

CCSD MIDDLE SCHOOL FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

Revised on July 10, 2025



The National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA) Flag Football Rules, as modified by the Southern Nevada Officials Association (SNOA) are the official rules for all Southern Nevada regular season games and post-season games.

FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

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CCSD FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

I. GENERAL RULES:

a. Game Length:

1. Games will be played in two (2) twenty (20) minute halves.
2. Half-time will consist of five (5) minutes.
3. Running clock until last (1) minute of each half. The game clock will start on the snap following the stoppage for notification of 1-minute warning.
4. Each team will have two (2) thirty (30) second time outs per half with no carry over from the first half to the second half or the second half to overtime.

b. Field:

1. Width: 40 yards
2. Length: 80 yards of field + 2 end zones (10 yards each)
3. Team Area: 2 yards from each side line and between the 20 yard markers.
4. Hash marks are not utilized. The ball will always be spotted in the center of the field.

c. Players:

1. Team consists of at least 7 players.
2. Minimum of 5 players to play a game.
3. Must have at least 7 players to start a game.

d. Equipment:

1. Shoes:

- Must be soft pliable upper material (i.e. canvas/synthetic) that completely covers the foot and is attached to a one-piece molded composite bottom (i.e. tennis shoes).
- Turf Shoe or molded rubber cleats only. NO metal cleats, screw in cleats, or baseball cleats allowed.

2. Shirts/Jerseys:

- All jerseys must have numbers on front and back. (6 inches in height on the front and 8 inches in height on the back)
- No identical numbers on the field at the same time.
- Must cover the players' shoulders, chest and back.
- Must be long enough to be tucked into pants.
- Must have both a light colored (away) and a dark colored (home) shirt.
- Shirt must be tucked in at all times.
- Sweats (including hoods) must be worn under the uniform, if worn.

3. Shorts/Pants:

- Must be part of a uniform.
- Uniform may be a flag football, soccer or lacrosse uniform.
- No Open Pockets
- Spandex and compression shorts may be worn under the uniform.
- No torn shorts or sweat pants.
- The pants or shorts must be a contrast color than the flags.

4. Flags:

- A one-piece flag belt (Triple Threat or Flag Tag) without any knots.
- One flag on each side of the body at the hips and one in the center of the back. (3 total)

- The flag belt must not be covered by any part of the uniform.
- Triple Threat Belt flag size is 2 ¼ wide by 14 ½ length.
- Flags may not be altered in width or length and may have no tape on them.
- All players must be wearing a flag before the ball becomes live. Failure to properly wear required player equipment when the ball is about to become live results in a dead ball penalty for Delay of Game.

NOTE: Games will not be played unless both teams have the appropriate flags.

5. Football:

- Pebble grained or rubber covered football.
- Must be a youth or intermediate size football.
- No requirements regarding ball pressure.
- The referee shall be the judge of any ball offered for play.

6. Field Equipment:

- Score board
- Goal post pads
- Sideline markers and pylons
- Down marker (If possible)

7. Additional Equipment:

- Mouth and Tooth Protector: It is **MANDATORY** that all players wear a mouth piece.
- Sunglasses: Players are not permitted to wear sunglasses unless they are prescription sunglasses.
- Hand Warmers: Players may not wear hand warmers that buckle around the waist.
- Knit or stocking cap (beanie) is permissible. No other type of head gear is permitted.
- Cloth wristbands are allowed but must be worn on the wrist if used.
- Headwear shall meet the following guidelines: Hair adornments must be securely fastened close to the head and not increase risk to the athletes, teammates or opponents. It remains the responsibility of the head coach to ensure players are legally equipped before the competition begins.
- Knee & ankle braces are permitted but all exposed hinges must be covered. Most oversleeves recommended by the manufacturer are acceptable. These braces may be padded or unpadded.
- The officials shall not permit any team member to participate while wearing apparel or equipment if in his/her judgment any item is dangerous or confusing to other players, is not appropriate, or constitutes a safety concern.
- A player may not wear jewelry. Religious and medical alert medals are not considered jewelry. A religious medal must be taped and worn under the uniform. A medical alert medal must be taped and may be visible. Additionally, no hanging play cards and no eye shade other than all black.
- Players may wear a face shield molded to the face with no protrusions to protect against a facial injury.
- Towels: A solid white towel may be placed under the ball if field conditions deem it helpful to keeping the ball clean/dry. The towel must be no smaller than 4" by 12" and no larger than 6" by 12" with no words, symbols, letters, or numbers (other than team logo and/or a single manufacturer's or distributor's normal label or trademark not to exceed 2-1/4 square inches in area).

