



FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

(FORMAL & CO-REC)

Mission Statement

To Serve, Educate and Promote Wellness

Vision Statement

We are a service-oriented department dedicated to excellent fitness, and recreation programs that enhance the university experience.

** - Indicates new rule. Games governed by NIRSA Flag & Touch Football Rules with modifications.

I. ELIGIBILITY

1. Players are subject to Intramural Sports eligibility rules, which are listed, in the current Intramural Sports Handbook.
2. Players listed on the Judicial Board Ejection List are ineligible to play.

II. THE GAME, FIELD, PLAYERS AND EQUIPMENT

1. Games shall be played between two teams of 7 players each. Teams must start and end with a minimum of 5 players. There is a maximum of 14 players per team.
2. Players must bring current U of A ID to every game. Faculty/Staff must be a Department of Campus Recreation Member or have an Intramural Sports Participation Card. **NO ID, NO PLAY, NO EXCEPTIONS.**
3. Jersey – Players of opposing teams must wear contrasting colored jerseys (t-shirts), without pockets, numbered on the front OR rear. The numbers MUST BE “permanent”! Tape, taped on numbers, or pinned on numbers is not allowed. THE HOME TEAM HAS CHOICE if there is any doubt! Jerseys must be long enough so they remained tucked in during the entire down or short enough so there is a minimum of 4” from the bottom of the jersey to the player’s waistline. The Referee will use a fist to measure the distance between the waistline and the bottom of the jersey.
4. Flag Belt – Each player must wear a one piece belt without knots, the waistline with three flag permanently attached, one flag on each side and one in the center of the back. The flags must be of a contrasting color to their opponent’s flags.
5. **Pants/Shorts – Each player must wear pants or shorts without belt(s), belt loops, NO POCKETS, exposed drawstrings, exposed snaps of any type. NO EXCEPTIONS!** The pants must be a different color than the flags.
6. All players must wear athletic type shoes. Among the items which do not meet these requirements are gymnastic slippers, loafers, tennis shoes cut so protection is reduced, ski and logger boots, and other apparel not intended for football use. Cleats are limited to studs or projections which do not exceed ½ inch in length (the screw must be a part of the cleat) and are made with nonabrasive rubber or rubber-type synthetic material which does not chip or develop a cutting edge. **NOTE: The intramural staff reserves the right to prohibit any apparel that it deems unsafe or not within the spirit of the rule!**
7. Tackle football type equipment is prohibited.
8. Players are prohibited from wearing hats (stocking caps or bandannas are acceptable),
9. THE WEARING OF ANY FORM OF JEWELRY IS PROHIBITED!

10. Mouth and Tooth Protector – It is strongly recommended that a mouth piece be worn by all players.
11. Cast, wooden or metal splints or braces of any kind (on any part of the body) are prohibited unless approved in writing by the Department of Campus Recreation.
12. Each team shall designate to the officials a field captain. The field captain will speak for the team in all dealings with the officials. The captain's choice of any option shall be irrevocable.
13. All substitutes, spectators, etc., must remain at least 5 yards behind the restraining line on each field at all times.
14. The field of play is 40 yards x 100 yards. There are four 20-yard zones and two ten-yard end zones that mark the field of play. Teams in possession of the ball are given four downs in which to advance the ball into the next 20-yard (advancing) zone. Failing to cross into the next advancing zone results in loss of possession.
15. Illegal Equipment – A player wearing illegal equipment shall not be permitted to play. This applies to any equipment which, in the opinion of the Staff or Referee, is dangerous or confusing.

III. PERIODS, TIME FACTORS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

1. **The game will consist of two halves of 22 minutes each. The clock will run continuously for each half (excluding time outs). The clock will run during P.A.T. At the conclusion of the second half, additional 5 plays will take place. Exception: Point after Touchdown (PAT) Attempts.**
2. **PUTTING THE BALL IN PLAY – THE BALL SHALL BE PLACED AT THE TEAMS 15 YARD LINE TO BEGIN EACH HALF OF A GAME AND FOLLOWING A TRY, TOUCHBACK OR SAFETY, UNLESS MOVED BY PENALTY. THERE ARE NO KICKOFFS!**
3. A coin toss will determine choice. The team winning the toss shall choose one of the following options: (1) receiving the ball or (2) which goal to defend. At the start of the second half the team losing the coin toss shall choose between the same options. Teams winning the toss in the first half can not defer their choice until the second half.
4. Each team is allowed 2 one-minute time-outs per half. Half time will consist of no more than 3 minutes.
5. A team may substitute any number, but no more than seven players may be on the field at any given time.
6. No substitute shall enter the game while a down is in progress.
7. THE 5 PLAY RULE (men & women): 5 plays will be added if the point difference is 9 or less points at the end of the second half of the game. The same rule applies if a team increases their lead to 9 or more points during the 5 plays period of the game.
8. THE 5 PLAY RULE (co-rec): 5 plays will be added if the point difference is 12 or less points at the end of the second half of the game. The same rule applies if a team increases their lead to 12 or more points during the 5 plays period of the game.
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IV. DEAD BALL AND OUT-OF-BOUNDS

