



UREC

University Recreation
Intramural Sports

4v4 Flag Football

Flag Football is a contact sport and injuries are a possibility. The department of University Recreation, Intramural Sports assumes no responsibility for injuries; however basic, first aid will be available.

Regulations published in the Intramural Sports Handbook will be the governing policies for all intramural sports. Participants are responsible for possessing a thorough understanding of these regulations and their implications.

Flag Football will be conducted under the rules of the National Intramural and Recreational Sports Association published rule book. A review of these rules, along with the Intramural Sports modifications are as follows:

All Rule and Policy and Procedure updates/changes are highlighted in yellow.

ELIGIBILITY AND GUIDELINES

All participants must meet the eligibility guidelines as outlined in the Intramural Sports Participants Handbook.

General Information

- (i) 1. The Players
 - a. The game shall be played between two [2] teams of four [4] players each. Three [3] players are required to begin a game.
 - o **Co-Rec Only:** The game shall be played between two [2] teams of four [4] players each, two [2] male and two [2] female. A team may play with three [3] players but may not have more than two [2] males or two [2] females on the field at one time.
 - b. If, due to injuries, a team drops below the minimum number of players, three [3], the game may continue at the Referee's discretion.
 - c. **All students, faculty or staff can participate provided they meet the eligibility requirements outlined in the Intramural Sports Handbook.** Players may only play for one Men's or Women's team.
 - d. **Roster limit will be six [10] players.**

TIMING

1. The game will be TWO (2) 12 minutes halves. The clock will be running until the last (1) minute of the **2nd half.**
2. Each team will get one (1) time out per game.

UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

1. All teams are required to furnish their own jerseys.
 - a. All jerseys must be of the same color.
 - b. All jerseys must have numbers on the back.
 - i. Numbers 0-5 are preferred.
 - ii. No three digit numbers.
 - iii. Numbers may NOT be taped
 1. Numbers that are painted, sharpie, marker etc. are acceptable
2. If a participant is bleeding or has blood on their jersey they will be removed from the game until the bleeding is under control. Prior to any participants re-entering a game the bleeding must be stopped, cleaned and any cuts or lacerations must be covered. Participants will not be allowed to participate in any activity until the above conditions are met.
3. **Jewelry:** Jewelry or hard hair control devices will not be allowed. This includes but is not limited to necklaces, earrings, newly pierced earrings, facial piercing, rings, bracelets & watches. Individuals will not be allowed to tape over any jewelry item. If you cannot remove the item you cannot play.
 - a. The only type of permissible jewelry are medical alert bracelets. These bracelets must be taped down to the participant's wrist, with the important medical information showing.
4. **Shoes:** Only non-marking shoes will be allowed. Athletic style shoes are preferred. Cleats are permitted for Intramural Sports Flag Football. NO metal cleats are permitted.
5. **Supports, Braces, & Pads:** No casts/splints will be allowed under any circumstances. No pads or braces will be allowed above the waist. Players who wear a knee brace with exposed metal or metal hinges are required to cover it. Kneepads of a soft pliable nature will be allowed below the waist. Any player wearing illegal or dangerous equipment shall not be permitted to play. All equipment shall be subject to the approval of the Intramural Sports Staff and their decisions shall be final.
6. **Headwear:** Players may wear a one-piece elastic headband made of a soft pliable material. They may also wear knit stocking caps in cold weather. Rubber or elastic cloth bands may be used to control hair. No other headwear will be allowed. No baseball caps, bandannas.
7. **Pants/Shorts:** NO pockets are permitted in shorts or pants. Shorts or pants must also not match the color of the team's flag belts.
 - a. NO zip up pockets, taped/stapled pockets, or exposed openings.
8. **Flag Belt:** Each player must wear a 1 piece quick release belt, which shall be provided by UREC Intramural Sports.

SCORING and BEGINNING THE GAME

All games shall begin with a coin toss.

- a. **Coin Toss-** The Referee shall toss a coin and the winning captain has these options:
 - i. To defer his/her option until the second half.
 - ii. To receive the ball first or play defense first.
 - iii. To defend a specific goal.
- b. At the start of the second half, the loser of the first half coin toss shall have his/her option to be on offense or defense, or which goal to defend, unless the first half winner deferred his/her selection.

2. 5-Minute Rule and Forfeits

- a. If one team has below the minimum number of players at game time, the 5-Minute Rule will come into effect.
 - i. The team with less than the minimum will have 5 minutes to accrue the minimum number of players to begin the game
 - ii. In this 5 minutes, the other team will accrue six (6) points for each minute that passes.
 - iii. If the 5 minutes expires and the other team does not have the minimum number of players, the game will be forfeited and the team charged the forfeit fine.
 - iv. If the team gains the minimum number of players within the 5 minutes, the game will begin. The score will stand for the first set and the clock will begin at its current time.
 - v. If NO participants appear from either team, the game will be a double forfeit
 - vi. If both teams have below the minimum number of players at game time, the 5-Minute Rule will go into effect for both teams.

The Game

1. Each drive will start on the 40 yard line (mid field), going towards the end zone.
2. The field consists of two lines to gain: 20 yard line and the goal line.
3. The offensive team has **three (3)** downs to get to the next line to gain.
4. Dead ball- the ball is considered dead between when and play ends and when the ball is next legally snapped.
 - a. The offense has twenty-five (25) seconds to snap the ball after the officials ready for play whistle.
5. Live ball- the ball is considered live between when the ball is legally snapped and one of the following events that can end a play:
 - a. Incomplete Pass
 - b. Ball holder is deflagged
 - i. If a player's flags fall off without being pulled, one hand tag the player.
 - c. Ball holder is out of bounds
 - d. Scoring play
 - e. Fumble (dead when it hits the ground)
 - f. Official stops play
 - g. The Offensive Pass Clock has ran out (*see Offensive Play for more details*).
 - h. The defense intercepts the ball.
6. All penalties are the same as standard 7v7 Flag Football rules.
 - i. All penalties that were originally 10 yards are now 5 yards.
 - ii. All penalties that were originally 5 yards are now 3 yards.
7. **Out-of-Bounds:** A ball in player possession is out-of-bounds when the runner or the ball touches the ground or anything else which is on or outside a boundary line, except a player or game official. If the inbounds runner is touched by a player or an official on the sidelines out-of-bounds, the ball is still in play. A loose ball is out-of-bounds when it touches the ground, a player, or anything else, which is on or outside a boundary line. A player who is catching a forward pass is considered out-of-bounds when any part of his/her person contacts that area declared out-of-bounds. One foot inbounds is needed for a legal reception.

Offensive Play

1. **Number of Downs:** The team in possession of the ball shall have three (3) consecutive downs to advance to the next zone line-to-gain. A new series of downs shall be awarded when a team moves the ball into the next zone.
2. If the offense fails to reach the next line to gain in the 3 downs given, the ball will be turned over to the other team. They will start their new drive on the 40 yard line.
3. After each snap, the offensive team has **five (5) seconds to pass the ball**. This count will be kept by the official on the line of scrimmage.
 - a. The Offensive Pass Clock (OPC) starts when there is a legal snap and will end when there is a legal forward pass OR when it runs out.
 - b. If the OPC runs out without the offense legally passing the ball, the play will be considered dead and the play will be treated as if it was an incomplete pass.
4. **NO** offense play may cross the line of scrimmage with the ball.
 - a. All offense plays must be forward passes that cross the line of scrimmage.
 - b. If an offensive player runs through the line of scrimmage with the ball, it will be an Illegal Advancement penalty (3 yards, replay the down).

Defensive Play

1. **NO** defensive play is allowed to rush the quarterback. If a defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage, it will be an Illegal Advancement penalty (3 yards, replay the down).
2. If a defensive player intercepts the ball, the play is dead and the intercepting team will then start their new drive on the 40 yard line.
 - a. There are **NO** interceptions returned.

SNAPPING and CATCHING the BALL

1. **The Snap:** The snapper shall pass the ball back from its position on the ground with a quick and continuous motion of the hands. The ball does not have to be snapped between the legs.
 - a. Following the ready for play signal, no defensive player may break the plane of the line of scrimmage at any time until the ball is snapped.
 - b. No offensive player shall make a false start, or any action that simulates the start of play. This penalty may be enforced regardless if the ball is snapped.
 - c. The snapper must have both feet behind the scrimmage line. They may also not simulate the start of the snap.
 - d. The player receiving the snap must be at least 2 yards behind the scrimmage line at the time of the snap.
2. **Legal Positions:** All players are subject to motion, position, and illegal procedure rules.
 - a. Anytime at or after the ball is ready for play, each Team A player must momentarily be within 10yards of the ball before the snap.
 - b. During the snap, the offense must have at least one (1) player on their scrimmage line. Two, three, and four point stances are legal.