II. GAME PLAY RULES:

1. Offense:

➤ Blocking:

- All blocks must be made with the blocker in an upright position with both hands in front or directly at their sides. The players may not have their hands near their body and then extend their arms in a pushing motion to conduct a block. Players may not fire the arms out to create contact; the arms must be extended prior to making contact. No body blocks, roll blocks, or dropping of the shoulder to block is allowed at any time. NO EXCESSIVE CONTACT will be allowed.
- Blocking by the offense beyond the line of scrimmage is allowed (other than blocking that would meet the definition of offensive pass interference).

➤ Passing:

- The offensive team may NOT throw more than one forward pass per play.
- The offensive team may throw an unlimited number of backward passes during any play.
- No player may throw the ball forward if that player is beyond the line of scrimmage.
- The passer may not intentionally ground the ball by throwing the ball into the ground or out of bounds to avoid a sack. (**Exception:** It is not a foul if the passer throws to ball incomplete into an area near a teammate. It also is not a foul if both the passer is or has been 3 yards or more from the center of the field AND throws the ball so that it crosses or lands beyond the line of scrimmage. This applies only to the player who controls the snap and does not relinquish possession to another player before throwing a forward pass.)
- The passer to conserve time may legally throw the ball directly to the ground immediately after controlling the ball (i.e., spike the ball with under 2 minutes left in a half).
- If the ball is thrown laterally or backwards it is considered a fumble and the ball will be placed at the spot where the ball crossed the out of bounds demarcation or hits the ground. If the pass is thrown forward it is considered an incomplete pass and will be placed at the previous spot.
- No forward passes are allowed after an interception.

➤ Snapping:

- The ball must be snapped from the ground, but does not have to be snapped between the legs.
- The ball may be snapped to any person whose feet are at least 2 yards behind the line of scrimmage.
- The person who receives the snap is considered the quarterback for that play.

➤ Rushing:

- ALL players are eligible receivers.
- Quarterback can run the ball ONCE per SERIES OF DOWNS.
- There is no limit on the number of times players other than the quarterback can run.
- The PAT shall be treated as a new series (**QB is open**).
- No stiff arming.
- If a defense “blitzes” or rushes the quarterback, the quarterback may run without it counting as their one run per series of downs.

➤ No Run Zone:

- No-Run Zones are located 5 yards from each end zone and 5 yards from each line-to-gain. No run zones are designed to avoid short-yardage, power-running situations to help avoid illegal blocks & excessive contact. If a penalty or loss of yardage takes a team out of the no run zone (more than 5 yards from end zone or line to gain), that team is then considered to be out of the no run zone again.
 - QB runs are not allowed in these No Run Zones.
 - Any number of direct handoffs, backward passes, and pitches are allowed only if the player last receiving the handoff, backward pass or pitch then passes the ball beyond the line of scrimmage.
 - All passes in the No Run Zone must be forward and must be touched or caught beyond the line-of-scrimmage to be legal. (Exceptions: 1) Passes touched by the defense, prior to being touched by an offensive receiver, may be legally touched or caught behind the line-of-scrimmage. 2) Incomplete passes landing behind the line of scrimmage are not illegal. 3) Passes caught behind the line of scrimmage are legal once a defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage.)
 - The QB or the player last receiving the handoff, backward pass, or pitch is allowed to run if the defense crosses the line of scrimmage.
- **Receiving:**
- A reception is deemed made if:
 - The receiver possesses the ball before the ball makes contact with the ground and
 - The receiver has a body part down in the field of play after possessing the ball.
 - The receiver may NOT use their hands or arms to move a defender in order to make a reception.
 - No stiff arming.
- **Jumping:**
- Jump cuts are allowed by ball carriers.
 - A player may not leave their feet to avoid a flag from being pulled. Official will blow the whistle and the player will be down at the spot where they left their feet.
- **Spinning:**
- Spinning by a ball carrier is legal.
- **Fumbles:**
- Fumbles are dead as soon as they hit the ground.
 - Backward fumbles will be placed at the spot where the ball crossed the out of bounds demarcation or hits the ground.
 - Forward fumbles will be returned to the spot of the fumble (with the exception of a forward fumble that goes into an opponent's end zone which will result in a touchback and change of team possession).
 - A fumble caught in the air by either team is a live ball and may be advanced.

2. Defense:

➤ **Blocking:**

- All blocks must be made with the blocker in an upright position with both hands in front or directly at their sides. The players may not have their hands near their body and then extend their arms in a pushing motion to conduct a block. Players may not fire the arms out to create contact; the arms must be extended prior to making contact. No body blocks, roll blocks, or dropping of the shoulder to block is allowed at any time. Additionally, a swim move is a foul if the defense creates any contact with the swim that is not in line with the defined legal blocking style. NO EXCESSIVE CONTACT will be allowed.