1. The ball is dead whenever:
 - ◆ A live ball touches the ground (other than a kicked ball).
 - ◆ The ball is muffed on a punt return (the kick returnee drops the ball after touching it).
 - ◆ Any part of the ball carriers body, except hand or foot, touches the ground.
 - ◆ The officials whistle is sounded.
 - ◆ The ball carrier steps on or over a boundary line.
 - ◆ A forward pass, backward pass or fumble strikes the ground
 - ◆ A ball carrier's flag is pulled.

- ◆ A passers flag is pulled before the ball leaves the hand.
- 2. Whenever the football is fumbled, batted or muffed, the ball is spotted where the ball first touched the ground. Exception: The ball is spotted where possession was lost if the team gains an advantage by fumbling the ball.
- 3. An offensive player who goes out of bounds under his/hers own impetus during a down may not participate in the remainder of the down.

V. PUNTING THE BALL

1. Punts will be PROTECTED SCRIMMAGE KICKS and must be declared to the referee prior to the snap.
2. Neither team may move or leave the line of scrimmage until the ball is PUNTED.
3. Both the defense and offense must maintain 4 people on the line of scrimmage prior to the ball being PUNTED.
4. The Punter must receive the snap of the ball at least 5-yards behind the line of scrimmage and Punt the ball immediately (within 10 seconds) and in one continuous motion. The ball **MUST** be Punted forward of the line of scrimmage so that the receiving team may have an opportunity to field the ball. If team "A" is the Punting team, then team "B" must be given the opportunity to receive the Punted ball.
5. Attempting to block a punt is an illegal act.

VI. SCRIMMAGE

1. The scrimmage line is determined by the position of the ball.
2. No player shall be offside prior to, or at the snap of the ball.
3. Defensive players shall not enter the established neutral zone before the snap. As soon as they enter the neutral zone the ball becomes dead. This is encroachment. Penalty: 5-yards replay the down.
4. Defensive players must remain 1 yard off the line of scrimmage prior to the snap.
5. The ball may be snapped between the legs or from the side. The ball must remain on the ground until it is snapped.
6. The player receiving the snap must be a minimum of 3-yards behind the scrimmage line.
7. All players must line up at least 5 yards from the sidelines.
8. The offensive team is required to have a minimum of 4 players on the line of scrimmage.
9. Offensive players must be motionless at the snap of the ball, but one player may be in motion parallel to or away from the line of scrimmage.
10. No player shall take a 3 or 4 point stance.
11. The neutral zone between the offense and the defense is 1 yard.

VII. HANDING THE BALL

1. Players shall not hand the ball forward of the line of scrimmage or after a kick. A ball may be handed backward any time.
2. The player receiving the snap may make a direct run to advance the ball.
3. A snapper may not receive a hand-off unless he/she has first turned 180 degrees to face their own end zone.

VIII. PASSING THE BALL

1. Only one forward pass can be thrown per down. The initial direction of a pass determines whether the pass is forward or backward. Example: If a passer throws a forward pass that is BEHIND the line of scrimmage, this is considered a forward pass.
2. Any player may make a backward pass to any other player at any time.
3. An incomplete backward pass or fumble is a dead ball at the spot where it strikes the ground. The team last in possession retains possession at that spot.
4. A fumble may not be recovered by the defense.
5. A forward pass caught simultaneously by opposing players is dead and belongs to the offensive team at that spot. If either player lands out of bounds, the pass is incomplete.
6. 2 or more offensive players in succession may touch a pass.
7. A receiver must have 1 foot inbound for a pass to be ruled complete. (If that foot lands out of bounds simultaneously with, or before, the inbound foot lands, the pass is incomplete).
8. Illegal forward passes include forward passes released beyond the scrimmage line.
9. Both offensive and defensive receivers shall have the same opportunity to catch a thrown pass without physical contact. Therefore, neither team may use physical contact to "break up" a pass regardless if contact comes before or after the ball becomes a pass that can be caught.
10. Defensive players may not contact or "chuck" offensive receivers. This is a "no contact sport"!

