



Outdoor 7 on 7 Flag Football Rules

(Grades 1 – 8)

I. Game, Player, Field, and Equipment

- a. The game will consist of two 20-minute halves, continuously 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 in the event of an injury. Games must be completed in one hour:

Playing Time (2–20-minute halves) 40 Minutes

Half Time 5 Minutes

Time Outs (1 minute) 4 Minutes

50 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. Once rosters have been released, a new player may not be added without approval from the Football Coordinator.
- d. Grades 5-8 Field Size – 80 yards long and 40 yards wide (plus a 10 yard end zone on each end side of the field). The field shall be divided into 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.
- e. Grades 1-4 Field Size – 50 yards long and 30 yards wide (plus a 10 yard end zone on each end side of the field). The field shall be divided into 10-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 10 yards long.
- f. The QB Tee must be used by all teams to snap the ball at the beginning of each play.
- g. Tennis shoes or rubber cleats are permitted.
- h. Soft helmets are recommended but not required.

- i. **EVERY PLAYER MUST PLAY AT LEAST HALF OF THE GAME!**
- j. Each player shall play equally on offense as on defense in each game.
- k. Every player must always wear a mouthpiece – NO EXCEPTIONS!
- l. During games, all players will wear SYSA issued flags.
- m. Games will be 7 on 7 format – all players are eligible to receive a pass.
- n. Grades 1-2 will use Pee Wee sized footballs and Grades 3-6 will use Junior sized footballs.
- o. Only one coach from each team may be on the field at one time.

II. Starting the game

- a. 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 for Grades 5-8 and their own 20 yard line for Grades 1-4.

III. Substitutions and Time Outs

- a. Each team has (1) one minute time out per game.
- b. You may substitute freely. However, mass substitutions should only be done at time out or on change of possession.

IV. Scoring

- a. Touchdowns are worth 6 points.

Extra points after a Touchdown: Teams will be able to choose to go for 1 point running a play (pass only; no run including QB scramble) from the 5 yard line or to go for 2 points by running a play (pass or run) from the 10 yard line.

- a. An interception on an extra point attempt is not returnable.
- b. Safety's are worth 2 points. The scoring team will then start with the ball on their 20 yard line.
- c. After a Touchdown, the non-scoring team will start with the ball on their 20 yard line.

- d. If a team does not score and runs out of downs, the other team will then start on their 20 yard line to begin possession.

V. **Special Rules and Definitions**

- a. The offense is only allowed one running play per set of downs. The ball must cross the line of scrimmage in the run play to count towards your one run per series.
- b. If the quarterback is rushed and scrambles, this will not count towards the one run play.
- c. The ball is dead from the point at which the ball carrier's flag is pulled. If the ball is caught by a player without a flag belt it is down at the point of reception.
- d. Flags must be worn on the outside of the jersey.
- e. Hurdling, Diving, and jumping over an opponent are not allowed. The ball will be dead from the initial point of the hurdle, jump or dive.
- f. One foot in bounds by a receiver constitutes a catch.
- g. Spinning is allowed.
- h. **There will be no blocking allowed.** This includes down field blocking. This follows the gold standard of flag football presented by the NFL.
- i. Stiff arms by the ball carrier are illegal– 10 yard penalty.
- j. Defensive rushers must play the flag of the Quarterback, not the ball.
- k. 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.
- l. All fumbles are dead when the ball hits the ground. Strips are considered a fumble and will be ruled dead.
- m. Interceptions are live and can be returned for a touchdown (except on extra points)
- n. Tie games are tie games! No overtime will be played.

- o. Reverses, draws, counters, screen passes, and other such offensive plays are allowed. These would count as your one run play.
- p. The quarterback will have a 7 second pass clock. If the ball is not thrown or handed off within the 7 seconds, it will result in the loss of a down. As soon as the ball leaves the quarterback's hands, the pass clock has been satisfied.
- q. 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-8th graders will have a 20 second time clock. Going past the time clocks allotted time will result in a 5 yard penalty.
- r. The offensive ball carrier may not intentionally interfere with the defensive player's attempt to grab the flag (flag guarding). This is a 10 yard penalty.
 - i. The ball carriers **natural** running motion does not constitute flag guarding.

VI. **Formations**

- a. The offense will consist of six skill players and a Quarterback. Coaches have discretion on formation. (SYSA uses a QB Tee in place of a Center)
- b. The Defense can set up in any Defense formation but can only rush 3 players during a play.
- c. Players that are rushing the Quarterback, must start 5 yards behind the line of scrimmage.
- d. The quarterback must snap the ball from the QB Tee to commence play.
- e. All players are eligible to receive a pass.

VII. **Penalties**

Offensive	<p><i>Offside – 5 yards</i> <i>Illegal use of time clock – 5 yards</i> <i>Chipping (hitting the backs of legs) – 15 yards</i> <i>Holding – 10 yards</i> <i>Flag Guarding – down where it occurred</i> <i>Offensive Pass Interference – 15 yards and loss of down</i> <i>Stiff arm – 10 yards</i> <i>Blocking – 10 yards and replay of down</i> <i>Illegal Pitching – 5 yards</i></p>
Defensive	<p><i>Offside – 5 yards</i> <i>Roughing the passer – 15 yards</i> <i>Holding – 10 yards</i> <i>Pass interference – 1st down at point of infraction</i> <i>Tackling – 15 yards</i> <i>Blocking – 10 yards and replay of down</i></p>
Both	<p><i>Fighting – 15 yards & automatic expulsion from game</i> <i>Offsetting penalties – Down is replayed</i></p>

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. 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. 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.