

ADULT FLAG FOOTBALL RULES 2025

1. ELIGIBILITY

- a. Adults ages 18 and out of high school
- b. Players must sign roster before participation.
- c. **All players must have a matching color shirt with a number.... (NO EXCEPTIONS)**

2. LENGTH OF GAME-TIME FACTORS

- a. **Playing time:** there shall be two (20 Minute) halves with a 3 minute half time. Games are played rain, shine, sleet, and snow.... only cancellation or delay would be due to lightning.
- b. *There is **NO GRACE PERIOD!** We will start at the scheduled game time. Players must be equipped and at the field ready to go.*
- c. **In case of a tie:** one overtime will be played. Each team will have possession at the Twenty (20) yard line with an opportunity to score plus the one or two point conversions. Additional overtimes will not be played, unless playoffs.
- d. **Time-Out:** Each team is allowed 3 time-outs per game; any player in the game or on the bench may call for a time-out. One minute will be allowed for each time-out. No time outs will be recognized if teams have used their maximum number.
- e. **The Clock Stops for:** incomplete passes, 1st downs and out of bound plays in the last minute of each half. On first downs, the clock will start once the official has spotted the ball. Otherwise, the clock does not stop except for time-outs and the discretion of the official. If a team appears to be using stalling tactics, an un-sportsman like conduct penalty may be called by the official.
- f. **Huddle:** 30 seconds is allowed to put the ball in play (after head official whistle to start 30 sec. clock). The penalty for too much time is 5 yards. The down remains the same, no option by the opponents. Official will let offense know when 10 seconds and 5 seconds remain to put ball in play.
- g. **Captains:** will get together with the official at the field prior to each game to toss a coin to determine possession. The winner of the flip shall choose either offense or defense. Teams will change direction of play in 2nd half.

3. SCORING

- a. Touchdown.....6 points
- b. Point after touchdown.....1,2 or 3 points
- c. Safety.....2 points

*****NOTE: The point after touchdown must be scored by a pass or run from the 5 yard line for (1) point or 10 yard line for (2) points OR 15 yard line for (3) points. Defense team can score the same point value if returned.**

4. SAFETY

- a. A safety is declared when the ball becomes dead on or behind a team's goal line. This includes fumbles, sacks, dropped punts and center snaps that land on the goal line or in the end zone.

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5. PUNTING

- a. When a team declares to punt, both teams must have 3 players on the line of scrimmage. No player on either team may take off until the ball is kicked. The receiving team must have 3 players deep. *** NEW RULE. (2) DEFENSIVE PLAYERS MAY ATTEMPT TO BLOCK THE PUNT, BUT MUST DECLARE A MINIMUM OF 3 SECONDS BEFORE THE BALL IS SNAPPED.**

6. PLAYING FIELD AND DOWNS

- b. The playing field shall be marked off in 3 zones, each 20 yards long. The playing field will be 40 yards wide and 60 yards long.
- c. In a series of 4 downs, the team in possession of the ball must advance the ball to the next zone which is in advance of where the ball is located at the start of the first down of the series.
- d. When a team starts possession after a score, they will receive the ball on their own 10 yard line and must go 10 yards for their first down.
- e. Any time a team fails to convert on fourth down, the opposing team takes possession of the ball at that spot.

7. NUMBER OF PLAYERS

- f. Fees for team and team rosters may be taken to the Park & Recreation office, 100 Republic Street, Norwalk. This must be done before a player is allowed to participate in this sport. ***Players may be added for no additional fee in September. From October 1-Oct. 31 there will be a \$30 late player add-on fee. Beginning Nov. 1, all rosters are frozen for the remainder of the season. Late add-on players must sign the roster at the Rec. prior to participating.***
- g. 6 players max. on the field. No penalty for 5 players.
- h. 3 players are required to be on the line of scrimmage on offense when the ball is snapped. These players do not need to be linemen. Penalty for less than 3 players on the line is 5 yards.
- i. A maximum of 20 players may be on the roster. No player may be on more than 1 team.
- j. A team that has 4 players may pick up 1 to field 5. Team would still play 5 vs. 6.

8. ELIGIBLE PASS RECEIVERS

- k. All players are eligible receivers. Receiver that steps out of bounds may not be first to touch a forward pass, unless forced out.
- l. The quarterback may rush the football.

