



APPLETON PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Rules for 7 v 7 Youth Flag Football

The following rules and regulations have been established to allow participants to compete in a safe and fair environment. Participants and coaches are to be familiar with these directives. These rules may be subject to change if during the season a team gains an unfair advantage over other teams due to a given rule in the league. All coaches and players will be notified of any rule changes made during the season.

A. Field

1. The field shall be a 60-yard football field (not including the end zone).
2. Width will be approximately 20 yards.

B. Equipment

1. The ball shall be:
 - pee-wee size for 1st and 2nd grade
 - junior size football for 3rd through 6th grade
2. No equipment, which in the opinion of the referee could endanger others, shall be used.
3. Helmets, baseball hats, or pads will not be allowed. (Stocking caps are allowed)
4. Participants will not be allowed to participate when wearing jewelry, watches or any other potentially dangerous items.
5. Cleats are allowed, however cleats with exposed metal are not allowed and must be removed.
6. Players should avoid wearing yellow & red shorts and pants, not to conflict with flags.

Note : A referee may remove a player at any time for dangerous equipment.

C. Players

1. The league is seven vs. seven-person flag football.
2. Players can play a maximum of one (1) half at the same position per game, offense or defense. For instance, player A plays quarterback for the 1st half. Player A may not play quarterback during the 2nd half.
3. Each registered player on a team's roster must play the equivalent of one half (20 minutes)
4. Teams must have a minimum of five (5) players to begin the game or a forfeit will be declared.
5. Four (4) offensive players must be on or within one yard of the line of scrimmage before a play is started.
6. A team has 6 downs in which to score after it assumes possession of the ball.
 - If a team fails to score in 6 downs its opponent shall take possession of the ball at the spot where the ball is declared dead ending on the 6th down.
 - A team may punt on sixth down.

D. Time

1. The game will consist of two, 20-minute halves. The clock will run at all times except for:
 - Time outs
 - 1 minute warning of both halves
2. Last one (10 minute of each half for incomplete passes, out of bounds, penalties, scores, and change of possessions.

3. Fumbles do not stop the clock during the last minute of each half.
4. There will be a four-minute break between halves.
5. In the event of a tie at the end of regulation, there will be a maximum of one overtime played. Overtime consists of each team having up to four (4) plays from their opponents ten (10) yard line. Extra points are attempted after scores. If the game remains tied, it will be recorded in the standings as a tie.
6. **Play clock will be set for 30 seconds, time starts when the ball is placed on the ground.**

E. Time-outs

1. Two (2)- 30 second time outs are allowed per half.
2. Substitutes must be made within thirty (30) seconds.
3. Time outs will not be granted in the final one (1) minute to team up by eighteen (18) or more points.

F. Scoring

1. Touchdown 6 points
2. Extra Point 1 point from (3) yard line
3. Extra Point 2 points from (10) yard line
4. Safety 2 points

Note: Teams must notify officials if attempting a 2-point play.

Extra points may be scored via the pass or run.

G. Starting the Game

1. The game will not start with a coin toss.
2. The team listed as the “home team” on the schedule will receive the kick to start the game.
3. The team listed as the “away team” will designate which goal his/her team will defend.

H. Kick Off

1. Kick offs will be from the:
 - 25-yard line for 1st and 2nd grade league
 - 20-yard line for 3rd and 4th grade league
 - 15-yard line for 5th and 6th grade league
2. All kick offs will be off a tee. Tees will be provided.
3. The kickoff will take place at the beginning of each half and after every score.
4. Players must possess the ball for game play to begin
i.e. a player from the opposing team cannot purposely try and touch the ball if kicked on the ground to take possession at the point of contact.
5. If the ball goes out of bounds, the ball may be kicked again, and the kicking team will be charged a five-yard penalty or may be taken where the ball went out of bounds.
 - Should the ball be kicked out of bounds two times, the receiving team will take possession at mid-field.
6. No on-side kicks.

I. Line of Scrimmage/Downs

1. Four offensive players must be on or within one yard of the line of scrimmage before a play is started.
2. A team has 6 downs in which to score after it assumes possession of the ball.
 - If a team fails to score in 6 downs its opponent shall take possession of the ball at the spot where the ball is declared dead ending on the 6th down.

3. The center cannot retain the snap, the ball must be exchanged to a player in the backfield.
4. The quarterback may pass or run the ball.
5. No Diving--Diving or lunging over the line of scrimmage or goal line is prohibited. Play is blown dead at the point of the dive.
6. **Fumbled snaps will not be blown dead.**
i.e a player (most likely the quarterback) can pick up the ball and continue the play.

