

Flag Football

All standard Intramural Rules and 2019-2020 NIRSA Football Rules apply except with the following changes/clarifications:

General Rules

- All teams must show up and be checked in by their designated game time.
- Grace period: 5 mins max. If a team has at least 1 participant signed in at game time, but not enough to play, the team will be given 5 mins to get enough players. If after 5 mins, the team is still short players, the game is a forfeit. If the teams gets enough to play before the 5 mins is up, the game will begin, and the other team will be awarded 3 points. The game clock will reflect the amount of time elapsed for the grace period. If no players are signed in at game time, there is no grace period, and the game is declared a forfeit. No exceptions.
- Players must show their Panther Card or a government issued photo ID to the Intramural Sports staff to sign-in for each game. Players without a valid form of ID will not be allowed to play
- Sportsmanship:
 1. Two unsportsmanlike conduct penalties or a single unsportsmanlike conduct penalty if the referee deems the action egregious will result in an ejection from the game.
 2. A player may be ejected at any time by an official, scorekeeper, or supervisor.
 3. If ejected, the player automatically must sit out at least the next scheduled game. The player and team are also subject to further suspension/discipline depending on the judgment of the Competitive Sports Coordinator. If a player is ejected from a game, that player must meet with the Competitive Sports Coordinator before being allowed to participate in further games. It is the player's responsibility to schedule the meeting with the Competitive Sports Coordinator. The meeting must take place in the Coordinator's office the next day at the earliest.
 4. After each game, both teams will be given a SPORTSMANSHIP RATING by the officials, scorekeepers, and supervisors. (See the "Player Conduct & Sportsmanship" section on the Policies page for more information)

1. Game, Field, Players, and Equipment

1.1 Shirts must be long enough to tuck in so that they remain tucked in the pants/shorts during the entire down or short enough so there is a minimum 4" from the bottom of the shirt to the player's waistline.

1.2 Pants or shorts with BELT LOOPS or POCKETS are PROHIBITED

1.3 Towels may not hang from a player's waist or otherwise interfere with the possible removal of a flag. Towels however may be used and kept on the ground on the ball before the snap.

1.4 All jewelry must be removed including watches, earrings, bracelets, etc. Players may wear soft, pliable basketball or wrestling knee pads on legs, knees and/or ankle.

1.5 The game shall be played between two teams of 7 players each on a rectangular field. Each team must have 4 players on the field in order to begin the game. Rosters are limited to 20 players.

1.6 The field is divided into 4 zones of 20 yards each and 2 end zones of 10 yards each.

1.7 Each team shall designate a captain to act as team spokesperson and make decisions. Only the captain may talk to officials. Team representatives including players, spectators, team managers, coaches, and group members subject to the rules.

1.8 The use of dangerous equipment is prohibited. Cleats must be rubber and no metal cleats are allowed.

1.9 Men will use the regular size football, while women will use the intermediate size football (Co-Rec may use either size balls). Game balls will not be provided so teams must use their own footballs. Referees will not handle the football, as the offense is responsible for the ball at all times.

2. Periods, Time Factors, Substitutions

2.1 The winner of the pre-game coin toss shall have the first choice of options:

- A. offense/defense
- B. which goal to defend
- C. to defer their choice of A or B until the second half.

2.2 Playing time and intermissions. A game shall consist of 4 quarters with a 3-minute halftime. Each quarter shall consist of 10 minutes. There is no intermission between the 1st- 2nd quarters and the 3rd-4th quarters. Teams will switch directions at the end of the 1st and 3rd quarters. The clock will run continuously during the 1st quarter, the 2nd quarter, the 3rd quarter, and the first 8 minutes of the 4th quarter. The clock will stop during the last 2 minutes of the 4th quarter. During those last 2 minutes, the clock will stop such as in college football:

- Penalties
- Scoring plays
- Incomplete passes/out of bounds
- Injured players
- First downs (until the ball is set in play by referee's ready to play whistle).

2.3 Mercy Rule: If a team is ahead by 19 points (Co-Rec is 25 points) at the two-minute warning in the second half, the game is over.

2.4 At the beginning of each half and after every score, the ball will be placed on the fourteen-yard line.

2.5 Each team is allowed two (2) timeouts per half (30-seconds each); time-outs not used in the first half are not carried over into the second half. The clock will stop during time-outs.

2.6 Free substitution is allowed after any whistle provided the substitution does not delay the game. However, all offensive players must be momentarily 5 yards inbounds before the snap.

2.7 The offensive team has 25 seconds to put the ball in play after referee signals "ready for play."
Penalty: 5yds.

2.8 Tie Games: Ties will be broken by the "Texas Tie Breaker"

- A. Play will begin on the 10-yard line and teams will have 4 plays each.
- B. A coin toss will precede "Tie Breaker". The team winning the toss has 3 options: Offense, Defense, or Direction. The opposing team then has the remaining choice.
- C. The object is to score a touchdown and subsequent extra point (1, 2, or 3 points). After team A scores, team B then has 4 plays within which to score. If no team has scored after their respective plays the process is repeated.
- D. When a pass is intercepted the defense becomes the offense and begins their series of 4 plays. If the defense intercepts a pass (forward/backward), the play is whistled dead.
- E. Penalties are assessed similar to the regular game. A team shall be given a new series of 4 plays when an automatic first down penalty is accepted. Dead ball penalties after a touchdown are penalized on the extra point attempt. Dead ball penalties following a successful attempt will be penalized from the succeeding spot, the team B 10-yard line, if accepted.

3. Definition of Playing Terms

3.1 Removal of flag belt: When the flag belt is clearly taken from the ball carrier the down shall end and the ball is declared dead. A player who removes the flag belt from the ball carrier should immediately hold the flag belt above his head to assist the official in locating the spot where the capture occurred. A player may dive to remove a flag belt if no contact is made with the opposing team.

3.2 The position of the ball when a player is deflagged determines the spot of the next line of scrimmage.

3.3 A defensive player may not hold, push, or knock down the ball carrier in an attempt to remove the flag, nor shall an offensive player hold, block, or run through a defensive player trying to remove the flag belt.

3.4 When a runner loses his/her flag belt, either accidentally or inadvertently, play continues. The deflagging reverts to a one-hand tag of the runner.

3.5 Scrimmage line: The scrimmage line for team A is the yard line and its vertical plane which passes through the point of the ball nearest its own goal line. The scrimmage line for team B is the yard line and its vertical plane, which passes one yard from the point of the ball nearest its own goal line. A colored puck will signify each.

4. Ball in Play, Dead Ball, Out-Of-Bounds

4.1 The ball is declared dead when the ball touches the ground: A) on a fumble B) on a lateral C) on a pass or D) after touching a player on a punt.

4.2 The sideline and end lines are considered out of bounds. (Only one foot needs to touch inbounds for a pass to be complete).

4.3 Once an offensive or defensive player steps out of bounds, that player is no longer eligible to touch the ball. Penalty: 10 yards and replay the down.

5. Series of Downs, Number of Downs

5.1 In a series of 4 downs, the ball must be advanced forward into the next zone for a new series of downs to be awarded. Yardage lines are considered part of the forward zone.

6. Kicking the Ball

6.1 If a punt is to be made, the team punting must announce it before the down starts. After the announcement, the punt must be made. The offensive team must still adhere to all formation and procedure rules. The kicker must catch and then kick the ball in one continuous motion. Quick kicks are illegal. Penalty: Delay of game.

6.2 The defensive team may not build a pyramid or support each other in any manner in order to block or attempt to block a kick. Penalty: 5 yards from the previous spot.

6.3 If the ball enters the receiving team's endzone after a kick, it's automatically declared dead and ruled a touchback.

7. Snapping, Handling, and Passing the Ball

7.1 The ball may be snapped between the legs or to the side of the snapper.

7.2 The player who receives the snap must be at least 2 yards behind the offensive scrimmage line. Direct snaps are always illegal (under center). Penalty: 5 yards.

7.3 It is defensive pass interference if an eligible receiver is deflagged prior to touching the ball on a forward pass attempt.

7.4 During the interval between downs, when 2 or more consecutive encroachments are committed by the same team, the penalty will be 10 yards for the second encroachment foul.

7.5 The offensive team must have a minimum of four set players on the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap.

7.6 All players are eligible for a forward pass. The passer may pass from anywhere behind the line of scrimmage.

7.7 The passer shall not intentionally ground the ball in order to avoid a sack. Penalty: 5 yards and loss of down.

8. Scoring Plays

8.1 A team is given the choice of going for 1, 2 or 3 points after scoring a touchdown. Once the captain makes the choice, it may only be changed if a time out is called. Ways of scoring a successful point-after attempt: A) By running or passing from 3 yards = 1 point. B) By running or passing from 10 yards = 2

points C) By running or passing from 20 yards= 3 points. If the defense intercepts a pass while the offense is going for a point-after-attempt, the play is automatically whistled dead.

8.2 Touchdown Verification: The player scoring the touchdown must raise his/her arms so the nearest official can deflag the player. If the player is not deflagged with one good pull, and the official determines the flag belt has been secured illegally, the touchdown is disallowed. The player is disqualified, and it is a foul. Penalty: 10 yards from the previous spot and a loss of down.

8.3 Play after safety. After a safety is scored, the team that is awarded 2 points will automatically gain possession at their own 14-yard line. (No kick will take place)

9. Players' Conduct

9.1 It is illegal to steal or attempt to steal (strip) the ball from a player in possession. The object of the game is to deflag a ball carrier, not to steal the ball. Penalty: 10 yards from the end of the run.

