

YMCA Flag Football Rules

- A coin toss determines the first possession and goal to be defended.
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has four (4) plays to cross midfield. 3rd and up will kick off at the beginning of the game and half time.... Once a team crosses midfield, it has 4 plays to score a touchdown.
- If the offense fails to score or get a first down and they have not elected to punt the defense will receive the ball at the line of scrimmage
- All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5 – yard line. Teams change sides after first 20-minute half with a 5-minute half – time break. The team that lost the coin flip assumes possession to start the second 20-minute half. K-2 will have a “punting rule” in which if it is 4th down the offense will have the option to put the ball at the opponents 10-yard line. In the 3rd and up division there will be punts but there will be absolutely NO RUSHING THE PUNTER. The punting team must have the punter at least 5 yards back from the line of scrimmage and must receive the snap and punt from that spot. The punter cannot move laterally or vertically but must stand still and punt. The opposing team will wait until the ball is kicked and then play can continue.

Players/Game Schedules:

- Teams must field a minimum of six (6) players at all times.
- Teams consist of 9 – 12 players (7 on the field with 2-3 substitutes; can start with 5)

Timing/Overtime

- Games are played to 40 minutes running time.
- If the score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, the game ends and both teams win!
- Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 40 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive a single warning before a delay-of-the game penalty is enforced.
- Each team has one 60 seconds and one 30 second times out per half.
- Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.

Scoring:

- Touchdown – 6 points
- Extra Point - 1 point (played from 5 – yard line) or 2 points (played from 10- yard line)
- Safety - 2 points

Line:

- The line will have three players on each side (offence and defense)
- The offensive side will have a center and two guards. (Tight ends are allowed)

- The defense is allowed to have an extra man on the line if the Tight end is on the line. If the tight end is off the line the defender must be at least 5 yards back.
- The defensive side will have a nose guard and two defensive tackles/ ends.
- The defensive line will make and maintain contact with the offensive line for a minimum of three seconds before rushing the passer. The coach for the defensive side will be expected to count out loud for their team.
- If the ball is handed off the defensive line can rush the ball carrier as soon as it is handed off.

Running:

- The quarterback can run with the ball.
- Only direct hand-offs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Offense may use multiple hand-offs.
- Laterals or pitches are permitted.
- The player who takes the hand-off 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). Ball is downed where player leaves their feet.
- There are no fumbles, the ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground.

Receiving:

- All players are eligible to receive passes including quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage. (This excludes linemen)
- Only one player is allowed in motion at a time.
- A player must have at least one foot inbound when making a reception.

Passing:

- Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception k, 1st and 2nd grade. 3rd and up may return the interception.

Dead Ball:

- The ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to one side, to start play (both shotgun and direct snaps are acceptable).
- Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- Play is ruled "dead" when:

- ✓ Ball carrier's flag is pulled.
- ✓ Ball carrier's steps out of bounds.
- ✓ Touchdown or safety is scored.
- ✓ Ball carrier's knee hits the ground.
- ✓ Ball carrier's flag falls out.

Note: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground. Interceptions may be returned in 3rd grade and up.

Rushing the Quarterback:

All players who rush the passer must be a **minimum of five yards** from the line of scrimmage (**not just where the ball is placed**) when the ball is snapped. Defensive line men must make contact with the offensive line for a minimum of three seconds before rushing the passer (if the play is a hand off they may rush the ball carrier as soon as the hand off is made). Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.

*Once the ball is handed off, the five – yard rule is no longer in effect, and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage. **Remember, no tackling is allowed.**

Sportsmanship/Roughing:

If the field monitor or referee witness any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.

Trash talking is illegal. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. (Trash talk is talk that may be 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.

Attire:

Cleats are allowed, except for metal spikes. Inspections must be made. All players must wear a protective mouthpiece, there are no exceptions. Game shirts must be worn during the game.

Weather:

Games will be played unless lighting or dangerous wind chill. If you are unsure please call the YMCA at 406-248-1685 after 8:00 am for information.

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