

# PE61 Flag Football Rules

## Sample Mission Statement

The PLS Flag Football League is dedicated to improving youth sports by teaching and developing skills, promoting maximum participation and providing a positive, fair, safe environment with maximum participation. All organizations are committed to the proposition that all children should have fun regardless of the outcome of any contest and therefore seeks to raise awareness through the education of administrators, volunteer coaches, parents, spectators and game officials.

## Rules

- An “Odd/Even” determines first possession.
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at the hash marks and has four plays to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on its hash marks. (If playing inside, hash marks = main basketball court sideline.)
- All possession changes, EXCEPT INTERCEPTIONS, start on the offense’s hash marks line.
- Teams change sides after the first 20 minutes, but possession does not change and the clock will stop for a 5-minute halftime. (Class time limits length of halves.)
- Game ball sizes are:
- Teams must field a minimum of 3-5 players at all times.

## Timing

- Games are played to 40 minutes running time with a 5 minute halftime.
- If the score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, the game will be a tie and the game is over. No overtimes will be played. (This rule is under study and subject to change.)
- 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.
- Each team has one 60-second and one 30-second time out per half.
- Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.

## Scoring

- Touchdown: 6 points
- Extra point: 1 point (played from half the distance from hash mark)
- 2 points (played from hash mark)
- Safety: 2 points

## **Running**

- The quarterback cannot run with the ball until he or she is rushed (defense crosses line of scrimmage).
- Direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Offense may use multiple handoffs. No direct handoffs to the center, you must shuttle pass it to them for them to run.
- Laterals and pitches are allowed, however, forward laterals must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- “No-running zones,” located half the distance from hash mark, are designed to avoid short-yardage, power-running situations.
- The player who takes the 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 offensive players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player (no diving). Defensive players may dive to pull an offensive flag.
- The ball is spotted where the ball carrier’s feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.

## **Receiving**

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

## **Passing**

- All passes must be forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- Shotgun formation is allowed by the quarterback.
- The quarterback has a 7 second “pass clock”. If a pass is not thrown within the 7 seconds play is dead, loss of down. Once the ball is handed off, 7-second rule is no longer in effect.
- “Pick-6” interceptions are allowed. Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start on hash marks.

## **Dead Balls**

- The ball must be snapped between the legs or off to one side, to start play.
- Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- Play is ruled “dead” when:
- Ball carrier’s flag is pulled.

- Ball carrier 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.

### **Rushing the Quarterback**

All players who rush the passer must count out loud to "5-Apple".

- 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 5-Apple rule no longer is in effect, and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
- A special marker, or the referee, will designate the line of scrimmage.
- Absolutely no blocking or tackling is allowed, which includes down field situations. An offensive player must be at least 5 yards away from the ball carrier in down field situations.

### **Sportsmanship**

- Coaches, Asst Coaches, Parents, and Spectators must not use any foul or offensive language that may be offensive to the officials and the players. No tobacco or alcohol is allowed at games.
- If the field monitor or referee witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player, coach or spectator will be given a warning, and the next unsportsmanlike act, the player, coach or spectator will be ejected and sit out for the next scheduled 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 and sit out for the next scheduled game.

### **Penalties**

- All penalties will be called by the referee.

### **Defense**

- Off sides - 5 yards and automatic first down.
- Interference - 10 yards and automatic first down.
- Illegal contact (holding, blocking, etc) - 10 yards and automatic first down.

- Illegal flag pull (before receiver has ball) - 10 yards and automatic first down.
- Illegal rushing (starting rush before 5-Apple count) - 10 yards and automatic first down.

### **Offense**

- Illegal motion (more than one person moving, false start, etc) - 5 yards and loss of down.
- Illegal forward pass (pass received behind line of scrimmage) - 5 yards and loss of down.
- Offensive pass interference (illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender) - 10 Yards and loss of down.
- Flag guarding - down at the spot of the infraction.
- Delay of game - clock stops, 10 yards and loss of down (discourage teams from running out clock).

### **Attire**

- Official jerseys and flags must be worn during play.
- All T-shirts must be tucked into flag belt while playing.
- You must wear flags on your hips and check them every play to make sure they have not shifted.
- No jewelry of any kind is allowed.

### **Notes**

- Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.

All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage.

- The coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players and coaches cannot question judgment calls.
- Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.
- There are no kickoffs, and no blocking is allowed.