



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

YMCA of Greater Kansas City Flag Football Rules

OUR MISSION - the YMCA, founded on Christian principles, is an inclusive association of people united to enrich the quality of family, spiritual, social, mental, and physical well-being.

OUR VALUES - In our youth sports programs, please keep in mind that the YMCA is all about values and character development for our children. Caring, Respect, Honesty and Responsibility are the four core values of the YMCA.

SPORTSMANSHIP - Coaches are responsible for team members and spectators supporting their team, before, during, and after the game. The referee will warn any coach or player displaying unsportsmanlike conduct. If the conduct does not improve then it shall be the referee's decision to eject that coach or player from the game. If a coach fails to control his parents who are exhibiting bad sportsmanship after a warning from the referee, it will be the referee's decision to forfeit the game in favor of the other team. If a coach is having problems handling a parent's conduct, please let your official and Sports Director know immediately.

If the field referee or supervisor witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike conduct, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. **FOULPLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!**

The referee has control of the game; his/her decision is final. Any abusive language or undesirable conduct by a player, coach, or spectator will result in the disqualification of a player, coach, or team. Coaches are responsible for the behavior of their teams and spectators.

Any excessive, abusive, or inappropriate behavior on the part of a player, coach, or spectator will result in a conference with the Sports Director and possible **DISMISSAL** from the YMCA Youth Sports program without refund.

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DIVISIONS & EQUIPMENT –

- K-1st & 2nd-3rd: PEE WEE size football
- 4th-5th: JUNIOR size football
- 6th-7th: YOUTH size football
 - All Division play 5 vs. 5
 - Two twenty minute halves, running clock. Clock will only stop for timeouts or injuries.
 - *Typical Position Options:* Quarterback, Running backs, Receivers, Center, Linesman
- **Required Gear:**
 - All players must wear their YMCA provided flag football jersey.
 - Tennis shoes or soccer shoes with rubber cleats. **NO** toe cleats allowed.
 - **NO jewelry is allowed.** Players should remove all jewelry (earrings, necklaces, bracelets, etc.) before warming up or playing. This is for the child's own safety and the safety of the other players.
 - Each team will be provided a football and flag belts for practice and games
 - All players must wear a **protective mouthpiece, no exceptions.**
 - Coaches must return all equipment after the last game.

TEAM ASSIGNMENT POLICIES - the Sports Director will put all rosters together. No player shall switch teams without the approval of the YMCA Sports Director and affected coaches.

PRACTICES - There should be one scheduled practice each week per team. Players are encouraged to notify their coaches prior to being absent from games and practices. Coaches should keep parents updated on practice times, date, location and any cancellations.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

- Players and coaches are encouraged to show up at least 15 minutes prior to game time.
- Every coach and team is responsible for assisting in cleaning up the playing field and sideline area after each game. Encourage your parents and players to assist in clean up.
- Every coach is responsible for his/her own conduct first and foremost, followed by the conduct of his or her players and parents. REMEMBER as a YMCA coach you are a role model for the kids and extension of the YMCA's missions and values.
- YMCA officials will try to do their best to officiate all games in a correct manner. Please do not challenge them during the game. Profanity and other forms of abuse towards referees, coaches, parents or players will not be tolerated.
- The YMCA properties and off- site programs are considered to be SMOKE FREE!

MOST IMPORTANTLY: BE SAFE AND HAVE FUN!

GAME RULES

Referees

- There will be one or two referees per field.
- All rule infractions should be briefly explained to the offending player.

Players

- There will be no forfeits. Teams will play with the same number of players on the field if the standard amount of players for each division is not available for each team. Teams may not play with more players than what is stated for their division.
- Coaches will not have an offensive/ defensive unit. Please give each child an opportunity to play all positions.
- Teams must field a minimum of 5 players at all times. Game may start with fewer players if supervisor or officials and coaches agree.