IX. OFFENSIVE TEAM REGULATIONS

1. Offensive Screen Blocking shall take place with minimal or no contact. The screen blocker must have their hands, elbows, and arms close to or behind their bodies. Screen Blocking is defined as taking a normal upright stance and/or moving to maintain a position between the opponent and the ball carrier without making contact. A player making a screen block shall not take a position so close to a moving opponent that the opponent cannot avoid contact. A player, when behind a stationary opponent, shall not take a position closer than a normal step away from the opponent. Use of any part of the body to initiate contact is illegal. Unintentional contact causing the offensive team to receive an advantage is also illegal. Screen blocker must be on their feet while attempting to screen block.
2. The ball carrier must avoid contact with defensive players attempting to pull his/hers flags. He/she may not intentionally run into defensive players or lower head and/or shoulder to gain an advantage.
3. The ball carrier may not flag guard or stiff arm.
4. Teammates may not physically assist (push, pull, etc.) the ball carrier to gain an advantage.
5. If a ball carrier inadvertently loses his/her flag, a one-hand tag between the shoulders and the knees constitutes capture.
6. A ball carrier may leave his/her feet in order to gain a certain yardage, but may not go through or initiate contact with an opposing player.
7. After an inadvertent or early whistle is sounded, the team in possession of the ball will have the choice of either (1) accepting the play or (2) replaying the down.

X. DEFENSIVE TEAM REGULATIONS

1. Defensive rushing shall take place with minimal or no contact. The defensive players are expected to go around an offensive screen blocker by using an evasive maneuver. Hands and arms cannot be used to hold or push an opponent to gain an advantage.
2. Fundamentals of Flag Football: The flag must be played at all times (defensive players may not "steal" the ball from an opponent).
3. Regardless of the situation the neutral zone is always 1 yard.
4. Players may leap into the air in an attempt to deflect a thrown ball provided that there is no physical contact (in mid-air or upon landing) with an opponent.
5. Players may not contact a thrower's arm when attempting to block a pass and must allow the thrower a full follow through motion.
6. Players may not illegally obstruct the ball carrier while attempting to de-flag him/her.
7. De-flagging the ball carrier is the only legal way to stop his/her progress. Pushing the ball carrier out-of-bounds is an illegal act. Penalty: Unsportsmanlike conduct.

XI. GAME SCORING

1. A touchdown is worth 6 points. It is scored when the ball penetrates the vertical plane of the opponents goal line. 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 pull and the official determines the flag belt has been secured illegally, the touchdown is disallowed, and the player is disqualified.
2. **The TRY - (PAT):** An opportunity to score **1 POINT** from the 3 yard line, **2 POINTS** from the 10 yard line, **3 POINTS** from the 20 yard line by running or passing the ball only shall be granted the team scoring the touchdown. The offensive team must declare their option immediately following their touchdown.
3. On the TRY - (PAT): The defensive team may intercept the ball and attempt to advance the ball toward the opponent's goal line. **At the conclusion of the play, the defensive team has the option of accepting the result of the play (including scoring a touchdown, 6 points) in lieu of receiving the ball at the 15-yard line.**
4. If a ball carrier is downed (de-flagged) behind his/her goal line, either a safety or a touchback is the result. If force exerted by the team whose goal line is involved is responsible for the ball being there, it is a safety. If by their opponents, it is a touchback.
5. A safety is worth 2 points for the defense and brings the ball to the 15-yard line with a first down.
6. A touchback brings the ball to the 15-yard line with a first down.
7. A fumble, backward pass or snap that goes out of bounds behind the goal line or would be spotted behind the line is a safety.
8. A foul by the offensive team behind their own goal line is a safety.
9. If a pass is intercepted and momentum carries the ball carrier into the end zone a touchback results.

XII. OVERTIME

1. In the event the game ends in a tie, both teams shall have four attempts to score from the ten-yard line. The team that scores the most points will be declared the winner. If the game is still tied after both teams have attempted two series, then the ball will be moved to the five-yard line. If still tied after two more series, then the ball will be moved to the three-yard line. If still tied, the ball will remain at the 3-yard line until a winner is determined.
2. A coin toss will determine the first offensive possession in the overtime.
3. The same end of the field will be used for both teams' attempts.
4. No extra points are attempted during overtime periods.
5. The four downs will be treated as a regular offensive series. If a team gains one yard on it's first down then it shall be second and goal to go. However, if a team scores a touchdown on the first play they then still have three more downs in the series. So, a team could potentially score twenty-four points during a four play series.
6. If the defense intercepts a pass then the defense takes possession of the ball to begin their offensive series. **There is a change of possession.**

