

**Official Rule
Book**
Millennium
Development
Flag Football
2011-12 Season



Junior Division

Effective as of September 2011

Game

1. At the start of each game, captains from both teams shall meet at midfield for the coin toss to determine .who shall start with the ball. The visiting team shall call the toss. The winner of the coin toss gets first offense possession. The loser of the coin toss chooses the end zone it would prefer to defend. Teams may not choose to defer to second half choice.
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.
3. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on its 5-yard line.
4. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its .drive from its 5-yard line.
5. All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line.
6. Teams change sides after the first half. Possession changes to the loser of the coin toss.

Game Overview....

1. Games are played on a **40 minute clock for JR division and the clock will stop with the ONE MINUTE WARNING for the Junior Division THE CLOCK WILL ONLY STOP FOR THE FOLLOWING AN INCOMPLETE PASS, RUNNING OUT OF BOUNDS, INJURY ON THE FIELD OR TIME OUT SIGNALLED BY THE HEAD COACH.**
2. **FOR JR DIVISION-THE GAME WILL BE PLAYED AS 5 ON 5, BUT A TEAM CAN WITH FOUR PLAYERS.**
3. Halftime is **7 minutes.**
4. 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
5. Each team has **two 30 second out and 1 injury time out per half.**
6. Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
7. In the event of an injury the clock will stop and then restart when the injured player is removed from the field of play **within in two minutes.**
8. **OVERTIME RULES.....**
 - *When the game ends in a tie at the end of regulation, there will be overtime period until a team is declared the winner. Then, the winner of the coin toss shall choose the following options: 1. to be offense, 2. defense, 3. The goal they wish to defend. The overtime period has no time limit. Each team gets one opportunity to score or execute their series of downs.*
 - *The captains and head coaches shall come to the middle of the middle of the field for a coin toss. The visitors shall have first choice on the coin flip.*
 - *The ball will be placed on the opponents 10 yard line. It will be regular football from that point forward with three downs to score.*
 - *Once the offensive or defensive team gains possession they have the chance to score.*
 - Beginning the third OT period each must attempt a 2 point conversion following a touchdown.

SCORING

1. Touchdown: **6 points**
2. PAT (Point After Touchdown) **1 point** (5-yard line) or **2 points** (12-yard line) .*Note: 1 point PAT is pass only, 2 point PAT can be run or pass.*
3. Safety: **2 points**
 - a. A safety occurs when the ball carrier is declared down in his/her own end zone. They can be called down when their flags are pulled by a defensive player, their flag falls out, they step out of bounds or they hit the ground with their knee or arm. A Safety also occurs when there is an offensive penalty in the end zone.
4. A team that scores a touchdown must declare whether it wishes to attempt a 1-pt. conversion (from the 5-yard line) or a 2-pt. conversion (from the 9-yard line). Any change, once a decision is made to try for the extra point, requires a charged time out. Decision cannot be changed after a penalty. Interceptions on conversions can not be returned.

5. Mercy Rule: ***(Only the head coach's can make that call)*** After one team is winning by twenty eight points or more, the losing team gets one offensive series to continue regulation play. If they do not score, the game goes into scrimmage mode playing up to the fifteen minute mark in the second half if time allows. After the fifteen minute mark, the game is over.
6. Scrimmage Mode: The losing team gets the ball for up to three possessions. Each possession lasts until the team scores or fails to achieve the Line-To-Gain. Points do not count in final score. After three possessions the game is over.

