

STYFA FLAG FOOTBALL RULES AND REGULATIONS

About the Program

STYFA Flag Football is a non-contact 8-on-8 recreational flag football program designed for youngsters new to the sport of football. We want them to learn how to play the sport, brush up on the rules, tactics, and skills, improve their game and most importantly, HAVE FUN! Our focus is on football education, participation, and sportsmanship.

Who

Boys & Girls, Ages 5-6

Attire – Helmets required for safety only. Cleats are allowed, except for metal spikes. All players must wear a protective mouthpiece; there are no exceptions.

Equipment (provided by FYFA)

Flag belt, Game Jersey, Helmet (Helmets and Flag belts will be returned to FYFA)

When – No more than 3 (1.5 hr max) events per week. Flaggers can not start practice until after August 1st. Saturday morning games starting in mid to late August. Labor Day weekend off.

Weather and Football Information via Website: www.leaguelineup.com/fyfa

The Basics

A coin toss determines first possession.

Each team is allowed to bring their own ball for their offensive plays. Coaches should be ready with the ball during change of possession. Referees will give a warning to each team and at their discretion, select a single game ball if play is delayed too often.

Note: There are no kickoffs, and no blocking is allowed.

The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 20-yard line and has four plays to make a first down. Once a team enters the next zone, it is a first down and a new series of downs begins. First downs can be made at the 40 and 20 yard lines. Each team will have four consecutive downs to advance the ball into the next zone or to score a touchdown. A team failing to move the ball into the next zone will lose possession. The opposing team takes over at the point where the ball becomes dead and begins its series, first down and zone to go. At the conclusion of each down, the ball will be placed in the center of the field. Teams change sides after the first 20 minutes. Possession changes to loser of coin toss unless deferred and the clock does not stop.

Players – Teams consist of 10 to 14 players

The game is played between two teams consisting of eight (8) on-field players each; unless mutual consent is reached between the two opposing coaches for a lower number in the case that one team has fewer than 8 players.

Playing Fields - The playing area shall be 80 yards long (if available). This field can be 40 to 54 yards wide. The field should be divided into 4 zones of twenty yards (if available). The end zones should be ten yards each. Goal posts are not necessary.

First downs can be made at the 20 and 40 yard lines. Running and passing plays are allowed and all players are eligible for passes. The defensive team covers receivers, rushes the passer and grabs flags to make “tackles.”

Timing/Overtime Games – Games will consist of two, 20 minute “running time” halves. After time expires, there will be four (4) more plays. Half time should be no more than 5 minutes. If a regular season game score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, the game will be recorded as a tie. If a playoff game is tied at the end of 40 minutes, the teams move directly into overtime (coin toss). The first team to score wins.

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.

For the first two games of the season this rule will be relaxed to 40 seconds between snaps.

Each team may have 2 offensive and 2 defensive coaches on the field. They must be clear of the players before the snap. At least 15 yards from the ball. No coaching after the ball is snapped. Repeat offenders may be sent to the sideline at the discretion of the referee.

Each team has two 60-second time-outs per half.

Officials can stop the clock at their discretion for water breaks.

Scoring / Touchdown: 6 points

Extra point: (started from +-3 yard line)

1 point (running play crosses goal line) or

2 points (pass play crosses goal line)

*A defensive interception on a PAT that is returned beyond the nearest 40 yard line will result in 2 points for the defensive team.

Safety: 2 points

Blocking – A blocker must be on his feet at all times while blocking. Cross body and roll blocking are not permitted. A blocker cannot use his hands or elbows. He must blocking using the “moving pick” technique, only using his body to impede the defender. A recommended technique is to have the offensive linemen cross their arms by touching each shoulder. Blocking a player from behind is not permitted (clipping). There shall be no blocking below the waist.

Running – Offense may use multiple direct hand-offs. The player who takes a direct handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage. Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush. Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player (no diving). The ball is spotted where the ball carrier’s feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.

The ball carrier cannot use his hands or arm to protect his flags. The defensive player must have the opportunity to remove the ball carrier’s flags. The ball carrier cannot lower his head to drive or run into a defensive player. Stiff-arming by the ball carrier is illegal. The ball carrier cannot hurdle to prevent a defensive player from removing his flag belt. He may run in any direction until the ball is declared dead.