- c. if intentionally grounded to save loss of yardage;
 - 1. only called when it is an effort to not lose yardage.
 - d. if a passer catches his/her untouched forward pass;
 - e. if there is more than one [1] forward pass per down.
3. **Open-Closed Plays (Co-Rec Only).** During the offensive team's possession, there may not be two [2] consecutive legal forward pass completions, from a male passer to a male receiver. A male may never run the ball past the line of scrimmage.
- a. During an "open" play, any combination of passers or receivers, or runners may advance the ball beyond the line of scrimmage.
 - b. After a male-to-male completion, the play becomes "closed". This rule also applies to the try for point.
 - c. During a "closed" play, the play must involve a female passer or a female receiver.
 - d. The spot where the ball becomes dead, by rule, must be beyond the scrimmage line for the play to become "open."
 - e. There are no other restrictions concerning a male passer completing legal forward passes to a female receiver, or female to female, or female to male.

Pass Penalty: Illegal Forward Pass, 3 yards from the spot where the second consecutive male-to-male completed legal forward pass is released, and a loss of down. Any foul, whether accepted or declined, shall have no effect on whether the next legal forward pass completion is "open" or "closed"

Run Penalty: A male may not advance the ball by running across the line of scrimmage. **Penalty: Illegal Procedure, 3 yards from the previous spot, replay the down. . Any foul, whether accepted or declined, shall have no effect on whether the next play is "open" or "closed".**

7. **Backward Pass and Fumble**

- a. A runner may pass the ball backward at any time.
 - b. A backward pass or fumble may be caught or intercepted in flight inbounds by any player, which will result in a turnover.
 - c. A backward pass or fumble which goes out of bounds between the goal lines belongs to the team last in possession at the out of bounds spot.
 - d. A backward pass or fumble which touches the ground outside of the end zones is down at the spot where it touches the ground and belongs to the team last in possession unless lost on downs.
 - e. A backward pass or fumble by the offense that first hits the ground in the opponent's end zone is a touchback.
8. **Pass Interference** – Intramural Sports flag football is non-contact sport, however, incidental contact will occur.
- a. **Offensive Pass Interference, 5 yards from the previous spot.**
Note: Offensive screen blocking beyond the line of scrimmage **DURING** a pass attempt is considered Offensive Pass Interference.
 - b. **Defensive Pass Interference, 5 yards from the previous spot.**
Note: If contact is made on a receiver behind the line of scrimmage during a pass attempt, the penalty is **Illegal Contact**, not Defensive Pass Interference.

- a. In a. and b. above, pass interference is defined as bumping, pushing, or unnecessary contact with an opponent OR restricting a player from access to a pass while on offense or defense.
 - b. Players may **NOT** "go through opponents" to get to a ball that is in flight. This could result in automatic ejection from the game.
9. **General Information**
- a. A pass is any exchange of the ball that involves airtime. This can be a forward or backward, overhand pass, underhand pitch, or any other toss or flip of the ball.
 - b. The pass begins when the ball is released from the passer's hand. The ball is dead if the passer is deflagged or legally touched before the release.
 - c. The initial direction of a pass determines whether a pass is forward or backward.
 - d. If a forward or backward pass is caught simultaneously by opposing players, the ball becomes dead, is considered a completed pass, and belongs to the offensive team.