9.2 Roughing the passer. Defensive players must make a definite effort to avoid charging into a passer after it is clear that the ball has thrown and may not make contact with the throwing arm. Penalty: 10 yards and automatic first down, tack on the end of the play (if positive yards have been gained), if not, 10 yards from the original spot and automatic first down.

9.3 Guarding the flag belt. Ball carriers shall not guard their flags by causing contact with arms, hands or ball to deny the opportunity for an opponent to pull or remove the flag belt. Penalty: 10 yards.

9.4 The defensive player shall not (intentionally or accidentally) hold, grasp, or obstruct forward progress of a ball carrier when in the act of removing the flag belt. Penalty: 10 yards.

9.5 The flag belt removal. Intentionally pulling or removing a flag belt from an offensive player without the ball by a defensive player is illegal. Penalty: 10 yards.

9.6 Offensive screen blocking. The offensive screen block shall take place without contact. The screen blocker shall have their hands and arms at his/her side or behind their back. Any use of the arms, elbows, legs, or knees to initiate contact during an offensive player's screen block is illegal. A blocker may use their feet in order to gain position before, during and after screen blocking. Penalty: 10 yards.

9.7 Screen blocking fundamentals – a player who screens shall not:

A. when they are behind a stationary opponent, take a position closer than a normal step from him or her;

B. when they assume a position at the side or in front of a stationary opponent, make contact with him/her;

C. take a position so close to a moving opponent that his opponent cannot avoid contact by stopping or changing direction. The speed of the player to be screened will determine where the screener may take their stationary position. This position will vary and may be one to two normal steps or strides from the opponent.

D. After assuming their legal screening position, move to maintain it, unless they move in

the same direction and path of their opponent. Penalty: 10 yards.

9.8 Blocking and interlocked interference. Teammates of a runner or passer may interfere for them by screen blocking but shall not use interlocked interference by grasping or encircling one another in any manner. Penalty: 10 yards.

9.9 Use of hands or arms by the defense. Defensive players must go around the offensive player's screen block. The arms and hands may not be used to grab or push the opponent aside. The application of this rule depends entirely on the judgment of the official. A rusher may use their arms or hands to break a fall or retain their balance. Penalty: 10 yards.

9.10 There shall be no bumping, checking, or other intentional contact between a defender and an offensive pass receiver. Both offense and defense are limited to screening an opponent.

9.11 If a player is attempting a diving flag removal and trips the ball carrier there is a penalty of 10 yards from the spot of the foul

Note:

Offensive Pass Interference - 10yds from the previous spot. (NO loss of down)

Defensive Pass Interference - 10yds from the previous spot (NO automatic first down). If the pass interference by either player is intentional or unsportsmanlike, his/her team shall be penalized an additional 10yds.

CO-REC Rules

Standard Intramural Flag Football rules shall be used, with the following exceptions:

Players

The game shall be played between two teams of 8 players, 4 men and 4 women.

Teams with 7 players shall be 4 men and 3 women or 4 women and 3 men.

Teams with 6 players shall be 3 men & 3 women, 4 women & 2 men, 2 women & 4 men.

Teams with 5 players, 3 men 2 women or 2 men 3 women, are required to start the game and avoid a forfeit.

The game may be continued with fewer than 5 players as long as the team has a chance to win.

Scoring

If a female player scores a touchdown, the point value is nine.

If a female player throws a legal forward pass and a touchdown is scored by any offensive player, the point value is also nine.

Male Touchdown is worth six points.

Safety is two points.

Extra Point is one point from 3yards; two points from 10 yards; three points from 20 yards.

Safeties and extra points carry the same value regardless if scored by male or female.

Playing Rules

Males may not run the ball across the line of scrimmage unless the ball has previously broken the scrimmage line with a legal forward pass.

If a male receiver receives a forward pass behind the line of scrimmage, he may not run across the line of scrimmage. In this case the only alternative is to lateral to a female and have her break the line of scrimmage.

When a "male-to-male" completion occurs, the next play shall be "closed". A closed play means that a "male-to-male" completion will result in an Illegal Forward Pass penalty penalized from the spot where the quarterback threw the ball.

The condition of "closed" play shall remain in effect until a female throws or receives a forward pass that results in positive yardage (advances the pucks).

A team's possession will always start as an "open" play ("male-to-male" completions are legal) regardless of the status of the play at the end of their last possession. Extra Points will be "open" or "closed" depending as called for by the previous play (a "male-to-male" completion that leads to a touchdown, regardless of whether a female or male scores the touchdown, will result in a "closed" extra point play).

If there is any penalty on a play, the officials will first determine whether the play should be "open" or "closed" and then enforce the penalty. Example: Team A is penalized for illegal motion and during the play completes a 20-yard "male-to-male" pass completion. The next play will be "closed" regardless of whether the penalty is accepted or not. Exception: If a female completes a pass to a male behind the line of scrimmage and the male player proceeds to run across the line of scrimmage, the penalty should be an illegal forward pass from the spot where the ball was thrown, five yards, loss of down, and the play remains "closed".