XIII. CONDUCT OF PLAYERS, COACHES, AND OTHERS

1. A sportsmanship Rating system has been implemented to instill a positive atmosphere of fun and fair play, to provide an opportunity for meaningful participant interaction and to encourage teams to be more responsible for the behavior of their players/spectators. Please refer to the Section on Conduct of Participants and Spectators in the Intramural Sports Handbook for specific Ratings guidelines.
2. No spectators shall stand beyond the sideline marker of the 20-yard line or behind or near the end zone before and during the game.
3. Any act will be considered Unsportsmanlike if in the opinion of the official it promotes ill will or detracts from the game. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - ◆ unnecessary roughness
 - ◆ use of abusive or insulting language
 - ◆ indicating objections to an official's call
 - ◆ touching or striking an official (immediate player ejection and life suspension)
 - ◆ Intentionally pulling the flag of a player not in possession of the ball.
4. Unsportsmanlike conduct: Any participant receiving 2 Unsportsmanlike conduct penalties during a game shall be removed (ejected) from the game immediately and must leave the playing facilities. Ejected players must meet with the Department Judicial Board before they will be allowed to resume play. Any player receiving 3 Unsportsmanlike conduct penalties for the season will be disqualified for the remainder of the season. Three Unsportsmanlike conduct penalties on one team shall end (forfeit) the game immediately. Any team receiving 4 Unsportsmanlike conduct penalties for the season will be disqualified for the remainder of the season.
5. Any team that leaves the bench or sideline area to participate in an on field altercation (for whatever reason) shall receive an automatic loss for their next scheduled league or play-off game. Let the Game Officials and on site Sport Assistant do their job!

SUMMARY OF PENALTIES:

LOSS OF 5 YARDS

- Required equipment worn illegally
- Delay of game
- Illegal substitution
- Helping the runner
- Less than 4 players on the offensive line of scrimmage
- Offensive player less than 5 yards from the sideline
- Infraction of protected scrimmage kick
- Encroachment
- Infraction of scrimmage formation
- Player out of bounds when ball is snapped
- Offensive player illegally in motion
- Player receiving snap less than 3 yards behind the scrimmage line
- Illegal shift
- Illegally handing the ball forward (also loss of down)
- Illegal forward pass (also loss of down)
- Intentional grounding (also loss of down)
- False start
- Illegal snap

LOSS OF 10 YARDS

- ◆ Quick Kick
- ◆ Kick catch interference
- ◆ Forward pass interference-Offensive (loss of down)
- ◆ Forward pass interference-Defensive (automatic 1st down)
- ◆ Illegally secured flag belt on touchdown (loss of down)
- ◆ Unsportsmanlike Conduct player, team, spectator
- ◆ Spiking, kicking, throwing, not returning ball to the official
- ◆ Steal, strike, or attempt to steal the ball
- ◆ Trip an opponent
- ◆ Contact with opponent on the ground
- ◆ Throw runner to the ground
- ◆ Hurdle any player
- ◆ Obstruction of runner
- ◆ Illegal participation
- ◆ Illegal flag belt removal
- ◆ Contact before or after ball is dead
- ◆ Unnecessary contact of any nature
- ◆ Drive or run into player
- ◆ Clipping
- ◆ Position upon shoulder or body of player to gain advantage
- ◆ Tackle runner
- ◆ Roughing the passer (automatic 1st down)
- ◆ Illegal offensive screen blocking
- ◆ Interlocked interference
- ◆ Defensive Use of hands
- ◆ Guarding the flag belt (Flag Guarding)
- ◆ Stiff arm
- ◆ Illegal Kicking
- ◆ Reentry of disqualified player

CO-REC. MODIFICATIONS

I. THE GAME, FIELD, PLAYERS AND EQUIPMENT

1. The game will consist of two halves of 22 minutes each. **The clock will run continuously for each half (excluding time outs)**. The clock will also run during P.A.T. At the conclusion of the second half, additional 5 plays will take place if applicable.
2. The games shall be played between two teams of eight players each. Teams with 7 players shall be 4 men and 3 women or 4 women and 3 men. Teams appearing with a minimum of 6 players must be 3 men/3 women in order to avoid a forfeit.
3. At no time may a team compete with fewer than 3 women.
4. A regular or intermediate size football may be used. No ball smaller than intermediate size may be used. If an intermediate ball is used it must say intermediate on the ball.
5. Four offensive players must be on the line of scrimmage at the time the ball is snapped.
6. If a team is 13 or more points ahead when the referee announces the 5-play warning at the end of the second half, the game shall be over. The same rule applies if a team increases their lead to 13 or more points during the final 5 plays of the game.