J. Flags

1. Players should wear appropriately sized flags.
 - Red- small
 - Yellow- medium
 - Blue- large
 - Green- extra large (adult)
2. Flag belts must be clipped to itself around the players waist.
 - They may not be wrapped or tied.
3. It is the player's responsibility to be wearing a securely fastened belt.
4. All flags must be worn over the shirt and shirts must be tucked in.
5. All players must wear flags while on the field.
6. The spot on the field where the flag belt is pulled from the ball carrier is where the down ends, and the ball is next put in play.
7. If a player's flags are inadvertently lost, the player shall be ineligible to handle the ball. If a player without flags handles the ball, the down ends immediately.
8. g A player may not hold or guard their flags from a defensive player. No stiff-arming, swatting defender's hands away, or leaving your feet to avoid being deflagged.
 - Spin moves are allowed as long as the ball carrier does not touch the ground.
 - The penalty is that the ball is blown dead at point of infraction

K. Blocking

1. Players may use hands, but elbows must stay with-in the body and arms cannot fully extend into opposing player.
2. No blocking below the waist, crack blocks, blocks in the back, or low and rolling blocks.
 - Each blocking infraction is a 10 yd. penalty.
3. Players shall not leave their feet on a block.
4. Down field blocking is allowed, provided it is a legal block.

L. Passing

1. All players are eligible to receive a pass.
2. All forward passes must be thrown from behind the line of scrimmage.
3. There may be more than one forward pass, but forward passes must be thrown from behind the line of scrimmage.
4. If a pass is caught simultaneously by opposing players, the ball shall be blown dead and awarded to the offensive team.
5. A receiver needs only one foot inbounds for a legal catch.
6. The clock will not stop after an incomplete pass, except during the last one minute of both halves.

M. Fumble/Dead Ball

1. All fumbles, besides those at the snap, are dead when the ball hits the ground.

2. The ball goes back to the team that had possession of the ball at the point of the fumble, except after the 6th down.
3. A live ball becomes dead when:
 - an official blows the whistle and declares it dead
 - the ball goes out of bounds
 - any part of the ball carrier's, other than the hand or foot, touches the ground
 - a forward pass strikes the ground
 - a ball carrier's flag is removed
 - an inadvertent whistle occurs
4. If a ball carrier's knee is down, the play is over and blown dead.
5. A fumble in the last one minute does not stop the clock.

N. Defensive Restrictions

1. Defensive players may not use their hands as blockers. They must attempt to avoid blockers.
2. Defensive players may not impede the forward progress of the ball carrier without going for the flags.
3. Defense must line up five (5) yards off the ball, with an immediate rush allowed. Inside the opponents 5-yard line, the buffer will be removed.

O. Substitutions

1. Substitutions can be made at any time and the player may re-enter the game as often as he/she wishes when the ball is dead.
2. All substitutions must be made within 30 seconds.

P. Punting

1. The defense may not rush a declared punt. Any other play will be illegal once the team has declared they will punt.
2. Teams may quick (undeclared) punt, however, the defense may rush the punt in this situation.
3. The snap can be dropped and still kicked on a declared punt play. However, the defense still may not rush.
4. After a safety, teams must punt:
 - 1st through 4th grade will punt from its own 20-yard line
 - 5th-6th grade will punt from the 15- yard line.

Q. Penalties

1. **All penalties are from the line of scrimmage**
2. The offended team may take or decline a penalty. A declined penalty will result in the play standing.

5-Yard Penalties

1. Delay of game – clock must stop (Officials have discretion to add an unsportsmanlike penalty if they feel that the delay of game was intentional.)
2. Kick-off out of bounds
3. Too many players on the field
4. Too few players on the line of scrimmage
5. Offsides
6. False start
7. Too many timeouts requested

10-Yard Penalties

1. Tackling ball carrier
2. Impeding the runner
3. Defensive pass interference (replay down)
4. Offensive pass interference (+ loss of down)
5. Illegal use of hands or arms or flailing elbows
6. Holding
7. Illegal block (clipping, low blocks, crack blocks, etc.)
8. Roughing kicker or passer

15-Yard Penalties

1. Unnecessary roughness (+ loss of down)
2. Unsportsmanlike conduct (+ disqualification of coach and/or player involved)

R. Special Rules/Helpful Hints

1. Official high school football rules (not in conflict with above rules) will govern all other play, not NFL or college.
2. Emphasis is placed on sportsmanship, fair play, and team building. Please remind your team of the importance of fair play and proper sportsmanship.
3. ***Tiebreaker rule for end of season awards***
In the event of a tie within your division the following procedure will be used to determine the place of finish.
 - A. *Head-to-head competition*
 - B. *Points Allowed (lowest)*
 - C. *Point Differential (highest)*
4. End of Season Awards
 - Awards for the first and second place team determined by record and/ or above conditions will be given ribbons in the 3rd – 4th grade and 5th- 6th grade leagues.
 - Participation awards given in the 1st- 2nd grade league.

S. Benches

1. Teams and coaches should be on the opposite side of the field from spectators.
2. Teams may use same side or opposite sides of the field for bench area.
2. Be aware of standing in front of scoreboard during play.
3. Spectators will sit closest to the dirt of the infield and away from the sideline. If referee feels spectators are too close and may impede the game, they will be asked to move back.

T. After the game

1. Players should remove the flags before any post-game team meeting, line up, and shake hands with the opposing team.
2. Players should place flags in separate piles on the ground near the center of the field.
3. For the last scheduled game of the evening, have the players put the flags in the equipment boxes as directed by the staff.