

# RULES

## LEAGUE FORMAT

All teams will compete in the regular season and top teams advance to the playoffs. The number of playoff teams will be determined by the total number of teams in the league. If there is a tie in the standings, the head-to-head match up will determine seeding. If there is no clear head-to-head winner, points scored differential will determine seeding.

## THE GAME

Flag football is an 8 on 8 non-contact league. All players must have NIGHTLIFE SPORTS provided uniforms and will wear the provided flags around their waist.

Games consist of 4 10 minute quarters , with one 3 minute half-time. There will be a running clock maintained by the referee except for the last two minutes of the second half unless one team is ahead by 19 points or more, in which case time will continue to run with no stoppages aside from a trailing-team's timeout. Clock stops in the 2nd half under 2 minutes.

If the game is within 18 points during the final two minutes of the second half, the clock is stopped for an incomplete pass, if a player goes out of bounds before having their flag pulled, if either team scores (clock starts when the opposing team snaps the ball, after the PAT attempt), for a change of possession, if a penalty must be marked off, or if a team calls time out. The clock does not stop on first downs or for a completed pass in bounds. If a team is down by 19 points but scores after the two-minute mark in the second half, the clock then stops.

## START OF THE GAME

The referee will have the two captains flip a coin. The winning captain will have the first choice of which half they want the ball or direction. The losing captain can then choose from whatever option is left over. Teams change directions and possession at half time.

## UNIFORM RESTRICTIONS

**All players must wear their team's UNIFORM. PLAYERS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO PLAY UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES WITHOUT A FULL UNIFORM.**, Players can not wear jewelry of any kind, players will not be allowed in the game with jewelry. Players may not alter the SPORTSKIND provided flags. NIGHTLIFE SPORTS will provide all field equipment, including footballs and flags. Each team is entitled to use their own football.

## SUBSTITUTION RULES

In order for an official game with league referees there must be at least 6 players on the field. A minimum of 5 players from the team's roster must be present to field a team. Any teams short of 6 players may look to utilize our substitution rules but if the team is still without at least 6 players 10 minutes after the scheduled game time, the game will be an

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official forfeit and the forfeit policy will take effect. YOUR FEMALE PLAYER MUST PLAY IN THE FIRST HALF.

## TIME OUTS

Each team is allowed 3 (one-minute) time outs in the first half and 3 timeouts in the second half. If not used, the time outs in the first half does not carry over. About two minutes before each half ends the referee will inform each team of playing time remaining in that half. If a touchdown has occurred after time has expired, the extra point conversion will be allowed. A half cannot end on a defensive penalty.

No timeouts can be called by a leading team if they are ahead by 19 or more. Time will only be stopped during the first 38 minutes for called timeouts and serious injuries. If an injury occurs, that player must leave the game for one scrimmage down.

## LINE OF SCRIMMAGE

The ball starts on the 20 yard line. Only one offensive player may be “in motion”, be moving as the ball is snapped. The man in motion can move laterally or backwards at the snap but not forward. Excepting a man “in motion,” all players must be set before the ball is snap. Aside from the Center position, there is no minimum number of players required to line up on the line of scrimmage. After a play, the line of scrimmage is determined by the location of the hips when the flags are pulled. The ball becomes dead when the flag is removed legally (If the belt/flag falls off, one hand touch between shoulders and knees).

## DOWNS

The ball will be spotted for downs where the hips of the player is located once their flag is pulled.

First downs are obtained by crossing midfield, and your opponent's 20 yard line. If a team fails to earn a first down in four plays, possession will go to the opposing team. The offensive team may elect to punt on fourth down.

The offensive team must declare punts on fourth down to the referee with enough advance warning for the defense to put players back in receiving formation. Once the offensive team declares with the official whether to punt, but then changes their decision, they must use a timeout before being allowed to proceed. No fake punts are allowed and all punts must be kicked.

The kicking team must stay on the line of scrimmage until the ball is punted. Five players from the receiving team must be on the line of scrimmage. The receiving team may fair catch the ball or advance it. The receiving team can field the ball off one bounce, however when the ball hits the ground a second time it becomes a dead ball. If the ball travels into the end zone without being touched, a touch back is called and the ball placed at the 20 yard line. The defense may not block a punt.

