



CAPSULIZED RULES FOR YOUTH FLAG FOOTBALL LEAGUE – January 1, 2016

- No Contact or Blocking is allowed.
- The Quarterback cannot run the ball unless he or she has received a direct handoff behind the line of scrimmage.
- The player who rushes the QB must start 7 yards off the line of scrimmage.
- All players are eligible to receive a pass.
- **Age Divisions: 3/4, 5/6, 7/8, 9/10, 11/12, 13/14 & 15-17.**
- No kicking or punting.
- The offense has **4 downs** to pass midfield and then **4 downs** to score. A turnover on downs will occur if the offense is short of the first down or end zone resulting in an immediate possession change spotting the ball at the opponent's 5-yard line.
- All possessions, except interceptions, will start at the 5-yard line.
- Games are run with two 24 minute halves and a one minute half time.
- The clock will only stop at the One-Minute Warning of the second half for an incompleteness, touchdowns, extra points, safeties, or out of bounds play. The clock will stop to set the pucks if a first down is obtained.
- Interceptions may be returned.
- Offensive Penalties = loss of down and yardage.
- Defensive Penalties will result in an automatic first down.
- Game time is forfeit time. If you aren't at field for your scheduled game at game time, you will forfeit that game.
- Offense must have a minimum of (1) player on line of scrimmage (Center) or up to 4 players on the line.
- **PLAYING TIME IN LEAGUE PLAY ONLY:** Coaches are expected to distribute playing time as equally as possible.

THE ROSTER

- A maximum of 10 players per roster. 3 players on field minimum to avoid forfeit.
- **The birthday cutoff date for Spring and Summer is April 1st of that year, the Fall birthday cutoff is August 1st of that year.**
- A player may only appear on 1 roster, per age division.
- **Illegal Player:** If a player is found playing on a team illegally, the team will forfeit that game (Score will be turned in as 28-0)
- **BIRTH CERTIFICATES: must be present at all games if age of player is protested.**
- **Protest Procedure:** League/Tournament Director is contacted DURING THE GAME with a \$50 protest fee. If protest is upheld, the \$50 will be returned. NO PROTESTS WILL BE ALLOWED AFTER THE GAME IS OVER.

THE ATTIRE

- Players are required to wear protective mouthpieces at all times during a game.
- Players must wear shorts/pants with no pockets. However, if a player is wearing shorts or pants with pockets, the **POCKETS MUST BE TAPED** for the player to be eligible.
- **REFEREES WILL CHECK EACH TEAM BEFORE THE GAME TO CONFIRM MOUTHPIECES AND NO POCKETS. IF A PLAYERS IS INELIGIBLE HE/SHE WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO PLAY UNTIL PROPER EQUIPMENT IS PROVIDED.**
- **Jerseys must be tucked in at all times.** If a jersey is hanging over their flag belt, flag guarding will be called.
- Teams may use their own footballs as long as they are Regulation Sizes: **Pee Wee Size** (3/4, 5/6, & 7/8) and **Junior Size** (9/10, 11/12, 13/14 & 15/16).
- Molded/screw-in cleats and tennis shoes are permitted. No metal cleats are allowed.

THE POSSESSIONS

- **At the start of each game, captains from both teams will meet at mid-field for the coin toss to determine who shall start with the ball.**
- **The winner of the coin toss has the choice of offense or defense. The loser of the coin toss has the choice of direction. TEAMS MAY NOT CHOOSE TO DEFER TO THE 2ND HALF.**
- All possession changes will start at the offensive team's 5-yard line. Exception: On interceptions the team will take possession of the ball where the defenders flag was pulled. Penalties on interceptions will be assessed where the interception occurred. Exception: If the game referee judges that a player intentionally or flagrantly commits a penalty then the penalty will be at the point of the foul, no less than the point of interception.

All rules are subject to League Directors discretion.