Center sneaks are not allowed. The QB must take the ball from the center to begin the play.

Receiving – All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage). As in the NCAA, only one player is allowed in motion at a time. A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception. If an offensive and defensive player catches a pass simultaneously, the ball is declared dead at the spot of the catch and the passing team is awarded possession.

Passing

Shovel passes are allowed.

Interceptions may be returned.

Dead Balls

The ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to one side, to start play. All balls touching the ground are immediately dead (except the center snap to the quarterback).

Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.

Play is ruled “dead” when:

- the ball carrier touches the ground with his body, other than hands or feet.
- the ball hits the ground as a result of a fumble or muffed ball (except the center snap to the quarterback)
- Ball carrier’s flag is pulled off or falls off
- Ball carrier steps out of bounds
- Touchdown or safety is scored
- Ball carrier’s knee hits the ground
- Ball carrier’s flag falls out
- Following a scoring play

Note: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground.

Offensive and Defensive Alignment / Rushing the Quarterback or Blitzing

Only the three defensive linemen will be allowed to “blitz” or penetrate the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Other defenders can move forward but, not cross the line of scrimmage until the quarterback either hands off the ball or runs outside the offensive tackle position.

If the offensive line has zero gaps (foot to foot), the defensive linemen cannot rush through the line and initiate contact. They must adhere to the no contact rule.

The offensive team must have at least four (4) players on the line and at least three (3) in the backfield. The defensive team can only have three (3) players on their line. Linemen must line up at least one yard off of the ball. Linebackers and other players must be at least two yards behind the defensive linemen at the snap.

Remember, no “hands on” blocking or tackling is allowed.

Deflagging – There shall be no tackling of the ball carrier, passer, or kicker.

The player carrying or having possession of the ball is down when the flag belt is removed from his waist (deflagging).

The defensive player shall hold the flag above his head and stand still.

The defensive player cannot hold or push the ball carrier to remove his flag. An accidental touch of the body or shoulder while reaching for the belt shall not be considered a violation; however, touching of the head or face shall be considered a violation.

A defensive player may not run over, push, or pull a blocker away from him. He may not push him sideways if he gets past him. He cannot push the blocker down.

A defensive player must go for the passer’s flag. He cannot touch the passer’s arm.

Sportsmanship/Roughing

If the field monitor or referee witnesses any acts of head butting, tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be given one warning. If it continues, the player or players will be ejected from the game.

FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.

Only the team head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players or other coaches cannot question judgment calls.

Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.

PENALTIES (YARDS OF PENALTIES IN PARENTHESES)

Penalties (NCAA rules apply unless they conflict with STYFA Flag Football Rules & Regulations):

1. Line of Scrimmage/Centering
 - A. Offside, defensive or offensive (5)
 - B. Illegal Snap (5)
 - C. Illegal Motion (5)
 - D. Illegal Formation (5)
2. Illegal passing from beyond line of scrimmage (5) and loss of down.
3. Pass Interference
 - A. Offensive (10) and loss of down
 - B. Defensive, first down from spot of infraction for offensive team
4. Flag wearing and deflagging
 - A. Tackling (10)
 - B. Wearing the flags illegally (5)
 - C. Ball carrier using his hands to prevent a defensive player from deflagging (10)
 - D. Holding, pushing, or hitting the ball carrier while deflagging (10)
 - E. Leaving one's feet while deflagging (10)
5. Illegal handoff
 - A. If the ball is handed forward beyond the scrimmage line (5) and loss of down.
 - B. Intentional grounding (5) and loss of down.
6. Blocking
 - A. Leaving feet to block (10)
 - B. Illegal use of hands by blocker (10)
 - C. Holding a defensive player (10)
 - D. Defensive player blocking or pushing the ball carrier out of bounds (10)
 - E. Defensive player using hands illegally (5)
7. Ball Carrier
 - A. Stiff arming (10)
 - B. Use of hands or arms to protect flags (10)
 - C. Hurdling (5)
8. Unnecessary Roughness
 - A. Offensive and Defensive (10)
 - B. Disqualification of guilty player or players if repeated
9. Unsportsmanlike Conduct
 - A. Fighting (10)—offenders ejected from game
 - B. Defensive player pulling offensive player's flag belt to make him ineligible for play (10)
 - C. Insulting and abusive language (10)

Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play and illegal rushing. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage.