



Outdoor Flag Football Rules

(Grades 1 – 6)

EXCEPT AS CHANGED OR MODIFIED BELOW, WASHINGTON STATE HIGH SCHOOL & NFL FLAG RULES WILL APPLY. THIS WILL BE A HYBRID STYLE OF BOTH TRADITIONAL AND PASSING.

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 (4-12 minute quarters) 48 Minutes

Half Time 4 Minutes

In-Between Quarter Time (2 minutes Q1-2 and Q3-4) 4 Minutes

Times Out (1 minute) 4 Minutes

60 Minutes Total

B. A maximum of 14 players shall be placed on team rosters – 7 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. Downs will be 20 yards long.

D. Every player must wear a flag belt.

E. Tennis shoes or rubber cleats are permitted. Soft helmets are recommended but not required.

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 if 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 always wear a mouthpiece – NO EXCEPTIONS!

J. Scores will be kept for standings for better spots in the candy bowl. If there ends up being a forfeit, the score will be kept as TBD.

II. Substitutions and Time Outs:

A. Each team has one timeout 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 PAT: 1 point (5 yd: pass only) or 2 points (10 yd: run or pass).

B. Kickoff/Start of game will begin with rock, paper, scissors to determine who has first possession. This will switch at half time. The starting possession team will start at their own 30 yard line.

C. If a team gets a safety, they will be given 2 points. After points have been rewarded, there will be no punt and the team will start on their own 20 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. Only down field blocking is allowed. Ex: When a ball carrier is running down the field, offensive players may get in the way of defenders with extended arms (no pushing). Blockers may not grab the defenders arms while blocking. If contact occurs, there will be a 15 yard penalty (Illegal blocking).

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 will be played.

L. Reverses, draws, counters and other such offensive plays are allowed.

M. Pitches and lateral passing are allowed, but they must occur behind the line of scrimmage. If they go past, there will be a 5 yard penalty (Illegal Pitching).

N. The quarterback will have a 7 second pass clock. If the ball is not thrown within the 7 seconds, it will result in the loss of a down. Teams can only rush the QB in a blitz. The defense must follow the blitzing rule (Starting 7 yards behind the line of scrimmage).

O. For grades 1st-2nd there will be a 40 second time clock in between plays. 3rd-4th will have a 30 second time clock. 5th-6th graders will have a 20 second time clock. Going past the time clocks allotted time will result in a 5 yard penalty.

P. Interceptions can be run down for a touchdown (6pt) and the team will have the opportunity to get a PAT. If they intercept the ball and don't run, they will gain possession from where their flag gets pulled/if they fall down.

Q. There will be only 1 rush per 4 downs. If you get a first down, this restarts.

(QB's may only rush if they are blitzed but will not count against the 1 rush)

VI. Formations:

- A.** The offense will consist of 7 players – quarterback, running back, center, 4 receivers. You have to have at least 1 man on the line, up to 5. There may not be any men in motion. Shifts are allowed but all offense must be set before the ball is snapped.
(5/6 grade may have players in motion. No forward moving prior to the snap)
- B.** There must be a 3 yard buffer between the offense and defense at the start of each play. The only exception is blitz (see D, F and G).
- C.** Unbalanced formations are allowed. In this case, offense must give defense time to line head up.
- D.** The defense may have 4 defensive players on the line of scrimmage 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 defense is blitzing, all blitzing players must start 7 yards behind the line of scrimmage.
- E.** All players who Blitz the passer must be a minimum of 7 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 7 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, including the center.

VII. Penalties:

- Offensive:**
 - Offside – 5 yards
 - Illegal use of time clock – 5 yards
 - Clipping – 15 yards (hitting someone in the back of legs)
 - Holding – 10 yards
 - Fanning & Spinning – down where it occurred
 - Offensive Pass Interference – 15 yards and loss of down
 - Stiff arm – 10 yards
 - Illegal Blocking – 10 yards and replay of down
 - Illegal Pitching – 5 yards
- Defense:**
 - Offside – 5 yards
 - Roughing the passer – 15 yards
 - Holding – 10 yards
 - Pass interference – 1
 - 1st down at point of infraction
 - Tackling – 15 yards
 - Illegal Blocking – 10 yards and replay of down

Both:

Fighting – 15 yards & automatic expulsion from game
Offsetting penalties – downplayed 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 judgment 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

i. Any display of unsportsmanlike conduct from a coach toward an official, a coach, or a player will result in disqualification from the current game and suspension from the next game.

B. Spectators

i. Any and all spectators will have to follow the same code of conduct as coaches. Coaches are to be responsible for spectators actions. Spectators may be asked to leave.