➤ **Rushing/Blitzing:**

- Any defensive players can rush from any position on the field as long as they are 5 yards behind the line of scrimmage.
- Teams may only rush up to two (2) players at a time.
- Rushers must attempt to avoid any blockers/players. NO EXCESSIVE contact is allowed.
- Rusher must avoid hitting the QB's arm, even on the follow through motion.
- NO limit on the number of rushing attempts (BLITZS) by a team.

➤ **Pass Defense:**

- The defense is allowed to legally ward off an offensive player until he/she is no longer a potential blocker (i.e., reaches the yard line that the defensive player is on or cuts away from him/her). When an eligible receiver goes downfield on a play where a forward pass crosses the neutral zone, he/she may not block an opponent until the pass has been touched. A defensive player may, however, treat the receiver as a potential blocker and may use legal blocking techniques to ward him/her off before the pass is thrown. If the receiver is not attempting to block the defender by going past him/her (indicated by being on the same yard line or beyond) or running away from him/her (the defender is chasing the receiver), the defender may not make contact. Contact is allowed until the receiver occupies the same yard line as the defender. Continuous contact by the defender is illegal.
- For a defender to legally contact an eligible receiver anywhere on the field, the following must be true:

- A legal forward pass that crosses the neutral zone must not yet have been thrown.
- The receiver must be in front of the defender (not yet on the same yard line).
- The receiver must not have turned away from the defender (defender is chasing) indicating he/she is running a pass route.
- There must be some doubt as to whether the receiver is going to block the defender or run a route.

If any of those four statements are false, the resultant contact is illegal.

- This is an illegal contact foul - 10 yard penalty. This would be enforced from the end of the related run (running play) or previous spot (pass play).
- Defenders are not allowed to play through the receiver to make a play on the ball.
- Interceptions occur if:
 - The receiver possesses the ball before the ball makes contact with the ground, &
 - The receiver has a body part down in the field of play after possessing the ball.
- If the defense intercepts a pass, they can return the ball for a touchdown. Wherever the flag is pulled is where the new offense will start their first series of downs.
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➤ **De-Flagging/Tackling:**

- The defender must make a play at the flags. A player may not make an attempt to strip, grab or knock free a ball in player possession, including a quarterback prior to passing the ball. If this occurs it is penalized as an illegal contact foul.
- When de-flagging the ball carrier:
 - The ball carrier is down at the point when the flag belt comes unclipped, NOT when it falls off.
 - The ball will be spotted using forward progress where the ball is at when the flag comes unclipped, not where the flag may fall.
 - Forward progress is the forward-most point of the ball when de-flagged, if a player is holding the ball out in front of their body, then that's the dead-ball spot where the ball will next be put into play.

3. Kicking:

➤ **Kick-offs:**

- There will be NO kick-offs.
- Teams will take possession of the football on their 20 yard line.

➤ **Punting:**

- There will be NO punts.
- On 4th down the offensive team must declare whether they are punting or going for the first down prior to expiration of the play clock.
- If the offensive team declares a punt after committing a delay of game foul, the penalty will be enforced at the subsequent dead ball spot.
- If the offense declares a punt the defense will take possession of the football 30 yards from the spot of the ball or any distance of less than 30 yards at the option of the team punting the ball. However, the maximum distance a punt will be spotted is to the 5-yard line.
- If the offense goes for the first down and does not obtain it, the defense will take possession of the football at that point on the field.

4. Penalties:

➤ **Offense:**

- **Illegal Contact:**
 - When an offensive player makes excessive contact with a defensive player.
 - Any contact other than a legal block.
 - 10 yard penalty
- **False Start:**
 - When an offensive player moves in a way that simulates the start of a play.
 - 5 yard penalty
- **Offensive Pass Interference:**
 - When an offensive player hinders a defensive player's ability to catch a pass by making physical contact with the defensive player.
 - It is forward-pass interference if any player of A, who is beyond the neutral zone, interferes with an opponent's opportunity to move toward, catch or bat a pass.