II. PASSING THE BALL

1. There are no restrictions on who you may pass the ball to.
2. The ball may be passed forward or backward at any time, from anywhere on the field.
3. On an incomplete forward pass (thrown beyond the line of scrimmage), the ball is returned to the spot from where the ball was last thrown.
4. On an incomplete backward pass or fumble, the ball is dead once it touches the ground. The ball is put into play from the spot where it touched the ground. Any incomplete spot pass made from teams own end zone will result in a safety and two points for the other team.

III. PUNTING THE BALL

1. On any protected scrimmage kick (punt) return, the receiving team may throw unlimited forward or backward passes. The pass counts as a down if: incomplete or if the net result does not enter a new zone to gain on the field.

IV. SCORING

1. If a male scores a touchdown it is worth 6 points.
2. ** A female's touchdown value is worth 9 points. If a female throws a legal forward pass and a touch down is scored it is worth 9 points.
3. **The TRY - (PAT):** An opportunity to score 1 point from the 3 yard line, 2 points from the 10 yard line, 3 points from the 20 yard line by running or passing the ball only shall be granted the team scoring the touchdown. The offensive team must declare their option immediately following their touchdown.
4. On the TRY - (PAT): The defensive team may intercept the ball and attempt to advance the ball toward the opponent's goal line. At the conclusion of the play, the defensive team has the option of accepting the result of the play (including scoring a touchdown, 6/9 points) in lieu of receiving the ball at the 15-yard line.

**** ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1. No animals in indoor/outdoor facilities. (Exception: Assisted living animals)
2. Forfeit Policy:
 - If a team does not have the minimum number of players to start a contest at the scheduled time, they will be given 10 minutes to secure the correct number before the game is declared a forfeit.
 - The Sport Assistant will declare a forfeit and award a “win” to the team that is ready to play with the correct number of players after they have properly entered their team on the scorecard.
 - If neither team is ready to play with the minimum number of players after the 10-minute forfeit period then both teams will receive a forfeit.
 - A team that does not have the minimum number of players after the 10-minute forfeit period shall forfeit the game. Example: game time is at 6pm, the game will be declared a forfeit at 6:10pm. In all cases the game must remain within the time period allotted, this means that the game clock will start at the time the game is scheduled to be played so that the 10 minutes will be deducted from normal playing time.
 - A team must start and continue the game with the minimum number of players as stated in the rules for that sport or a forfeit will be declared.
 - A team may receive a forfeit due to improper team attire.
 - Teams found to have ineligible players in the game or on the game roster may forfeit that game, depending upon time of discovery and the player’s effect on the game’s outcome.
 - Any Intramural Staff may assess forfeits for the use of an ineligible player or for player/spectator misconduct.
 - Forfeited games will not be rescheduled.
 - If a team forfeits ONCE, the first team on the waiting list may replace it (without a refund). If there is no waiting list, the team may continue to play by paying a \$20.00 Re-entry fee at the Intramural Office within 48 hour of the forfeit.
 - If a team forfeits or defaults twice (in league) it is dropped without notice.
 - A contest completed prior to a team being dropped from the league is official. A contest not played is recorded as a “win” for the opposing team.
 - A team will receive a forfeit if a game cannot be continued due to misconduct. The team will also be assessed the re-entry fee.
3. Forfeit Penalties:
 - Lose right to protest the game
 - Lose the option with regard to the coin toss for the 1st and 2nd half of play.
 - Start the game with an 8 point deficit
4. Default Policies:
 - As a courtesy to their opponents and to avoid a forfeit, a team may request to receive default for any game they will be unable to attend. In order to do so they must notify the Intramural Office at 621-8723 during normal business hours at least 24 hours prior to that game (Sunday games notification deadline is Friday at 3:30 pm).

- Default is recorded as a loss but does not require a fee payment.

5. ID Policy:

Why must a participant have an ID for each and every game? This is an often-asked question during the early part of the activity season. The answer is quite simple. During any and all transactions with the university you student ID officially recognizes you. This is what defines your status as a member of the student body or the campus community.

The Department of Campus Recreation, Intramural Sports Program wants to provide the very best services to "OUR" participants. If outside people participate in the program, they are putting participants and the university at risk. The other reason is: if an outside person is allowed to participate, these ineligible individuals would be, in essence, taking the opportunity to participate away from an eligible participant who we are here to serve.

Before each game players must present their Cat Card ID so that they may be signed in on the scorecard. Only the names of those players present will be placed on the game score card. Any player arriving after that game has started must present their Cat Card ID to the game official and have their name added to the game score card before entering the game. **NO ID, NO PLAY, NO EXCEPTIONS!**