SCORING and TOUCHBACKS

1. **Touchdown** - (Co-Rec) if a female scores a touchdown; throwing, receiving a pass or running across the goal line, the point value is nine (9). All other touchdowns are six (6) points.
2. **Extra Points** - Ball in play from the 3 yard line = 1 point
Ball in play from the 10 yard line = 2 points, Ball in play from the 20 yard line = 3 points
Note: The try ends when Team B secures possession. Team B cannot score during the Try.
3. **Safety** - When a safety is scored (two [2] points) the ball belongs to the scoring team at their own 14-yard line.
4. **General Information** - After any score, the ball shall be placed in play at the opposing team's 14-yard line, unless moved by penalty
 - a. To be ruled a touchdown; the ball must be on or over the goal line.
 - b. The player scoring the touchdown must raise his/her arms so the nearest official can deflag the player. If the official determines the flag belt has been secured illegally, the touchdown will be disallowed.
 - c. Once the captain makes the choice for one, two, or three points after a touchdown, he/she may change the decision only after an offensive or defensive charged team time-out.
 - d. A team, which intercepts a pass in its own end zone, may advance the ball out of the end zone. It is a touchback if the interceptor is deflagged before leaving his/her end zone.

PLAYER CONDUCT

1. **Personal Fouls:** No player, substitute, or coach shall commit a personal foul. Personal fouls may include but are not limited to:
 - a. Using fist, foot, knee, or leg to contact an opponent.
 - b. Tackling the ball carrier (automatic ejection).
 - c. Steal, attempt to steal or strip, or bat the ball from a player in possession.

- d. Touching a player or ball carrier with undo force.
 - e. Roughing the passer (automatic first down) - applies only to the player throwing a legal forward pass behind the offensive line of scrimmage. If a defender contacts the passer in any fashion, whether or not he/she touches the pass, it is roughing the passer.
2. **The runner may not:**
- a. Be aided by a teammate (grabbed, pushed, or pulled).
 - b. Stiff-arm an opponent.
 - c. Guard their flags by blocking with arms, hands, or the ball, and thereby denying an opponent the opportunity to pull or remove the flag belt.
3. **Unfair Acts:** No player, substitute, coach or others subject to the rules shall use disconcerting words or phrases or commit any act not in accordance with the spirit for the purpose of confusing the opponent.
Penalty: Personal Foul, Unfair Act, 5 yards.

FLAG REMOVAL

1. Deflagging (removal of the flag by a player) or legal touching is allowed only under special circumstances similar to tackling in football in that players must have possession of the ball before they can be deflagged or touched legally.
2. When a runner loses his/her flag belt either accidentally, inadvertently (not removed by grabbing or pulling), or on purpose, play continues. The deflagging reverts to a one hand tag of the runner between the shoulders and the knees.
3. In circumstances where the flag belt is removed illegally, play should continue with the option of the penalty or the result of the play.
4. Pulling or removing a flag belt from an offensive player without the ball or intentionally touching an offensive player without the ball is a foul.
5. Tampering with the flag belt in any way to gain an advantage including tying, using foreign materials, or other such acts is a foul.

SUMMARY of PENALTIES

1. **Loss of 3 yards**
 - a. Encroachment (Dead Ball)
 - b. False start (Dead Ball)
 - c. Illegal snap (Dead Ball)
 - d. Delay of game (Dead Ball)
 - e. Infraction of free kick formation (Dead Ball)
 - f. Encroachment of free kick lines (Dead Ball)
 - g. Illegal motion
 - h. Illegal shift
 - i. Intentional grounding (Loss of down)
 - j. Illegal substitution
 - k. Free kick out of bounds
 - l. Required equipment worn illegally
 - m. Player receiving snap within 2 yards of scrimmage line
 - n. Helping the runner
 - o. Illegal formation
 - p. Illegal forward pass (Loss of down for offense)
 - q. Illegal advancement (Co-Rec)

2. Loss of 10 yards

- a. Kick catch interference
- b. Two or more consecutive encroachments during same down interval
- c. Forward pass interference
- d. Illegally secured flag belt on touchdown, the score is no good (Loss of down) and disqualification
- e. Unsportsmanlike player, coach, or fan conduct
- f. Spiking, throwing, kicking, or not returning the ball to the official
- g. Steal, strike, or attempt to strip the ball
- h. Trip, hurdle, tackle, clip, stiff arm, or any unnecessary contact of any nature
- i. Roughing the passer (Automatic first down)
- j. Illegal offensive screen blocking
- k. Flag guarding by offense, illegal removal by defense
- l. Obstruction of runner
- m. Illegal participation
- n. Defensive illegal use of hands
- o. Illegal Equipment

3. **Note: Any flagrant activities associated with 3 or 5-yard penalties result in immediate disqualification**