- It is not forward-pass interference if:
 - a. Unavoidable contact occurs when two or more players are making a simultaneous, bona fide attempt to move toward, catch or bat the pass.
 - b. Contact by A is immediately made on a B lineman and the contact does not continue beyond the neutral zone.
- 10 yard penalty
- Illegal Forward Pass/**Intentional grounding**:
 - When a player is or has been past the line of scrimmage throws the ball forward or when more than one forward pass is thrown during a play.
 - When a forward pass is thrown after a change of team possession.
 - **When a player intentionally ground the ball by throwing the ball into the ground or out of bounds to avoid a sack.**
 - 5 yard penalty from the spot of the infraction (loss of down, if by offense).
- Illegal Quarterback Run:
 - When the quarterback runs the ball more than once per series of downs.
 - 5 yard penalty, loss of down
- Illegal Shift/Illegal Motion:
 - When an offensive player in motion moves towards the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped.
 - A maximum of one (1) player off of the line of scrimmage is allowed to be moving laterally/backward at the snap of the ball.
 - 5-yard penalty
- Flag Guarding:
 - When a player, either intentionally or accidentally, inhibits a player from de-flagging them by the use of their hands, arms, etc. (including stiff arming).
 - Player's that have hair outside of their uniform that extends to or below the flag belt area will commit a foul for flag guarding if they are a ball carrier and their hair inhibits a player from de-flagging them.
 - 10-yard penalty from the spot of the infraction, loss of down.
- Illegal Formation:
 - When the offensive team has more than 3 players lined up behind the line of scrimmage at the snap.
 - 5-yard penalty
- Hurdling/Diving:
 - A player may not attempt to jump over (hurdle) an opponent.
 - A player may not leave their feet and dive in any direction to advance the football.
 - 10-yard penalty.
- Illegal Touching:
 - No offensive receiver who goes out of bounds and returns inbounds during a down shall touch a legal forward pass while in the field of play or end zones or while airborne until it has been touched by an opponent or official.
 - **Exception:** This does not apply to an offensive player who immediately returns inbounds after going out of bounds due to contact by an opponent. Additionally, if the player touches the pass before returning inbounds, it is an incomplete pass and not a foul for illegal touching.
 - Penalty – Loss of down at the previous spot

➤ **Defense:**

- **Illegal Rush:**
 - When a defensive player rushes the QB after being less than 5 yards behind the line of scrimmage at the snap.
 - When more than two (2) players rush at a time.
 - 5 yard penalty
 - Enforced from previous spot
- **Illegal Contact:**
 - When a defensive player makes excessive contact with an offensive player.
 - A player may not run through the ball carrier when pulling a flag.
 - 10 yard penalty
- **Illegal Flag Pulling:**
 - A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off a player who has not touched the ball.
 - 5 yard penalty, automatic first down.
 - Run Play - enforced from end of run
 - Pass Play - Complete - enforced from end of related run
 - Pass Play - Incomplete - enforced from previous spot
- **Roughing the Passer:**
 - When a defensive player makes contact with the QB while the QB is in the throwing motion or has just completed the throwing motion. This includes hitting the QB's arm after they have released the ball.
 - 10 yard penalty, automatic first down.
- **Defensive Pass Interference:**
 - When a defensive player hinders an offensive player's ability to catch a pass by making physical contact with the offensive player.
 - It is forward-pass interference if any player of B, who is beyond the neutral zone, interferes with an opponent's opportunity to move toward, catch or bat a pass.
 - It is not forward-pass interference if:
 - a. Unavoidable contact occurs when two or more players are making a simultaneous, bona fide attempt to move toward, catch or bat the pass.
 - b. Contact by B is obviously away from the direction of the pass.
 - 10 yard penalty
- **Defensive Holding:**
 - When a defensive player holds up the offensive player while attempting to de-flag that player.
 - 10 yard penalty
- **Encroachment:**
 - When a defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped.
 - 5 yard penalty

- Tackling:
 - A player cannot tackle the ball carrier.
 - 10 yard penalty
- Sliding:
 - A player may not slide in an attempt to get the flag.
 - 10 yard penalty

III. Coach and Player Conduct:

- Coaches and/or players who disrespectfully object to a game official's call may be assessed an Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalty.
- No coach, player or substitute shall act in an unsportsmanlike manner once the game officials assume authority of the contest.
- Examples are, but not limited to:
 - Using Profanity, insulting or vulgar language or gestures.
 - Attempting to influence a decision by a game official.
 - Disrespectfully addressing a game official.
 - Failure of a head coach, following verification, to have his/her player(s) wear legal and/or required equipment.
 - Being on the field except as a substitute or replaced player.
- Being outside the team box, but not on the field.
- These actions result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty enforcement, with a second unsportsmanlike conduct foul resulting in disqualification.
 - Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalty enforcement will be treated the same as a dead ball foul with the penalty being enforced from the spot of the ball at the end of the play. A second Unsportsmanlike Conduct foul will result in the coach or player being disqualified for the remainder of the game.
 - Team captains should be the players that address the officials.
 - Fighting is any attempt by a player or nonplayer to strike or engage a player or nonplayer in a combative manner unrelated to football. Such acts include, but are not limited to, attempts to strike an opponent with the arm, hand, leg or foot, whether there is contact or not.