9. EQUIPMENT OF PLAYERS

- a. Players are prohibited from wearing any type of metal spike. Penalty is ½ game suspension.
- b. No padding will be worn. **Exception: Foam rubber knee or elbow pads permitted.**

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- c. **Matching colored tee-shirts or jerseys, with number**, should be worn on the inside of the shorts so they do not interfere with flags. Untucked shirts must have belt and flags over the top of shirt. Players that begin the play with untucked shirt will not be allowed impeding calls by defense hanging on shirt in attempt to get flag.
- d. **Each team must bring their own ball, regulation adult size.**

10. **TACKLING/FLAG PULLING**

- a. Tackling is not permitted. If tackled in open field, touchdown may be awarded.
- b. The ball is dead when the belt worn by the ball carrier is detached from the ball carrier, or when the discretion of the game official, the belt should have been detached from the ball carrier's waist. Examples: shirt over belt. However, if defensive man continues to hang on the pants or other clothing prior to detaching the belt, impeding will be called at the discretion of the official.
- c. When the ball carrier illegally uses his hands to protect his flag, or stiff arm he will be whistled dead at that point. The down is not replayed.
- d. Players who lost their flag/belt, or did not have one at the start of the play, are able to receive the ball, but are declared down by a **one hand touch** by the defense. If the ball is intercepted by the defense and the players' flag belt falls from his waist, the same situation prevails.
- e. Action against the runner, other than to detach the flag/belt, is unnecessary roughness. (removal from game is flagrant)
- f. Leaving the feet in an attempt to detach flag is legal. However, the primary contact is your responsibility.
- g. **Attempting to dislodge the ball** or take the ball from the ball carrier that has possession is not allowed. This is impeding the runner/or holding. Players must go for the flags, unless attempting to intercept the ball.
- h. Ball carrier may be pushed out of bounds in the hip (flag) area, near the sideline.

11. **BLOCKING**

- a. Blocking may be done with either the forearms in a position horizontal to the ground (below the face and neck) or with the hands kept inside the blocker's body. Use of hands outside width of blocker's body or grabbing defensive player in any way will be considered holding.
- b. There shall be not two-on-one blocking beyond the line of scrimmage. Accidentally falling when attempting a block, is not an illegal block.
- c. No defensive player may contact the offensive center (and must be one yard off of center at snap) in any manner until he has snapped the ball and had the opportunity to lift his head and defend himself. Center may not block until meeting above requirement.
- d. Blocking pass rushers in the back is **NOT** legal. A block must be continuous and begin at the shoulder, without separation, for a block to legally occur. *****This also applies within the tackle box*****

12. **DEAD BALL**

- a. Any ball which touches the ground during any play is to be blown dead at the spot, including a snap from the center.

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13. PASS INTERFERENCE

- a. No player from either team may make contact with the other in the secondary while the ball is in the air.
- b. Defensive backs and receivers may not make contact beyond 5 yards from the line of scrimmage. (illegal contact-5 yard penalty). If the ball is in the air, pass interference. Pass interference against offensive team is 10 yard penalty. Defensive Pass interference is a spot foul. If in the end zone, 1st and goal at the 1 yard line.

14. PASSING

- a. One forward pass may be thrown from any point behind the line of scrimmage. On any double pass, the first pass MUST be a lateral.
- b. Centering the ball must be between the legs, shot-gun or direct snap.
- c. One foot must be in bounds for a complete pass.
- d. Offensive team must retrieve ball on pass plays. The clock official will allow a reasonable amount of time before starting 30 sec. play clock.

15. OTHER RULES

- a. Official will give signal or inform coach of penalty and guilty party. Complaining about calls will not be tolerated by players, coaches or spectators.
- b. Any act of un-sportsmanlike conduct, before, during or after the game including the use of profane, abusive or insulting language can cause for the removal of the offending player by order of official or supervisor. The player will pay a \$10 fine for any unsportsmanlike penalty. Ejected players will be fined \$20 and sit the following game.
- c. Games will be played at Norwalk Rec or Sofios Park – 39 N. Old State Rd. Norwalk, on Saturday afternoons, rain, shine or snow!
- d. The league supervisor will remain the final authority.
- e. Neither a player, nor a non-player, may interfere with the play by an act which is intentionally unfair and which is not specifically provided for in these rules. **Penalty: the referee enforces any penalty he considers justified.**
- f. After pass is made you must avoid quarterback. Incidental contact is ignored, but raking head, face, pushing after the pass etc. is penalized. Go for the flag!!!
- g. Any number of defensive players may rush the quarterback. These players may rush from any point of the field and may be delayed.
- h. Any player lined up over the center must be one yard off the ball.
- i. Ball carrier may not dive/leap (over players). Play blown dead at the spot.
- j. Intentional grounding-QB's avoiding a sack must attempt a completion or throw the ball past the line of scrimmage *IN THE VICINITY OF A RECEIVER*.
- k. A **player on one knee or on the ground** must be touched or have flags removed to be considered down.
- l. Dehn Rule (come back blocks) – unprotected players may be screened (blocked). However, decleating a player who does not see it coming will be an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty and could result in ejection, depending on severity.