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COACHES ON FIELD

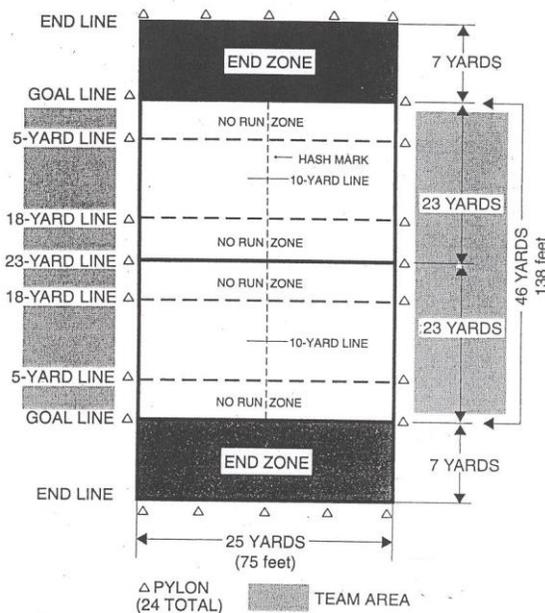
Coaches must back up out of the way at the snap of the ball. Assistant Coaches are allowed, but must stay on the sidelines during game play.

- 3/4 Division: 2 coaches on offense, 2 coaches on defense
- 5/6 Division: 2 coaches on offense, 2 coaches on defense
- 7/8 Division: 2 coach on offense, 2 coach on defense
- 9/10 Division: 1 coach on offense, 1 coach on defense
- 11/12 Division: 1 coach on offense, 1 coach on defense
- 13/14 Division: No coaches on field
- 15-17 Division: No coaches on field

THE FIELD DEMENSIONS – Vary per location

- 46 yards long x 25 yards wide with two 7 yard end zones.

4 ON 4 FIELD/5 ON 5 FIELD



THE PASSING GAME

- Only one forward pass per down. All passes must be forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- No laterals or pitches are allowed.
- Shovel passes are legal, but must be beyond the line of scrimmage.
- QB has a seven (7) second "pass clock." If the pass is not thrown within 7 seconds, the play will be ruled dead, with a loss of down. Once the ball is handed off, the 7 second rule is no longer in effect & all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- **Defensive Pass Interference is a SPOT FOUL and Automatic First Down.**
- Interceptions can be returned. Ball is spotted at where the ball is when defender's flag is pulled.
- If a penalty occurs on an interception return by the return team, the penalty will be assessed from the spot of the foul.
- If a penalty occurs on an interception return by the defensive team, the penalty will be assessed from the end of the run.

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THE RECEIVING GAME

- All players must start with their flag belts on. If a player starts without his flag belt properly secure with all flags attached, his team will be assessed a 5 yard and loss of down penalty.
- All players are eligible to receive passes (including the QB, if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
- One player at a time may go in motion 1-yard behind and parallel to the line of scrimmage. No motion is allowed towards the line of scrimmage.
- A receiver is down where the ball is when the flag is pulled
- If a receiver's flag belt falls off or is pulled off, before catch is made, the receiver must then be touched with ONE hand to be downed.
- Receiver must have at least one foot in bounds when making a catch.

THE RUNNING GAME

- The QB cannot run the ball. The QB can only run the ball if he or she has taken a direct hand-off.
- Only direct hand-offs behind the line of scrimmage are legal. Anyone behind the line of scrimmage can receive a hand-off. Exception: The ball cannot be handed off between the center's legs.
- No laterals or pitches of any kind, anywhere on the field, are allowed.
- The player who takes the hand-off can throw the ball, as long as he or she does not pass the line of scrimmage first.
- Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- Once the ball has been handed off, the seven-second pass rule is no longer in effect & all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- Defensive players cannot pass the line of scrimmage, during a direct hand-off play, until **the ball is handed off**.
- Spinning is allowed. However, hurdling a player or diving to advance the ball is not allowed.