IV. Scoring:

- **Touchdown:**
 - 6 points
- **Flag Check:**
 - After all scores the player must go to the nearest official for flag check.
 - **Removing a Flag:**
 - Player removing their own flag prior to a flag check will result in no score, loss of down at previous spot or, if by an intercepting team, first down at the spot of the interception and a warning.
 - Next infraction results in Unsportsmanlike Conduct foul.

➤ **Tampering with a Flag:**

- If a player is determined to have tampered with their flag it will result in a loss of down at previous spot or, if by an intercepting team, first down at the spot of the interception and a warning.
 - Next infraction results in Unsportsmanlike Conduct foul.

➤ **Point After Touchdown:**

- No kick attempts
- 5 yards = 1 point
- 10 yards = 2 points
- During a PAT attempt, the ball remains live, allowing the intercepting team to return the try for 2 points to the other end of the field.
- Once a team declares their choice for a 1 or 2 point conversion and the ball is declared ready for play by the officials, the team may change their decision only after calling a time-out.
- Point After Touchdown plays will be an untimed down at 1:00 or less in each half. Additionally, when a touchdown is scored and the PAT down has not been played when any half reaches 0:00, the period shall be extended for the PAT down on the same end of the field that the touchdown was scored.

➤ **Safety:**

- 2 points

Miscellaneous Rules:

➤ **Headgear:**

- A soft padded headgear that meets the American Society for Testing & Materials International's standards is permitted.
- No headgear can stop student-athletes from suffering concussions, and all sports should be played, coached, and officiated in recognition of that fact.
- The ability to wear headgear in flag football has been expanded beyond headbands. The wearing of any headgear is not required. Schools, parents, and students are encouraged to make their own assessment on the type of equipment worn via ASTM standards.

➤ **Mouth and Tooth Protector:**

If a player does not have a Mouth and Tooth Protector, the player must be removed for at least one (1) play and must have a Mouth and Tooth Protector worn properly prior to returning to the game.

➤ **Series of Downs:**

- A team in possession of the ball shall have four consecutive downs to advance the ball to the first down line.
- Officials will be responsible for determining the spot of the ball and the down markings.
- A new series of downs will be awarded when a team moves the ball to the next 20 yard line.
- On fourth down the offensive team must declare whether they are punting or going for the first down prior to the expiration of the play clock.

- If the offense declares a punt the defense will take possession of the football 30 yards from the spot of the ball or any distance of less than 30 yards at the option of the team punting the ball. However, the maximum distance a punt will be spotted is to the 5-yard line.
- If the offense goes for the first down and does not obtain it, the defense will take possession of the football at that point on the field.

➤ **Ability to retain possession after scoring a touchdown in the 2nd Half:**

When a team is trailing in the 2nd Half, after the conclusion of a Point After Touchdown attempt, the scoring team, has the following two options:

1. The scoring team may elect the normal option of giving the non-scoring team the ball at the 20-yard line, beginning a new series of downs. If this option is elected, all normal penalty enforcement principles will apply; or
2. The scoring team may elect to take the ball at its own 25-yard line, fourth-and-15. If the scoring team is successful in making a first down, they will maintain possession, and a new series of downs will continue, as normal. If they are unsuccessful in making a first down, the result will be a turnover on downs, and the non-scoring team will take possession at the dead ball spot (after enforcement of any applicable fouls).

Notes:

- In either case, normal timing rules apply, as dictated by the time remaining in the half.
- If the scoring team chooses option (1), bridged fouls against either team can be enforced, as normal from the 20-yard line.
- If the scoring team chooses option (2), fouls against either team that could otherwise be bridged, can only be enforced on the Point After Touchdown.
- All fouls by either team that occur after the ready for play on either option (1) or (2) above, are enforced as normal.
- Once the scoring team head coach has made his selection, that choice cannot be changed, regardless of subsequent fouls or timeouts.

➤ **Play-Clock:**

- The 25 second play clock begins once the ball is placed on the ground and the whistle is blown by the referee.
- Delay of game: If a team exceeds the 25 seconds.

➤ **Touchback:**

- It is a touchback and the ball will change team possession and be placed at the 20 yard line when the ball becomes dead out of bounds behind the goal line or becomes dead by hitting the ground behind the goal line of the defensive team and the offensive team is responsible for the ball being there (i.e., forward fumble), except from an incomplete forward pass.

➤ **Restricted Area:**

- The restricted area is the area extending two yards outside the perimeter of the entire field (i.e., outside both sidelines and end lines). This restricted area is designated by the restraining line. The team box is the area immediately outside the restricted area between the 20-yard lines on each side of the field. With limited exceptions, nonplayers are not permitted in the restricted area at any time during the game. Nonplayers include coaches, team personnel, spectators, game administrators and members of the media.

- During a dead-ball interval, no more than three coaches are permitted in the restricted area directly in front of the team box. No one may be in the restricted area when the ball is live.
- The restricted area is designated to make the sidelines safer for everyone and to allow game officials ample room to work. If the restricted area is not clearly delineated or not enforced by game administration, coaches or game officials, individuals in the restricted area are at risk for injury during or after a play.
- Coaches are encouraged to instruct team personnel of the parameters and boundaries of the team box, and to effectively communicate the requirements to stay in the team box at all times. Coaches are also required to remain outside the restricted area when the ball is live, and no more than three coaches are in the coaches' area when the ball is dead.
- Coaches are not allowed on the field to call plays.

➤ **Overtime:**

- In the event the 2nd half ends in a tie, **overtime** will commence.
- A coin toss shall decide who receives the ball first.
- Winner of the coin toss can choose to be on offense first, defense first or choose the end of the field that overtime will be played on. The loser of the toss shall exercise the remaining option for the first extra period and shall have the first choice of options for subsequent even-numbered extra periods.
- Each team will receive one (1) total time out in overtime regardless of the number of overtime periods played.
- Interceptions during overtime remain live and can be returned for a touchdown by the intercepting team.
- Each team will have at least one possession during each overtime period, unless B scores first.
- A winner must be determined (No ties).
- There will not be a series of downs played in overtime. Teams will have alternating one-play possessions to score point after touchdowns until one team is ahead at the end of an overtime period. For the first 2 overtime periods, teams will snap from the 10 yard line (going for 2 points). From the 3rd overtime on, teams will snap from the 5 yard line (going for 1 point).

➤ **Fouls During a Point After Touchdown or in Overtime After a Change of Team Possession:**

- A score by a team committing a foul during the down is canceled.
Exception: Live-ball fouls treated as dead-ball fouls.
- If both teams foul during the down and the defensive team had not fouled before the change of possession, the fouls cancel and the down is not repeated.
- Penalties against either team are declined by rule.
Exception: Penalties for flagrant personal fouls, unsportsmanlike conduct fouls, dead-ball personal fouls and live-ball fouls treated as dead-ball fouls are enforced from the succeeding spot (20 yard line).

➤ **Unfair Acts:**

- The Referee has much latitude in handling obviously unfair acts during a game. This would include situations that arise when a team commits a blatant and obvious intentional foul or fouls to gain a clock advantage late in a game. We should treat these intentional fouls as Unsportsmanlike Conduct fouls. Each player committing these unsportsmanlike acts will have a counted unsportsmanlike conduct foul, with 2 unsportsmanlike conduct fouls by a single player or coach resulting in disqualification.

The following is a lists some other potential intentional fouls that could be committed during the game:

- A player or nonplayer or person(s) not subject to the rules shall not hinder play by an unfair act which has no specific rule coverage.
- No team shall repeatedly commit fouls which halve the distance to the goal line.
- No player shall hide the ball under the jersey.
- Neither team shall commit any act which, in the opinion of the Referee, tends to make a travesty of the game.

➤ **Mercy Rule:**

- If the point deficit is 19 points or more in the second half, a running clock will be utilized.
- If the score differential becomes less than 19 points in the last 1 minute of the second half, the officials shall revert to regular timing until the point differential again reaches 19 or more points.

➤ **Protest:**

- There are no protests.
- All referee decisions are final.

➤ **Penalty Enforcement:**

• **How and When Completed:**

- a. A penalty is completed when it is accepted, declined or, canceled.
- b. Any penalty may be declined, but a disqualified player or coach must leave the game whether the penalty is accepted or declined.
- c. When a foul is committed, the penalty shall be completed before the ball is declared ready for play for any ensuing down.

• **Live-Ball Fouls by the Same Team**

When two or more live-ball fouls by the same team occur, the offended team may elect only one of these penalties.

• **Offsetting Fouls**

If live-ball fouls by both teams occur the fouls offset and the down is repeated.

Exception: When there is a change of team possession during a down, and the team last gaining possession had not fouled before last gaining possession, it may refuse offsetting fouls and thereby retain possession after completion of the penalty for its foul.

• **Dead-Ball Fouls**

Penalties for dead-ball fouls are administered separately and in order of occurrence.