Substitutions

- Coaches can substitute freely during each half of the game on dead ball situations and/or after any points are scored. A substitution can be made for an injured player. Coaches should do their best to provide **equal playing time for all players** as much as possible. Each player should **play at least half of each game.**

Start of Play

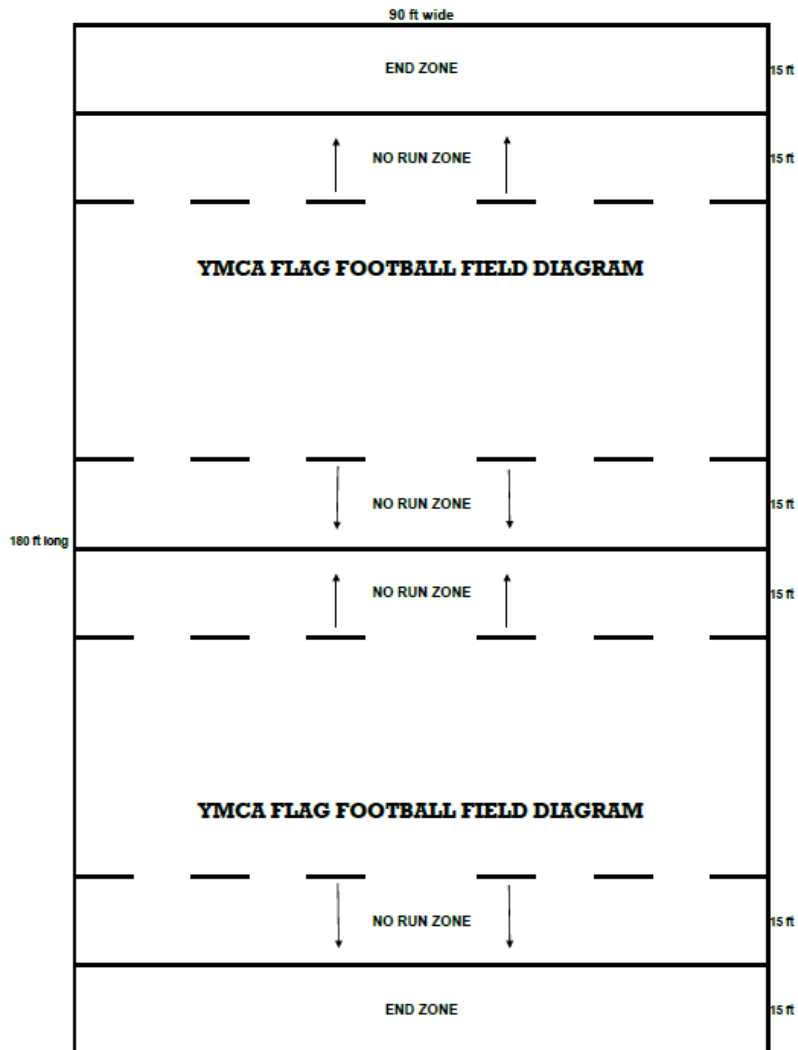
- The game will begin with a coin toss to determine possession.
- The ball will be placed at the 5 yard line.
- Time will be kept on the field.

Time outs

- Each team has one 60 second time out and one 30 second time out per half
 - Unused time outs will not be carried over.
- Officials can stop the clock at their own discretion

Game Play

- Only one coach is allowed on the field per team for K-1st and 2nd-3rd divisions.
- 5 offensive players vs. 5 defensive players
- GAME LENGTH: Two twenty minute halves, running clock. Clock will only stop for timeouts or injuries.
- PLAY CLOCK: for K-1st and 2nd-3rd divisions is 45 seconds and is 35 seconds for 4th-5th and 6th-7th divisions.
- Ball must be on the ground at the snap. Any incomplete snap shall result in a dead ball.
- Ball must be snapped between the legs to start the play.
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at their 5 yard line has 3 plays to cross midfield (**K-1st division has 4 plays to cross midfield.**)
- Once team crosses midfield they have 3 more plays to score a touchdown. The team may try for a touchdown on the 4th down but if they fail to score the defense takes over and the ball will be spotted at the end of the last play or 5 yard line whichever is greater.
 - Teams can choose to not play the 4th down after they cross midfield. If so, the defense takes over on their yard line.
- All possession changes except interceptions will start on the offenses 5 yard line.
- Teams change sides after the first half, possessions will alternate.
- There is no overtime in the regular season. (See Tournament ONLY Rules for Overtime.)
- Field Length is 60 yards long by 30 yards wide.
 - End zones are ONLY 5 yards deep.



