snapping the ball and the center takes off with the ball – this is not considered a hand-off and is an illegal play.
- Spinning is allowed.
- “Stiff arming” is NOT allowed.
- The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.
- Diving for the first down, touchdown, or forward progress is allowed. The ball will be spotted where the player's knee touches the ground, if the player's knee touches the ground first. If the ball touches the ground before the players' knee, the ball is down where it touches the ground. If a player is in the act of diving, and his flag is pulled in “mid-dive”, the ball is down at the point of the flag pull.
 - A player may put his hand on the ground to regain his/her balance and not be called down.

Offensive “snapping” of the ball

- The placement of the ball will be in the middle of the field – the center may touch the ball and adjust it at this “spot.” Players may not move the ball beyond six (6) inches from the placement of the ball from the official.
- The offensive snap of the football to the quarterback by the center – the ball must pass between the legs of the center.
- A quarterback may not hand the ball back to center – between the legs – but must wrap his arm around to the center to receive the ball.

Receiving

- All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
- As in the NFL, only one player is allowed in motion at a time.
- A player must have at least one (1) foot in bounds when making a reception.
- Diving to catch a pass is allowed. The receiver must come down with at least one 1 foot in bounds.

Passing

- All forward passes must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- The quarterback has a seven (7) 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.
- 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. If the interception is caught in front of the mid-field line, the team has three downs to cross mid-field (similar to FLAG rules above).

Dead Balls

- The ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to one side to start play.
- Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- Play is ruled “dead” when:
 - Ball carrier’s flag is pulled.
 - Ball carrier steps out of bounds.
 - Touchdown or safety is scored.
 - At the point of an interception, interception returns are not allowed.
 - Ball carrier’s knee hits the ground.
 - Ball carrier’s flag falls out.
 - Receiver’s flag falls out. Play is dead at the spot of the reception.
- There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the hits the ground.
- There is no “stripping” of the ball.

- If the ball is “fumbled” and the first spot it hits on the ground is in the end zone, it will be treated as a touchback. The opposing team will take possession at it’s own 5 yard line.

Rushing the Quarterback

- 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.
- **Tackling the QB in the act of passing.** If the quarterback is hit by a defender in the act of throwing a pass, or after the pass is thrown, it is an automatic 10-yard penalty and a 1st down. This includes a defender diving for the quarterback’s flag, whether the defender pulls the flag or not. In the act of passing the quarterback is in a defenseless position, since he is not allowed to run the ball past the line of scrimmage. Please inform your kids not to try and block the pass but to go for the flag as we have had the QB’s arm hit causing injury to the shoulder. As a result, attempting to block a pass will be permitted if the defensive player is standing at the line of scrimmage. No arms up to block passes beyond the line of scrimmage. Any “tackles” or “hitting” will be enforced as a penalty – 10 yards and an automatic first down and the player and coach warned.
- There will be some contact because some players give extra effort. But if the QB is “roughed up,” a penalty shall be called.
- Once the QB hands off the ball, or passes it, then he/she is not afforded this special protection.
- **Remember, no blocking or tackling is allowed.**

Safety

- A safety is awarded when the defense pulls the flag of the ball carrier in the offense’s own end zone.
- A safety is awarded if the offense fumbles the ball in their own end zone.
- A safety is awarded if the ball carrier steps beyond the end line or out of bounds within their own end zone.
- After a safety, the defensive team takes over on offense at their own 5-yard line.

Sportsmanship/Roughing

- If the field monitor, board member or referee witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected. **Foul play will not be tolerated.** We are not keeping score, there are no standings, and there are no playoffs. This league is recreational, and it’s purpose is for kids to play flag football and have fun.

- **Trash talking is illegal.** Officials have the right to determine offensive language. (Trash talk is talk that may be offensive to officials, opposing players, coaches, teams, or spectators.) If trash talking occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the player or players will be ejected from the game.
- **Any ejection shall be reported to a board member and they will follow up with the player and/or coach regarding the issue and potential suspensions.**

Penalties

- All penalties will be called by the referee, **not** the coaches
- If a penalty occurs against the defense inside of its own 10-yard line, half the distance to the goal will be marked off instead of 10 yards.
- If a penalty occurs against the offense inside of its own 10-yard line, half the distance to the goal will be marked off instead of 10 yards.

Defense

- Offsides: 10 yards and automatic first down.
- Interference: 10 yards and automatic first down.
- Illegal contact (holding, blocking, etc.) 10 yards and automatic first down.
- Illegal flag pull (before receiver has the ball) 10 yards and automatic first down.
- Illegal rushing (starting rush from inside 7 yard marker) 10 yards and automatic first down.
- Tackling. 10 yard and automatic first down.

Offense:

- Illegal motion (more than one person moving, false start, etc.): 10 yards and loss of down.
- Illegal forward pass (receiving behind the line of scrimmage): 10 yards and loss of down.
- Offensive pass interference (illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender): 10 yards and loss of down.
- Flag guarding: 10 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down.
- Stiff-arming: 10 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down and warning.
- Delay of game, clock stops 10 yards and loss of down.
- Within 10 yards of the goal, the ball will be placed half the distance to the goal.
- Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage.
- Only the team coach or team captain may ask the referee questions about rule interpretations and clarification. Players, coaches, and spectators may not question judgment calls.
- Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.

Attire

- Cleats are allowed, except for metal spikes. No metal soccer cleats. Inspections must be made.
- All players must wear a protective mouthpiece; there are no exceptions.

- Official Flag jerseys must be worn during play.
- Jerseys will be tucked in at all times.

Sportsmanship

- Everyone needs to keep in mind that this is a recreational league, and that no games or plays have any playoff or championship implications. Our referees are volunteers. They are people just like you. People make mistakes. If a referee makes a mistake, let it go. Hounding or disparaging of a referee will not be tolerated.
- Applaud good play by both sides.
- Treat everyone as you would want him or her to treat you.
- After a game, teams will shake hands at midfield and congratulate each other on a good game.

These rules are adapted from the NFL Flag. BFF has made some changes to the official NFL Flag rules.

Revised: January 2016