Exception: When dead-ball unsportsmanlike or dead-ball personal fouls by both teams occur and none of the penalties have been completed, the yardage penalties cancel and the number or type of down established before the fouls occurred is unaffected.

• **Live-Ball—Dead-Ball Fouls**

- a. Live-ball fouls do not offset dead-ball fouls.
- b. When a live-ball foul by one team is followed by one or more dead-ball foul dead-ball fouls by either team, the penalties are administered separately and in the order of occurrence.

• **Interval Fouls**

Penalties for fouls that occur between the end of the second and fourth period and the start of the extra period for overtime, between possession series in overtime, and between extra overtime periods are enforced from the spot of the next possession series.

➤ **Enforcement Procedures**

- **Enforcement Spots**

When the enforcement spot is not specified in the statement of the penalty, the enforcement spot is either the previous spot, the spot of the foul, the succeeding spot, or the spot where the run ends.

- **Determining the Enforcement Spot and the Basic Spot**

- a. Dead-ball fouls. The enforcement spot for a foul committed when the ball is dead is the succeeding spot.
- b. For fouls by either team behind the neutral zone, the penalty is enforced at the previous spot. **Exception:** If the foul occurs in offensive teams' end zone the penalty is a safety.

Penalties will be enforced as follows:

- a. When the team in possession commits a foul behind the basic spot, the penalty is enforced at the spot of the foul (unless it occurs behind the neutral zone as stated above).
- b. When the team in possession commits a foul beyond the basic spot, the penalty is enforced at the basic spot.
- c. When the team not in possession commits a foul either behind or beyond the basic spot, the penalty is enforced at the basic spot.

The following are basic spots for the various categories of plays:

Running plays:

- a. Previous spot, when the related run ends behind the neutral zone.
- b. End of the related run, when the related run ends beyond the neutral zone.
- c. End of the related run, on running plays that have no neutral zone.

Running plays when the run ends in the end zone after change of team possession (not on a try):

- a. Succeeding spot, when a foul occurs after a change of team possession in the end zone and the result of the play is a touchback.
- b. Goal line, when a foul occurs after a change of team possession in the field of play and the related run ends in a touchdown.
- c. Goal line, when a foul occurs after a change of team possession in the end zone, the related run ends in the end zone, and the result of the play is not a touchback.

Pass plays:

Previous spot, on legal forward pass plays. **Exception:** For defensive team fouls during a legal forward pass play: Penalty enforcement for defensive team personal fouls and unsportsmanlike conduct is from the end of the run when it ends beyond the neutral zone and there is no change of team possession during the down.

- **Fouls During Or After A Touchdown:**

Fouls by the nonscoring team during a down that ends in a touchdown (not on the try):

- a. Ten-yard penalties for personal fouls and for unsportsmanlike conduct fouls are enforced on the try or from the succeeding spot at the option of the scoring team. If such a penalty is enforced from the succeeding spot, the line to gain is the 40-yard line (i.e., 1st and 30 from the 10-yard line).
- b. All other penalties are not enforced on the try or from the succeeding spot. Such penalties are declined by rule.
- c. When a foul or fouls occur after a touchdown and before the ball is ready for play on the try, enforcement is on the try or from the succeeding spot at the option of the offended team. If such a penalty is enforced from the succeeding spot, the line to gain is the 40-yard line (i.e., 1st and 30 from the 10-yard line).

Penalties for fouls during and after a try down are administered as follows:

- a. Offsetting fouls: If both teams foul during the down and the defensive team fouls before a change of possession, the fouls offset and the down is repeated, even if additional fouls occur after the change of possession. Any repeat of the down after offsetting fouls must be from the previous spot.

- b. Fouls by the defensive team on a try:
When the try is successful the offensive team shall have the option of declining the score and repeating the try after enforcement, or declining the penalty or penalties and accepting the score. The offensive team may accept the score with penalties for personal fouls and unsportsmanlike conduct fouls enforced from the succeeding spot.
- c. The point value of the try may not be changed due to a live ball penalty by either team or dead ball penalty by either team after the ball has been marked ready for play.

Fouls by the offensive team on a try:

- a. After a foul by Team A on a successful try, the ball shall be put in play at the spot where the penalty leaves it.
- b. If the offensive team commits a foul for which the penalty includes loss of down, the try is over, and the score is canceled, and no yardage penalty is assessed from the succeeding spot.
- c. If before a change of team possession, the offensive team commits a foul that is not offset, and during the down there is neither another change of team possession nor a score, the penalty is declined by rule.

Dead-ball enforcement:

Penalties for fouls occurring after the ball is ready for play and before the snap are enforced before the next snap.