Running

- The quarterback is the first player to touch the ball from the snap.
- **K-3rd Grade ONLY** - The quarterback CANNOT run the ball directly from the snap.
- **4th-7th Grade ONLY** - The quarterback CAN ONLY run the ball if they 7 yard rusher crosses the line of scrimmage.
- The original quarterback from the snap can run the ball only after he/she has given up total possession of the ball.
 - All hand offs to the center must be wrapped around to chest/hands.
- Only direct hand-offs, laterals, tosses, pitches or backward passes behind the line of scrimmage are legal.
 - Offense has unlimited use of these options but only behind the line of scrimmage.
- **"NO RUNNING ZONES"** are located 5 yards from each end zone and 5 yards on either side of mid field (teams are allowed to run outside the 5 yard line)
- Any player who receives a hand-off, lateral, toss, pitch or backward pass can make a legal forward pass as long as he/she does not pass the line of scrimmage.
- Moving screens that protect the ball carrier are NOT allowed.
 - Any offense player actively moving to impede the flag puller from making a play on the ball is an automatic penalty and a 5 yard loss for the offense.
 - All blocks must be stationary.
 - **NO CONTACT ALLOWED.**
- The ball is spotted where the ball is when the flag is pulled.

Receiving

- All players are eligible to receive passes (including the QB if the ball has been fully relinquished off behind the line of scrimmage).
- Only one player is allowed in motion at a time, motion must parallel to line of scrimmage (no forward motion).
- Players must have at least one foot in bounds when making a reception.
- Crossing patterns intended to pick off defensive players are not allowed and will incur an unsportsmanlike penalty against team.

Passing

- All forward passes MUST be received beyond the line of scrimmage. (One foot must be beyond the line of scrimmage and inbounds.)
- Laterals are allowed ONLY behind the line of scrimmage and will be viewed as a pitch, but the receiver has to be behind passer. Laterals cannot occur past the line of scrimmage.
- Forward shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- QB has a 7 second "pass clock". If the pass is not thrown within the 7 seconds the play is dead, and there is a loss of down. Once the ball is relinquished by the quarterback the rule is no longer in affect.
- Interceptions change the possession of the ball and may be advanced by the defense unless intercepted in the end zone. (6 points for regular play, 1 or 2 points if intercepted during extra point attempt outside the end zone.)
- Interceptions in the end zone will be placed on the 5 yard line.

Rushing the Quarterback

- All players that rush the passer must be a minimum of 7 yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped.
- Any number of players can rush the QB if behind the 7 yard line.
- Players not rushing the QB may defend on the line of scrimmage.
- Jumping up to block the pass is allowed, but if any contact is made with the quarterback during the jump or upon landing, a penalty will be assessed.

- Once the ball is handed off the 7 yard rule is no longer in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
- Defensive players that are not 7 yards back to rush quarterback cannot cross the line of scrimmage until possession of ball leaves the quarterbacks hand.
- A special marker or the referee will designate 7 yard from the line.

Dead Balls

- Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- Play is ruled DEAD when:
 - ball carrier steps out of bounds
 - a touchdown is scored
 - at the point of an interception in the end zone
 - at the point of an interception on an extra point attempt in the end zone
 - ball carriers knee touches ground
 - ball carriers flag is pulled
 - ball carriers flag belt falls off
 - receivers flag belt falls off
 - a forward pass is caught behind the line of scrimmage
- There are no fumbles. The ball will be spotted where the ball hits the ground. Fumbles in the end zone will be placed at the 1-yard line plus loss of down. A fumble in the end zone is not a safety.
- If player with the ball loses flag belt, ball will be downed at the spot of losing the belt. If a player catches a pass with no flag belt, the spot of the ball will be where player comes down with the completion.