THE "RUN ZONES"

- "No Run Zones" located five (5) yards from each end zone and five (5) yards on both sides of mid-field.
- "No Run Zones" are designed to avoid short yardage situations.
- "No Run Zones" come into effect only when offensive team is approaching a first down or the end zone. Exception: If the offensive team has already achieved a first down, but has been pushed back into a "No Run Zone", then the "No Run Zone" is no longer in effect.
- **EXCEPTION: In 3/4 TODDLER Division, NO RUN ZONE is eliminated. Toddlers may run or pass at any time.**

THE RUSHING OF THE QUARTERBACK

- All players that rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage, which will be designated by the referee, before the ball is snapped. Any amount of players can rush the quarterback. **EXCEPTION: 3/4, 5/6 & 7/8 Divisions = No Rushing the QB.**
- If the offense draws any rusher to commit or jump that seven-yard marker, that rusher **CANNOT** rush during that play. However, any other defender that is seven yards back may rush instead.
- **The rusher CAN NOT run straight into the center.** The center has the right of way if the rusher does not take an angle to the QB. If contact is made with the center by the rusher who has not taken an angle to the quarterback a defensive obstruction penalty will be called.
- Players not rushing the quarterback may defend the line of scrimmage, as long as he or she is at least one yard from the line of scrimmage.
- **A rusher must go for the quarterback's flags. The rusher may attempt to block the pass but it is a penalty to make contact with the quarterback's arm.**

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THE DEAD BALLS

- Ball must be snapped between the center's legs to start a play. **EXCEPTION: 3/4 & 5/6 Divisions may snap from the side.**
- A play is ruled dead when: ball carriers flag is pulled, ball carrier steps out of bounds, ball carriers knee touches the ground, ball carrier lets the ball hit the ground, ball carrier fumbles the ball away, and after a touchdown, or extra point is scored.
- There are no fumbles. The ball will be spotted where the ball hits the ground.
- If there is an inadvertent whistle during a running play, the offense will have the choice of either the result of the play or replaying the down.
- If there is an inadvertent whistle during a passing play and the ball is in flight, the down will be replayed.

THE PENALTIES

- **All defensive penalties are an automatic first down.**
- **All offensive penalties are yardage plus loss of down.**
- Any type of blocking or screening is illegal and will result in a penalty.
- **ALL CALLS BY THE REFEREES ARE FINAL.**
- Games will not end on any accepted live ball defensive penalty.
- Any offensive penalty in their end zone will result in a safety (2 points).

THE SCORING AND TIME SITUATIONS

- Scoring: Touchdown = 6 points, Extra point (5 yards) = 1 point, Extra point (12 yards) = 2 points, Extra point (18 yards) = 3 points, Safety = 2 points, Returned extra point attempt by the defense = 1, 2 or 3 points, depending on what the offense was attempting.
- **There is a 30 second huddle clock, which will start once the line of scrimmage is marked.**
- Each team is allowed 2 timeouts (60 seconds long) per game. In OVERTIME, each team will be given one timeout. Timeouts are NOT carried over from the original game.
- Referee may stop the clock at own discretion.
- The clock will only stop at the **one-minute** warning of the second half for an incompleting, touchdown, extra point, safety, or if the offense gets out of bounds. The clock will stop to set the punts if a first down is obtained.
- **MERCY RULE:** If a team is ahead by 19 points at the one minute warning, the game shall be over.
- **FORFEITS:** Will be turned in as a 28-0 score.
- **OVERTIME:** Each team is given one play from midfield – the team gaining the most yardage wins. The winning team is given 1 point.
- **SUDDEN DEATH for Championship Games:** Each team is given one possession as in a regular game and if the score is still tied after the first possession the next team to score shall be declared the winner. (Winning team is given 1 point)

CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT

ALL COACHES MUST BE CONCUSSION CERTIFIED BEFORE FIRST PRACTICE TAKES PLACE.

- No athlete can return to play or practice on the same day as a possible concussion.
- Any athlete suspected of having a concussion should be evaluated by an appropriate health care provider as soon as possible.
- Any athlete with concussion must be medically cleared by a health care professional before resuming practice or game play.

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SEVERE WEATHER AT PRACTICE OR GAMES

- At **practice or games**, if you see lightning or hear thunder, coaches and referees must clear the field immediately (85% of all lightning injuries occur at practice when coaches think the weather is far enough away and avoid the rule). You must not resume practice or games until it has been 30 minutes from the previous sound of thunder or the previous sight of lightning.

THE USFTL Youth League will provide an atmosphere where players, friends and families can feel comfortable enjoying a day of football. Any players, teams, or family members that jeopardize that environment may be asked to leave. **THE USFTL** operates under a **NO TOLERANCE POLICY**.

All rules are subject to League Directors discretion.