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## **BLOCKING**

“Blocking” with hands is not allowed. This includes downfield “blocking” during an offensive play and returned punt. NO CONTACT is allowed at the line or downfield by any defensive player guarding a receiver. Players may block with their hands behind their back at the line of scrimmage, but may not do so 5 yards passed the line. Once a defender gets past a blocker, the blocker becomes an eligible receiver.

## **RUSHING**

All defensive players must play a yard off the line of scrimmage and can rush once the ball is hiked to the quarterback.

## **PASSING**

A forward pass is completed when caught by any player of the passing team who has at least one foot in-bounds. If opposing teams catch the pass in-bounds simultaneously, the tie goes to the offense. If a player steps out-of-bounds and comes back in-bounds to be the first person to touch the ball, it will be ruled an incomplete pass. However, if a player steps out of bounds, they will be eligible to catch a deflected ball.

After the immediate completion of a play, the referee will place a marker at the line of scrimmage. The offense has 25 seconds to put the ball in play after it is declared ready by the head judge (ie, when the marker is placed). No player shall put the ball in play until declared ready-for-play.

The QB may run for positive yards at any time. The QB need not be rushed (ie, defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage) in order to run for positive yards.

A change of possession can only occur due to downs, a punt, or an interception. A fumble where the ball hits the ground cannot result in a turnover (the ball is dead at the spot of the fumble). A lateral caught by the defense will result in a turnover.

## **CENTER IS AN ELIGIBLE RECEIVER**

On a change of possession, the offense must allow the defense to get set for 15 seconds after the marker has been placed before the offense can snap the ball.

## **SCORING**

Touchdowns are six points. After scoring a touchdown, teams may elect to go for either one, two, or three extra points or a field goal:

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- 1 point – attempted from the 3 yard-line
- 2 points – attempted from the 10 yard-line
- 3 points – attempted from the 20 yard-line
- 4 points (Field goal) - attempt from the 25

Converted extra point attempts are worth the same regardless of whether they are converted via run or pass. If the defense intercepts a pass or lateral they may attempt to return the ball for a score. If the defense returns the interception for a score they will be awarded the number of points equal to the original value attempted by the offense. Safeties are 2 points. The scoring team will now go on offense with the ball placed at their own 20 yard line.

## **FOOTBALL PENALTIES**

Moving penalties can be accepted or declined by the defense. If declined, the play stands as ruled. If accepted, the penalty is yardage and the down is re-played.

## **LOSS OF TEN YARDS PENALTIES**

Offsides

Encroachment

False Start

Illegal Substitution

Delay of Game

Illegal Formation/Procedure/Snap/Shift/Motion:

- 3 players are required to be on the line of scrimmage.

- Any player receiving a snap directly from the Center must be at least 2 yards behind the line of scrimmage.

- Offensive players must assume a set position and come to an absolute stop (except one man in motion). The player in motion may only move laterally or backwards.

Illegal Forward Pass (loss of down)

An offensive player cannot cross the line of scrimmage and then throw a forward pass. The offensive team cannot throw more than one forward pass per down.

Intentional Grounding (loss of down).

No Diving (spot foul) – No player may dive in order to gain positive yards, including crossing the goal line.

## **LOSS OF 15 YARD PENALTIES**

Defensive Pass Interference/Illegal Use of Hands/Illegal Contact (automatic first down)

Offensive Pass Interference

Roughing the passer (automatic first down)

Flag Guarding/Stiff Arming/Any Intentional Contact

Illegal Blocking (spot foul) – No player may use his hands to block opponent. Offensive players may not run down field past 5 yards from the line of scrimmage in front of or

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parallel to the ball carrier, whether you intended to block or not. They may run behind to receive a lateral.

Kick Catch Interference

Illegal Flag Removal

Illegal Kicking

Illegal Participation

Stripping the Ball/Attempting to Strip the Ball

Hurdling a Player/Attempting to Hurdle a Player

Illegal equipment (loss of down); including but not limited to:

Tying, modifying or in any way changing the intended use of flags to make it more difficult for the defense to pull.

