



OUTH FLAG FOOTBALL—OFFICIAL RULES

1. GENERAL LEAGUE OVERVIEW (AGES 6-8)

Fields will be **60-70 yards long** and 30 yards wide.

Each team will consist of 10 players. Teams must have an even number of players at all times. 5 on 5 is the standard however games can be played 4 on 4 at the referee's discretion.

coaches are always on the field with the children. **Weeks 1 through 4, coaches will quarterback teams. Weeks 5 through 8, kids will QB.**

There is absolutely no blocking or tackling allowed. There is also no kick-offs, no fumbles & no punts

2. FLOW OF THE GAME

A coin toss determines first possession. The team winning the toss must choose between either POSSESSION OR DIRECTION. In the 2nd half, the team that started on defense in the 1st half will now start on offense in the 2nd half, and will go in the opposite direction of the 1st half

The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has three (3) downs to cross midfield and obtain a first down. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, the ball changes possession and the opposition starts its drive from their own 5-yard line. **After week 4, the defensive team can blitz the QB if positioned 7 yards back from the line of scrimmage before the snap.**

Once a team crosses midfield, it has three (3) more plays to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the opposition starts its drive from their own 5-yard line.

All possession changes, except following interceptions, start on the offense's own 5-yard line. Interceptions may be returned by the defense.

Teams will play two (2) 20-minute halves with a 5-minute halftime if needed. Teams will change direction and possession to start the second half

All games will have a running clock. There will be a 1 minute warning (time-out) toward the end of the second half, after which the clock will continue to run until the end of the game.

Each team will have two (2) 30-second timeouts per half.

Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced.

3. SCORING

Touchdown – 6 points

Extra Point

1 point (played from the 5-yard line, no running allowed)

2 points (played from the 12-yard line, running allowed.)





4. RUNNING

The quarterback cannot run with the ball beyond the line of scrimmage. Defensive players must play man-to-man defense (single coverage), and be no farther than 5 yards from their offensive counterparts. Defenders must point out their man before the play and CANNOT leave their man until the ball is either caught by a receiver or handed off.

Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Offense may use multiple handoffs, however no laterals or pitches of any kind are allowed.

“No Running Zones”, located 5-yards from each end zone and 5-yards on either side of midfield, are designed to avoid short-yardage, power running situations.

A team may run into a no-run zone, but not out of one (this prevents power rushing attempts to gain a 1st down or touchdown.)

The player taking the handoff can pass if he/she is still behind the L.O.S.

Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush. ***Defenders CANNOT cross over the L.O.S. until the ball has been handed off.***

Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player (no diving or jumping allowed.)

The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's forward foot is when the flag is pulled or falls out, not where the ball is.

5. RECEIVING

All players except the QB, are eligible to receive passes.

As in the NFL, only one player is allowed in motion at a time.

A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

6. PASSING

The quarterback has a seven-second “pass clock.” If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, the play is dead (treated as an incomplete pass.)

Once the ball is handed off, the seven-second rule is no longer in effect

All passes must be forward (No backward laterals or pitches), but may be received behind the line of scrimmage.

Shovel passes are allowed as long as they are forward.

Interceptions can be returned by the defense.



7. DEAD BALLS

The ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to one side, to start play.

Play is ruled “dead” when the ball carrier’s flag is pulled or falls out, ball carrier steps out of bounds, a touchdown or safety is scored, or the ball carrier’s knee hits the ground. The ball is spotted where the forward foot is when the flag is pulled.

There are no fumbles – the ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground.

8. RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK

After Week 4, all defensive players starting their rush from behind the 7 yard marker before the snap may rush the QB immediately. Any player in front of the 7 yard marker must wait for a direct hand-off or a forward pass before crossing the line of scrimmage. No rush before Week 4.

9. PENALTIES

DEFENSE –

Defensive penalties will be **5-yards/automatic 1st down from the line of scrimmage** unless otherwise noted:

- Off-sides
- Pass Interference (**15 yards/automatic 1st down**)
- Defensive Holding
- Illegal Interference/Contact (holding, blocking, bump & run guarding, simulation of snap)
- Illegal Defense (double covering a receiver, playing safety/zone defense, playing off more than 5 yards away from a defender) (**5 yards and repeat down**)
- Illegal Flag Pull (before receiver has the ball)
- Crossing the line of scrimmage before a handoff or pass (**5 yards and repeat down**)
- Substitution Fouls (too many players on the field) (**5 yards and repeat down**)

OFFENSE

- All offensive penalties will be **5-yards and a loss of down from the line of scrimmage** unless otherwise noted::
- Illegal Motion (more than one person moving, false start, center moving the ball before the snap, etc.)
- Illegal Pass (laterals, pitches.)
- Offensive Pass Interference (illegal pick, pushing off defender)
- Holding/Blocking (**5 yards from ball carrier’s forward progress/loss of down**) (shield blocking)
- Flag Guarding (using hands to “swat” defensive hands away) (**5 yards from point of foul and loss of down**)
- Jumping to avoid a flag pull or jumping to advance the ball. (**5 yards from point of foul/loss of down**)
- Delay Of Game (clock stops if inside one minute in half)
- Substitution fouls (too many players on the field) (**5 yards and repeat down**)
- If the penalized team is less than 5-yards from the end zone, the penalty will be half the distance to the goal.
- Referees will determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage
- All penalties will be called by the referee. Please respect their decision. Only team captain may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players cannot question judgment calls.
- Halves cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.





10. 18 POINT RULE

The “18 point rule” is designed to keep games close when one team starts to pull away in score. At any point in the game, if one team goes up by 3 scores (18 points) or more, the following 3 rules will go into effect:

- 1) The leading team **MUST PASS** on offense. No handoffs resulting in advancing the ball beyond the line of scrimmage or running plays will be allowed.
- 2) Interceptions will be counted as incomplete passes, and will be returned to the trailing team .
- 3) Leading teams must play Man-to-Man defense, be at least 5 yards from the line of scrimmage, and **CAN-NOT RUSH THE QB AT ANY TIME.**

If a losing team pulls to within 18 points at any time, game rules will revert back to the original form.

11. SPORTSMANSHIP / ROUGHING

If the referee witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the players will be ejected from the game. Foul Play will not be tolerated.

Trash talking is illegal. Officials have the right to determine language that may be considered offensive to officials, opposing players, teams, or spectators. If trash talking occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the player or players will be ejected from the game.

12. ATTIRE

Cleats are allowed, except for metal spikes. **All players must wear a mouthpiece – no exceptions!**

No pockets, jewelry, hats, or glasses (unless prescription.)

Official Sports Arena jerseys must be worn and tucked in during play at all times.