Coaches

1. Coaches are typically volunteer parents or family members helping the players learn and enjoy the game. Parents are encouraged to support the coach at all time.
2. Coaches are allowed on the field to direct players according to need and bracket. Coaches must move to the sidelines before the snap of the ball.
3. Coaches are expected to adhere to NFL FLAG philosophies, coaching guidelines and codes of conduct.
4. **Only three coaches per team are allowed on the sidelines. this will be enforced if there is more than three on the sideline, there will be a warning issued first. IF IT CONTINUES, THERE WILL BE 15 YARD PENALTY AWARDED TO THE OPPOSING TEAM. NO PARENTS ALLOWED ON THE SIDE LINES.**

Live Ball/Dead Ball

1. The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead.
2. The official will indicate the neutral zone and line of scrimmage. It is an automatic dead ball foul if any player on defense or offense enters the neutral zone. In regards to the neutral zone, the official may give both teams a "courtesy" neutral zone notification to allow their players to move back beyond the line.
3. A player who gains possession in the air is considered in bounds as long as one foot comes down in the field of play.
4. The defense may not mimic the offensive team signals, by trying to confuse the offensive players, while the quarterback is calling out signals to start the play.
5. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
6. Any official can whistle the play dead.
7. Play is ruled "dead" when:
 - a. The ball hits the ground.
 - b. The ball carrier's flag is pulled.
 - c. The ball carrier steps out of bounds.
 - d. A touchdown, PAT or safety is scored.
 - e. The ball carrier's knee or arm hits the ground.
 - f. The ball carrier's flag falls out.
 - g. The receiver catches the ball while in possession of one flag.
 - h. The 7 second pass clock expires.
 - j. **7 second clock when the ball is handed off then it is a running play only (When the running back becomes the QUARTERBACK, the 7 SECOND CLOCK goes into effect as if he was the QUARTERBACK).**
8. In the case of an inadvertent whistle, the offense has two options:
 - a. Take the ball where the whistle blew.
 - b. Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.

Note: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground.

9. A team is allowed to use a time out to question an official's rule interpretation.

If the rule is interpreted incorrectly, the time out will not be charged and the proper ruling will be enforced. Officials should all agree upon any controversial call in order to give each team the full benefit of each call. If the ruling is correct the team will be charged a time out.

Running

1. The ball is spotted where the runner's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball carrier has the ball. If one foot precedes the other, the forward foot marks the spot.
2. Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. **THERE IS ONLY ONE HANDOFF/PITCH PER SET OF THREE DOWNS THAT IS FOR ALL THREE LEAGUES (MODIFIED ON SEPTEMBER 20, 2011).** Offense may use multiple handoffs.
3. "No-Run Zones," located 5 yards before each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield, are designed to avoid short-yardage, power-running situations. Teams are not allowed to run in these zones IF the subsequent line is LIVE. (Reminder: Each offensive squad approaches only TWO No Run Zones in each drive - one 5 yards from midfield to gain the first down, one 5 yards from the goal line to score a TD 5 yards).
4. The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
5. Once the ball has been handed off in front or behind the quarterback, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
6. Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. Diving, leaping or jumping is considered flag guarding.
7. Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a flag pull.
8. Runners may leave their feet if there is a clear indication that he/she has done so to avoid collision with another player without a flag guarding penalty enforced.
9. No blocking/or setting a pick or "screening" is allowed at any time.
10. Offensive players must stop their motion once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage. No running with the ball carrier.
11. Flag Obstruction – **All jerseys MUST be tucked in before play begins.** The flags must be on the player's hips and free from obstruction. Deliberately obstructed flags will be considered flag guarding.

Passing

1. All passes must be from behind the line of scrimmage, thrown forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage. **If a quarterback and the entire ball are in front of the line of scrimmage then a forward pass can no longer be thrown but a lateral is still a legal play. However, by the act of crossing the line of scrimmage, the quarterback does not lose the right to throw a forward pass as long as after crossing the line scrimmage, the ball returns behind and is thrown from behind the line 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 the seven seconds, play is dead, the down is consumed and the ball is returned to

the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off, the 7-second rule no longer is in effect.

a. *If the QB is standing in the end zone at the end of the 7-second clock, the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage (LOS).*

Receiving

1. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line).
2. Only one player is allowed in motion at a time. All motion must be parallel to the line of scrimmage and no motion is permitted towards the line of scrimmage.
3. A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.
4. In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.
5. 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.
6. *Interceptions are returnable, but not on conversions after touchdowns.*