Unsportsmanlike conduct, abusive or insulting language, or gesture to another player or referee, and taunting are not permissible under any circumstances. The player may be disqualified for above actions if judged by the referee to be flagrant and will be suspended for next week's game. If that player(s) is caught playing next week, the team will forfeit that game. In a severe case of unsportsmanlike conduct, the player will be suspended from playing any SPORTKIND event indefinitely.

## **OVERTIME RULES (PLAYOFFS ONLY)**

In the Playoffs, FLIP A COIN is played by the captains with the winning team deciding on first or second possession. Teams will attempt to score in the same end zone. Each team will then have four downs to score from the 20 yard line. If a team scores, they will have the opportunity to go for one, two, or three extra points. If a tie occurs after the first round, then teams will repeat using the same format. However, the team that defended first is now on offense first. If a third round is needed, then the teams must go for two or three extra points. The game will be decided when one team scores more points in the round. No first downs will be awarded except in the case of a penalty.

## **PLAYOFF ELIGIBILITY**

All players participating in the playoffs must be on the official team roster and have played at least 3 regular season games. If an opposing team believes one of the players on the other team hasn't played in an official regular season game and/or isn't on the official team roster they can protest that player. If a team checks in a player who isn't on the official league roster and the opposing team protests, said team will automatically GET 7 FOR the game and that player will be removed from the League.

## **FORFEIT POLICY**

If your team forfeits a game during the season, the following rules apply:

First Offense: Loss of game. Score marked: 21-0

Second Offense: Loss of game and ability to make the playoffs. Score marked: 21-0

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Third Offense: Removal from the league.

If you know in advance that your team is going to forfeit a game, we encourage you to contact us immediately so we can inform your opponent.

Teams have until ten minutes past the designated start time to field a full squad (or the league minimum of players required according to rules). If at that time a team is unable to field a legal team, they forfeit the game. The teams may utilize the playing field during their allotted time to play an unofficial game. The official score will be marked as a loss with the respective forfeit score of 21-0.

## **SPORTSMANSHIP**

We enforce a “Zero Tolerance Policy” in regards to behavior of players, captains, and fans. Abusive language will not be tolerated. Referees and league staff will have the right to reprimand or eject players, managers, or fans depending on the severity of the situation. Abusive behavior toward the referee will not be tolerated. An ejection carries a two game suspension (including the current game). In extreme cases, the player will be asked to leave the premises without refund. The severity of the punishment will be based on the discretion of the referee and league staff.

Only captains/coach of respective teams are allowed to approach the referee with questions or concerns in a respectful manner. Teams charging the field of play to question or complain a call will be subject to automatic forfeit for that game.

Alcohol and smoking is not allowed on playing fields.

Any rules not covered or protests will be handled by the commissioner/referees.

There will be no refunds allowed for rain delays or cancellations. If the league is postponed due to weather, we will reschedule to a later date. There will be no refunds if you are not able to furnish a team on the makeup date.

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Flag Football is played in the rain if at all possible unless the Referee or Facility Representative decide it is necessary to postpone due to dangerous field conditions or lightning. If lightning occurs, all attempts will be made to resume play 30 minutes after the last lightning flash is viewed and the umpire deems it safe to resume play. The games will resume as scheduled if at all possible, or shortened if necessary.

## **LEAGUE AUTHORITY**

**FIGHTING WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. ANY INSTANCES OF FIGHTING MAY RESULT IN A TEAM FORFEIT OF THE LEAGUE WITHOUT REFUND AND POSSIBLE EXPULSIONS FROM FUTURE LEAGUES.**

**ALL DECISIONS OF THE LEAGUE STAFF ARE FINAL. THE LEAGUE STAFF SHALL ALSO HAVE THE FINAL AUTHORITY TO MAKE ADJUSTMENTS TO THE GAME SCHEDULES, GAME DURATION, AND OTHER ASPECTS OF THE RULES OR OF THE LEAGUE.**

**ONLY NLS PERSONEL ALLOWED ON SIDELINES. EACH PERSON THAT IS ON THE SIDELINE OTHER THAN NIGHTLIFE PERSONNEL WILL BE 2 POINTS AWARDED TO THE OTHER TEAM AND THE GAME WILL NOT RESUME UNTIL THEY LEAVE THE SIDELINE.**