Penalties

- All penalties will be called by the referee and may be declined.
- All unsportsmanlike penalties incur an automatic 1st down or loss of down and depending on infraction; it may include expulsion of players/team/coach/spectators.
- Players must keep flags on hips/sides and one down the middle of their bottom. Failure to do so will result in dead ball/delay of game penalty. Flags shifting to positions other than hips or sides during the course of live ball play will not be penalized. Each player must check flag position between downs.
- Failure to tuck in jerseys will result in dead ball/delay of game penalty.
- Any penalty within the NO RUN zone will be half the distance to the goal line.
- Defensive penalties that bring the offensive team within the no run zone, will give the offensive team the opportunity to either replay the down outside of the no run zone without penalty **OR** loss of down or accept the penalty that moves the ball into the no run zone and gives offense an automatic 1st down.
 - Defense Penalties:
 - All defensive penalties incur automatic 1st down and loss of 5 yards
 - **Off sides** (on offense side of line of scrimmage at snap)
 - **Pass Interference**
 - **Illegal contact** (holding, blocking, tackling, pushing, tripping, or making contact with QB other than going for flags or to knock down a passed ball)
 - **Tackling penalties** additional 5 yards added to end of play (spot foul)
 - **Illegal Flag Pull** (before receiver has ball)
 - **Illegal Rusher** (if defender's foot or feet are inside the 7 yard zone at snap and then same defender crosses line of scrimmage before quarterback relinquishes the ball)

- Offense Penalties:
- All offensive penalties incur a loss of down and loss of 5 yards
 - **Illegal motion** (more than 1 person moving in the back field)
 - **False Start** (any players on the line set not in motion that move)
 - **Illegal forward pass** (receive forward pass behind line of scrimmage)
 - **Offensive Pass Interference** (illegal pick, pushing off)
 - **Flag Guarding** (from the spot)
 - If ball carrier reaches down to check if flag belt is still on during the play is it also considered Flag Guarding.
 - **Delay of game** (game clock will stop and restart when official starts play clock)
 - **Illegal Runner** (if QB runs with ball across line of scrimmage if not allowed)
- Yardage for all penalties except flag guarding and tackling will be marked from the original spot of the ball not the spot of the penalty.

Enforcement

- Referees determine incidental contact, which may result from normal running of play.
- All penalties except for flag guarding and tackling are from the original line of scrimmage.
- Only team captain / head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players, assistant coaches, or spectators cannot question judgment calls, nor can they chirp about calls.
- Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.

Points of Emphasis

- Spinning and Jumping are ALLOWED!
- Diving with the ball and laterals beyond the line of scrimmage will be considered dead ball situations. The play will be blown dead and the ball will be spotted at the point of the infraction.
- Players may not intentionally strip the football from the ball carrier or attempt to cause a fumble during the course of a play. If this occurs it will result in a 5 yard penalty and an automatic 1st down for the offense.
- Player's shorts must be a different color than the flags.
- Diving for the end zone as a ball carrier is not allowed.
- Players must wear shorts or pants w/o pockets or belt loops.
- Smoking on or around game sites is prohibited. The YMCA and its program locations are SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENTS.

Scoring

- Touchdown = 6 points
 - (Any part of the ball must cross the front edge of the touchdown line to score, or one foot in the end zone with possession.)
- Extra Points:
 - 5 yards out = 1 point (Pass ONLY Plays from the 5 yard attempt.)
 - 12 yards out = 2 points (Pass or Run Plays allowed from 12 yards out.)
- Safety = 2 points
 - Safety happens ONLY when one of these occur:
 - When ball carriers flag is pulled in own end zone
 - player goes down in their own end zone
 - or ball is hiked through the back of the end zone
 - A fumble in the end zone is not a safety.

TOURNAMENT RULES ON NEXT PAGE

YMCA Flag Football Tournament Rules Points of Emphasis

ALL Rules above for specific divisions still apply, yet rules below overrule in tournaments.

- Game time is forfeit time.
- The official score and time will be kept on the field.
- No playing time restrictions for players, but we do encourage all players get the opportunity to play.
- Diving with the ball and laterals beyond the line of scrimmage will be considered dead ball situations. The play will be blown dead and the ball will be spotted at the point of infraction.
- Jerseys must be worn on the outside, all layers must be underneath.
- Do you have trick plays? Please communicate with the officials prior to the game if you have a play that may be on the cusp of working outside the rules rather than between the rules. If in question talk to the official prior to the start of the game.
- If an interception on an extra point play happens outside the end-zone the ball can be returned. The team that intercepts the pass will be given 1 or 2 points depending on what the offensive team was attempting if the defensive team runs it back to their end zone.
- **OVERTIME**
 - Will consist of each team having a one play opportunity each overtime period.
 - Teams will choose to go for 1 point from 5 yards out (PASS ONLY) or 2 points from 12 yards out (PASS or RUN), this is similar to an extra point, until one team fails to score.