



Metro Youth Flag Football Association

League Rules

Basics

Referees will introduce themselves at this time. A coin toss determines first possession. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has three plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has three plays to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the opposing team takes over on its 5-yard line. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball goes to the opposing team and they start on their 5-yard line. All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line. Interceptions may be returned. Teams change sides after the first 20 minutes. Loser of coin toss at the beginning of the game takes possession at the start of the 2nd half unless deferred. **Any rules not addressed in this dialogue will default to NFL rules.**

Playing Time

All players should have equal playing time. Ideally players should play offense and defense, so they can learn both aspects of the game. Coaches can rotate their players at their own discretion as long as the kids get equal playing time.

Scoring

We don't officially keep track of score in Pre-K, 1st/2nd, and 3rd/4th grade divisions. Here is a break down of how it is scored in the 5th/8th. Touchdown: 6 points Extra point: 1 point (played from 5 yard line, pass only) or 2 points (played from 12-yard line, run or pass) Safety: 2 points (and ball is given to team who scored safety)

Slaughter Rule

When a team is 21 points ahead of the opposing team, the team that is ahead can no longer rush on defense. It is up to the coach to make the necessary adjustments on offense and defense to assure that he is giving the other team a chance to score. We are here to have fun, not to make any children feel bad. The referee has the right to reprimand any coach that is not abiding by this rule.

Running

The quarterback cannot run with the ball past the line of scrimmage. Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Pitches will be allowed for all leagues. "Pitches are only allowed behind the line of scrimmage, in other words laterals are not allowed downfield or past the line of scrimmage." (No hook and ladders) Overhand passes behind the line of scrimmage are allowed as long as the receiver is behind the QB. The receiver may then throw a forward pass. Offense may use multiple handoffs behind the line of scrimmage." No-running zones" are located five yards from each end zone and five yards from the first down marker. This is to avoid power-running in a short yardage situation. The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage. Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush. Spinning is allowed. Players should not leave their feet to avoid a defensive player (offense no diving/defense no diving from behind). Down field screening and blocking not allowed. The ball is spotted where the ball is at the point of the flag pull. (The "no-running zone" does not apply to the Pre/K league.)

Receiving

All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage). As in the NFL, only one player is allowed in motion at a time. A receiver moving forward must be set when the ball is snapped. Any player moving backwards or laterally may be in motion as the ball is snapped. A player in motion must not be moving toward the line of scrimmage. A player must have both feet inbounds when making a reception.

Passing

Shovel passes are allowed. Quarterbacks have a seven-second "pass clock." However if they are being rushed the seven second rule does not apply. If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, play is dead, loss of down. Once the ball is handed off, the seven-second rule is no longer in effect. Interceptions may be returned by defense.

Dead Balls

The ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to one side, to start play. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball. Play is ruled "dead" when: ball carrier's flag is pulled, ball carrier steps out of bounds, touchdown or safety is scored, ball carrier's knee hits the ground, or ball carrier's flag falls out. When lining up in shot gun formation if the ball is snapped over the quarterback's head and lands in the end zone this is a safety. There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground.

Rushing the Quarterback

All players who rush the quarterback must be seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage. 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. A special marker, or the referee, will designate seven yards from the line of scrimmage. Remember, no blocking or tackling is allowed. Blocking is not allowed at any time. The referee will determine whether other players down field are blocking or rather supporting their teammates. All referee decisions in this matter are final. **(Rushing the QB is not allowed in the Pre/K league.)**

Sportsmanship

If the on-site supervisor or referee witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any un-sportsman like act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game, no exceptions!! **FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.** Trash talking is illegal. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. (Trash talk is talk that may be offensive to officials, opposing players, teams or spectators.) If trash talking occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the offender (coach, spectator, or player) will be ejected from the game. An incident report will be filed and if this person is in violation again for the remainder of the season they will be banned from the field. The on-site supervisor has the right to ban anyone from the field at anytime.

Defensive Penalties

All penalties will be called by the referee.

Defense Offside's - five yards and repeat the down.

Interference: spot foul, and automatic 1st down.

Illegal contact: (holding, etc.) ten yards and automatic first down.

Illegal Flag Pull: (before receiver has ball) spot foul & repeat down

Illegal Rushing: (starting rush from inside seven-yard marker) five yards and automatic first down for 1st/2nd, 3/4th, 5th/8th.

Pre/K it is a warning the first

Time and a 2nd offense is 5yd penalty and automatic first down.

Offensive Penalties

Illegal Procedure: (more than one person moving, false start, etc.) five yards and repeat the down.

Illegal Forward Pass: (pass thrown beyond line of scrimmage) dead ball & loss of down

Offensive Pass Interference: (illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender) five yards and loss of down.

Flag Guarding: play is dead and loss of down.

Delay of Game: Clock stops, five yards and loss of down.

Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage. Only the team captain and coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players cannot question judgment calls. Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.

Attire

Cleats are allowed, except for metal spikes. All players must wear a protective mouthpiece; there are **no exceptions**.

*****The referee and or on site supervisor will have the final say in all decisions relating to rules and penalties. The on site supervisor has the right to stop a game and eject a player, coach, team, or parent at his/her discretion.**

Coaches on field during play:

There can be only one coach on the field after play has started. Prior to the play two can be out there to help get the little kids set but once play starts only one coach is allowed at a time. Please take turns being out there. **No Coaches allowed on field during play in 5th/8th.**

Field Dimensions

Fields are 70 Yards Long and 30 Yards Wide
End Zone is 10 Yards Long
No rushing Zone is 5 yards long

Clock Management:

2-(60 sec) time outs per half
30 seconds for Offense to set up play and snap ball
Clock stops in last 2 minutes of game. For first possession of the ball, first down, out of bounce and incomplete pass. Otherwise clock will remain running.