

Spokane Youth Sports Association

Flag Football Rules

Updated August 4, 2021

(Grades 1 – 6)

EXCEPT AS CHANGED OR MODIFIED BELOW, WASHINGTON STATE HIGH SCHOOL RULES WILL APPLY.

I. Game, Player, Field and Equipment:

- A. The game will consist of four twelve-minute quarters, running except for one time out per team each half. If necessary, referees may stop the clock to allow a mass substitution or time to explain a penalty to the player. Games must be completed in one hour:

Playing Time	48 Minutes
Half Time	4 Minutes
Quarter Time (2 minutes)	4 Minutes
Times Out (1 minute)	<u>4 Minutes</u>
	60 Minutes Total

- B. A maximum of 14 players shall be placed on team rosters – eight players will constitute a team. Additional players may be added with SYSA's permission.
- C. The field shall be 80 yards long and 40 yards wide. The field shall be divided into 4 20-yard zones. When the ball is first downed in a zone, the team in possession has four downs to move to the next zone or score.
- D. Every player must wear a flag belt.
- E. Tennis shoes or rubber cleats are permitted.
- F. **EVERY PLAYER MUST PLAY AT LEAST HALF OF THE GAME!!!**
- G. A player may play a **maximum of 2 quarters** per game at the skilled positions. The skilled positions in this league are RB or QB positions. Therefore, if a player were to play quarterback for one quarter and running back for another quarter, the player cannot play quarterback or running back for the rest of the game. Wide receivers will not be a skilled position as long as they are lined up as wide receivers. One play at a skilled position constitutes one full quarter played.
- H. Each player shall play equally on offense as on defense in each game.
- I. Every player must wear a mouthpiece at all times – NO EXCEPTIONS!

II. Substitutions and Time Outs:

- A. Each team has one time out per half.
- B. You may substitute freely. However, mass substitution should only be done at the end of each quarter or during a time out.

III. Kickoff and Scoring:

- A. There will be no extra point after touchdowns.
- B. There will be no kick offs. Ball will be placed on the thirty yard line.

IV. Guidelines:

- A. Once a team roster has been set, a new player may not be added without approval of the Football Coordinator.
- B. During games, all players will wear SYSA issued flags.

V. Special Rules and Definitions:

- A. The ball is dead from the point at which the ball carrier's flag becomes loose and is taken by the defense.
- B. **All jerseys must be tucked in.** Referees will monitor to make sure jerseys are always tucked in.
- C. If a flag falls off during the play unintentionally (referee's discretion), then the play will continue by one-hand touch. There will be a 10-yard penalty for deliberately pulling a flag if the player you pull it from does not have the ball. (Unsportsmanlike conduct).
- D. Hurdling, diving, and jumping are not allowed. The ball will be dead from the initial point of the hurdle, dive, or jump. The offensive ball carrier may not interfere with the defensive player's attempt to grab the flag (fanning).
- E. Spinning is allowed
- F. Blocking must be performed in accordance with Washington State High School rules. The head or face may not be used as the primary point of contact. Blocking downfield before a pass has been completed will be offensive pass interference – 10 yard penalty and a loss of down. If an offensive player intentionally makes contact with a defensive player downfield before the pass and impedes the defensive player's progress, then pass interference will be called (pick play).
- G. Stiff arms by the ball carrier are illegal– 10 yard penalty.
- H. The ball carrier may not run through a defensive player, (he may not charge) and he must attempt to evade the defensive player. The defense must "play the flag rather than the man." The defense can't run the carrier over to get the flag. A 15-yard penalty will be given for lowering the head and hitting the opposition or tackling the opposition.
- I. All fumbles are dead when the ball hits the ground, however the receiver on a punt return may pick up the ball at the referee's discretion. Strips are considered a fumble and will be ruled dead.

- J. Punts – no attempt will be made to block a punt. Neither the offense nor the defense may release until the ball is punted. Before a punt, the offensive team captain must inform the referee if there is to be a punt. Poor snaps on punts will not result in the ball being dead. Instead, the punter may gather the ball and kick it away. No quick kicks!
- K. Tie games are tie games! No overtime period will be played. (Score is not kept in regular season)
- L. Down field blocking on punts or plays from the line of scrimmage must be above the waist and the offensive blocker in this situation may not leave his feet.
- M. Reverses, draws, screen passes, counters and other such offensive plays are allowed.

VI. Formations:

- A. The offense will consist of a 5 – man line plus a quarterback and two running backs/receivers. There may not be any men in motion. The linemen may not be split more than one yard from each other. Shifts are allowed but all offense must be set before ball is snapped.
- B. Unbalanced formations are allowed. In this case, offense must give defense time to line head up over linemen.
- C. The defense must have 4 down linemen rushing and must line up head on with the offense. The defense may employ the defensive halfbacks or safety in any manner. The defensive backs must be a minimum of three yards behind the down linemen. If the defensive backs are blitzing, they must start 7 yards behind the line of scrimmage.
- D. The interior offensive linemen may not go past the line of scrimmage on passes until after the pass is completed.
- E. All players who Blitz 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.
- F. Once the ball is handed off, 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 tackling is allowed. Play action fakes negates the 7 yard blitzing rule.
- G. All players are eligible to receive a pass except the three interior linemen.
- H. All offensive linemen shall be in a 3-point stance.
All defensive linemen shall be in a 3 or 4-point stance.
No defensive lineman can line up opposite the center.

VII. Penalties:

Offensive: Off Sides – 5 yards
Illegal procedure – 5 yards
Clipping – 15 yards (hitting someone in the back of legs)
Holding – 10 yards
Fanning & Spinning – down where occurred
Offensive Pass Interference – 15 yards and loss of down

Defense: Off Sides – 5 yards
Roughing the passer – 15 yards
Holding – 10 yards
Pass interference – 1st down at point of infraction
Tackling – 15 yards

Fighting – 15 – automatic expulsion from game
Off –setting penalties – down played over

VIII. Concussion Protocol:

- A. If a player is suspected of a concussion, the player will sit out for the remainder of the game. This is NOT a judgement call. The coach, referee, or parent must remove the child from play with any suspicion of a concussion.
- B. If a child sustains a concussion, SYSA must receive a doctor's note clearing the child before the child can return to play.

IX. Zero Tolerance Policy

- A. Coaches are Role Models
- B. Any display of unsportsmanlike conduct from a coach toward an official, a coach, or a player will result in disqualification from current game and suspension from next game.