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16. SUMMARY OF PENALTIES

a. LOSS OF 5 YARDS

- 16.a.i. Protection of flags, stiff arming (play stops immediately & loss of down).
- 16.a.ii.** Off-sides (encroachment)-once cross neutral zone-AUTOMATIC!
- 16.a.iii.** Illegal motion- (more than 1 player in motion. All players must be set, in their stance for a minimum of 1 second before player goes in motion). Any player lined up within 3 yards on either side of center are considered linemen at the start of play. These players may not shift. Therefore, any movement after set in stance is illegal motion.
- 16.a.iv. Illegal Procedure: (not enough on line, motion person moving forward at snap)
- 16.a.v. Delay of game
- 16.a.vi. Illegal snap
- 16.a.vii. Early removal of flags (could be touchdown, 5 yard minimum)
- 16.a.viii. Illegal handing of ball forward (loss of down)
- 16.a.ix. Illegal forward pass (also loss of down)
- 16.a.x. Intentional grounding (also loss of down & 5 yds. From spot)
- 16.a.xi. Illegal contact – the lesser version of unnecessary roughness
- 16.a.xii.** Bulldozing – Any ball carrier that (in the judgment of the official) makes no attempt to avoid defender, by simply running at defensive player. Ball carrier must make a “football move” to gain yards.
- 16.a.xiii.** **LANGUAGE – *directed at a player's own team or about player's OWN play.***

b. LOSS OF 10 YARDS

- 16.b.i. Offensive Pass interference
- 16.b.ii.** Holding/ illegal contact/illegal use of hands/ block in the back.
- 16.b.iii.** Unsportsmanlike conduct (player could be suspended for 1 or more games).
All un-sportsmanlike conduct penalties will be \$10 fines and power plays. Any one player that receives 2 in one game will be ejected. 3 by one player in a season results in an indefinite suspension.

This penalty includes:

- 16.b.iii.1.a. Tackling (could be touchdown)
- 16.b.iii.1.b. Roughness – this includes any unnecessary contact away from the ball, blindside hits etc.
- 16.b.iii.1.c.** Disrespecting officials, kicking ball, taunting, etc.
- 16.b.iii.1.d.** Swearing. Warning first issued if not severe.

c. POWER PLAY

- 16.c.i. Team in violation will play with one less player for 3 plays. Power play is **NOT** voided if the opposing team scores during the 1st or 2nd power play.
- 16.c.ii. Penalized player must sit, no substitutes allowed.

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d. **SPOT FOUL**

16.d.i. Defensive pass interference-first down at spot of foul. In end zone will be 1st goal at the one (1) yard line.

e. **EJECTION**

16.e.i. One game minimum suspension and \$20 fine. Player must leave park within 3 minutes or forfeit will be declared. Ejected player may not return to field under any circumstances. The following list are reasons for ejection:

- 16.e.i.1. Unsportsmanlike conduct or fighting (severe)
- 16.e.i.2. Roughness (severe or 2nd violation on same player)
- 16.e.i.3. Altering flags - ½ game
- 16.e.i.4. Metal Spikes – ½ game

f. **FORFEIT/PICK-UPS**

16.f.i. Teams that fail to have 4 players available at game time will forfeit. Teams with 4 players may pick one up to field five, under the following conditions:

16.f.ii. Opposing manager approves of the pickup and the pickup is a participant in the league under contract.

16.f.iii. Team forfeit will result in team being eliminated from end of the season tournament. No exceptions!

g. **INADVERTANT WHISTLE**

16.g.i. The coach with possession of the ball has the choice of the play over or taking possession on the field where the play had progressed at the time the whistle had inadvertently stopped play.

h. **NO CENTER SNEAK!!!!**

NOTE: COACH IS RESPONSIBLE FOR RETURNING EQUIPMENT TO THE OFFICIALS FOLLOWING THE GAME. TEAMS MUST ALSO PICK UP THEIR BENCH AREA.