Rushing the Passer

1. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. **ONLY ONE PLAYER** can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.
2. 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.
3. A special marker/hash marker, or the referee, will designate a Rush Line seven yards from the line of scrimmage. Defensive players should verify they are in the correct position with the official on every play.
 - a. *A legal rush is:*
 - Any rush from a point 7 yards from the defensive line of scrimmage. **ONLY ONE PLAYER IS ALLOW TO RUSH THE QUARTERBACK. THE DEFENSE IS ALLOWED ONE RUSH PER SET OF DOWNS.**
 - A rush from anywhere on the field AFTER the ball has been handed off by the quarterback.
 - If a rusher leaves the rush line early, they may return to the rush line, reset and then legally rush the quarterback.
 - If a rusher leaves the rush line early and the ball is handed off before they cross the line of scrimmage, they may legally rush the quarterback.
 - b. *A penalty may be called if:*
 - The rusher leaves the rush line before the snap and crosses the line of scrimmage before a handoff or pass – Illegal Rush (5 yards LOS and first down).
 - Any defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped – Offsides (5 yards LOS and first down).
 - Any defensive player, not lined up at the rush line crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is passed or handed – Illegal Rush (5 yards LOS and first down).
 - c. **Special circumstances:**
 - Teams are not required to rush the quarterback, seven second clock in effect.
 - Teams are not required to identify their rusher before the play,

however if they do send a rusher, the rusher must check in with the official.

- If rusher leaves the 7-yard line before the snap, he/she may immediately drop back to act as a defender with no offside penalty enforced.
- The player rushing the Quarterback may attempt to block a pass. However, NO contact can be made with the quarterback in any way.
- Offense cannot impede the rusher in any way. The rusher has a CLEAR PATH to the QB and any interference that would impede his/her path to the QB will be considered screening. The defense may attempt to block a pass provided they do not strike the passer.
- **Blocking the pass and then striking the passer will result in a 10-yard penalty.**
- A Sack occurs if the QB's flags are pulled behind the line of scrimmage. The ball is placed where the QB's feet are when the flag is pulled. A Safety is awarded if the sack takes place in the offensive team's end zone

Flag Pulling

1. A legal flag pull takes place when the ball carrier is in full possession of the ball.
2. Defenders can dive to pull flags, but cannot tackle, hold or run through ball carrier when pulling flags.
3. It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball or pull from the ball carrier's possession at any time.
4. If a player's flag inadvertently falls off during the play, the player is down immediately upon possession of the ball and the play ends.
5. A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off of a player who is not in possession of the ball.
6. Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping of head, hand, arm or shoulder, or intentionally covering flags with the football or jersey.

Formations

1. An offensive team must have a minimum of one player on the line of scrimmage (the Center) and up to four players on the line of scrimmage.
2. The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.
 - a. One player at a time may go in motion 1-yard beyond and parallel to the line of scrimmage.
 - b. No motion is allowed towards the line of scrimmage.
3. Offensive players must come to a complete stop for one second before the ball is snapped unless he/she is the one player in motion.
4. Movement by a player who is set or a player who runs toward the line of scrimmage while in motion is considered a false start.
5. The center must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion between his/her legs to a player in the backfield, and the ball must completely leave his/her hands.

Penalties

General:

- The referee will call all penalties.
- Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.

- All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, except as note (spot fouls).
- Only the team captain or head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players cannot question judgment calls. **IF THE RULING ON THE PLAY NEEDS REVIEW, ONLY THE COMMISSIONER OR HEAD REFEREES CAN OVER TURN THE CALL ON THE FIELD. COACHES MUST NOT TRY TO INFLUENCE THE CALL. IF THEY DO, A PENALTY FOR MISCONDUCT WILL OCCUR.**
- Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.
- Penalties are assessed Live Ball then Dead Ball. Live Ball penalties must be assessed before play is considered completed.
- Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.
- *Once a penalty flag is thrown the play is deemed dead. The only instance is if there is pass inference and the receiver had a clear path to the end zone. Then, the ball will be placed on the one yard line of the opposing team. If the offense player scores a touchdown, the team will have the opportunity to decline the penalty.*