- **Half-Distance Enforcement Procedures**

No distance penalty shall exceed half the distance from the enforcement spot to the offending team's goal line.

➤ **Fouls During a Point After Touchdown or in Overtime After a Change of Team Possession:**

- A score by a team committing a foul during the down is canceled.
Exception: Live-ball fouls treated as dead-ball fouls.
- If both teams foul during the down and the defensive team had not fouled before the change of possession, the fouls cancel and the down is not repeated.
- Penalties against either team are declined by rule.
Exception: Penalties for flagrant personal fouls, unsportsmanlike conduct fouls, dead-ball personal fouls and live-ball fouls treated as dead-ball fouls are enforced from the succeeding spot (20 yard line).

➤ **Unfair Acts:**

- The Referee has much latitude in handling obviously unfair acts during a game. This would include situations that arise when a team commits a blatant and obvious intentional foul or fouls to gain a clock advantage late in a game. We should treat these intentional fouls as Unsportsmanlike Conduct fouls. Each player committing these unsportsmanlike acts will have a counted unsportsmanlike conduct foul, with 2 unsportsmanlike conduct fouls by a single player or coach resulting in disqualification. The following is a lists some other potential intentional fouls that could be committed during the game:
 - A player or nonplayer or person(s) not subject to the rules shall not hinder play by an unfair act which has no specific rule coverage.
 - No team shall repeatedly commit fouls which halve the distance to the goal line.
 - No player shall hide the ball under the jersey.
 - Neither team shall commit any act which, in the opinion of the Referee, tends to make a travesty of the game.

**Middle School Flag
Football**
Table of Game Clock Times

PERIOD of TIMING	CLOCK TIME
Game Clock	2 – 20 minute halves
Halftime Intermission	5 minutes
Charged Time-outs	30 seconds

STARTING & STOPPING the CLOCK

The clock shall start with the first legal snap of the game and will remain running until the last 1:00 minute of each half. If there is an official's timeout (i.e., for injury, penalty administration discussion, etc.) that occurs prior to the last 1:00 minute of each half, the clock shall be stopped during and will then start with the ready-for-play signal. If there is a charged team timeout, the clock shall stop and then start with the next legal snap.

1:00 MINUTE TIMING RULES

The clock shall start with the snap (except Point After Touchdown), if the clock was stopped because:

- a. Issue the 1:00 minute warning.
- b. The ball goes out of bounds.
- c. B is awarded a new series.
- d. Touchdown or Safety is scored.
- e. Legal or Illegal forward pass is incomplete.
- f. A request for time-out is granted.
- g. The penalty for delay of game foul is accepted.
- h. If the game clock is stopped for a foul inside the last one minute of a half, it may start on the snap, at the option of the offended team.

NOTE: The clock shall start with the ready-for-play whistle after issuing the 1:00 minute warning if the point deficit is 19 points or more in the second half.

The clock shall be stopped and will start for the ready-for-play signal on a down if the clock was stopped for any reason other than specified above or untimed down:

- a. For official's time-out, other than when B is awarded a new series.
- b. Penalty administration.
- c. There has been no charged time-out.
- d. First down administration.
- e. Because of an inadvertent whistle.

Middle School Flag Football

PENALTY SUMMARY

NO YARDAGE

Illegal touching (loss of down at previous spot)
Sideline Warning (first of the game)

LOSS of 5 YARDS

Delay of game
Illegal substitution
Encroachment
False Start
Illegal Formation (more than 3 backs)
Illegal Shift or Illegal Motion
Illegally handing ball forward (also loss of down)
Illegal forward pass (by A; also loss of down)
Intentional grounding (also loss of down)
Illegal forward pass (by B)
Sideline Interference
Second & Subsequent Sideline Warning
Nonplayer outside of team box
Attendant illegally on field
Illegal QB run (also loss of down)
Illegal Run in No Run Zone (also loss of down)
Illegal Defensive Rush
Illegal Flag Pull (also first down)

LOSS of 10 YARDS

Illegal Blocking Technique
Holding
Illegal Block in Back
Excessive Contact
Offensive/Defensive Pass Interference
Flag Guarding (by A; also loss of down)
Hurdling/Diving
Roughing the Passer (also first down)
Tackling
Sliding
Unsportsmanlike Conduct
Unfair Acts
Unintentional Contact with an official in the restricted area while ball is live

DISQUALIFICATION ASSOCIATED WITH CERTAIN PENALTIES

Flagrant Excessive Contact
Fighting by Player or nonplayer
Intentionally Contacting a Game Official
Striking, kicking, kneeling
A second unsportsmanlike foul by player or nonplayer
A substitute leaving team box during a fight