Five Yard Penalties

- Illegal Equipment Offside
- Illegal motion (more than one person moving, false start, etc.)
- Illegal forward pass (pass received behind line of scrimmage or throwing a pass beyond the line of scrimmage)
- Offensive pass interference (illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender) Screening, Blocking or Running with the ball carrier
- Delay of game
- Defense Illegal contact (holding, blocking, etc.)
- Defense Illegal flag pull (before receiver has ball)
- Defense Illegal rushing (starting rush from inside 7-yard marker)

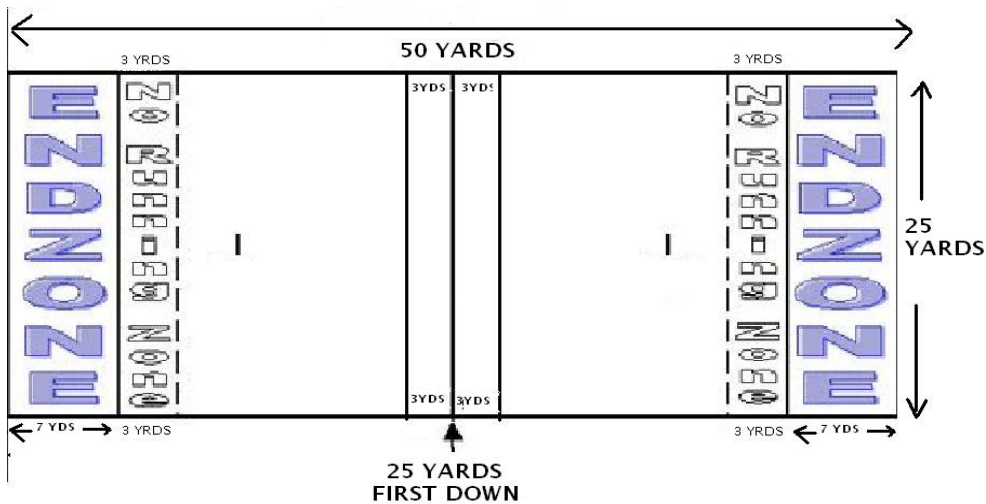
Ten Yard Penalties

- Roughing the passer
- Taunting
- Unsportsmanlike conduct. -After scoring and touchdown is good, offense receives a 10 yard penalty from the yard line of PAT attempt after touchdown(one warning to the player and team before ejection)

Unsportsmanlike Conduct

1. If the **COMMISSIONER/PAUL** or referees witness any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. The decision is made at the referee's discretion..No appeals! **FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.**
2. Offensive or confrontational language is illegal. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If offensive or confrontational language occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the **PLAYER/S OR COACHES** will be ejected from the game. **THIS MIGHT COST YOUR TEAM THE GAME. ONCE YOU ARE ASKED TO LEAVE THE FIELD, YOU MUST LEAVE IMMEDIATELY, IF YOU COME BACK THE GAME WILL BE HELD UP AND IF A SECOND OCCURANCE HAPPENS, THE GAME WILL BE CALLED.**

3. Players may not physically or verbally abuse any opponent or official.
4. Ball carriers MUST make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position.
5. Defenders are not allowed to run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.
6. **Fans must also adhere to good sportsmanship:**
 - a. **Yell to cheer on your players, not to harass officials or other teams.**
 - b. **Keep comments clean and profanity free.**
 - c. **Compliment ALL players, not just one child or team.**
7. **Fans are required to keep fields safe and kids friendly:**
 - a. **Keep younger kids and equipment such as coolers, chairs and tents away from the sidelines.**
 - b. **Stay in the end zone area, not between fields.**



FIELD DIMENSIONS FOR THE JUNIOR DIVISION FOR THE 2011-12 SEASON