



Village Sports League Flag Football Rules

Format

Game day and time: Saturdays. 8am,9am,10am,11am. Game times will alternate weekly.

Games will be played in a 7V7 format with teams of 11 players.

Players will be provided with flags, balls and officials.

Game

- At the start of each game, captains from both teams meet at midfield for the coin toss to determine who starts with the ball. The visiting team calls the toss.
- The winner of the coin toss has the choice of offense or defense. The loser of the coin toss has the choice of direction. Possession changes to start the second half to the team that started the game on defense.
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has four (4) downs to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has four (4) downs to score a touchdown.
 - a. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, on 3 downs, and elects to "punt" on 4th down, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its own 5-yard line.
 - b. If the offensive team goes for it on 4th down and does not cross field, the opposing team will start its possession from the spot.
 - c. Offensive Teams MUST declare 4th down intent; "Play or Punt", when asked by the referee and prior to 'Ready for Play'.
 - d. Teams may use a timeout only to change the declaration of "Play" at any time prior to the expiration of the play clock.
 - e. If the declaration is "Punt" the ball changes possession and will be placed at the opposing Team's 5-yard line, 1st down, with **NO** option to change the declaration.
 - f. If the offense fails to score, after crossing midfield the ball changes possession and the new offensive Team starts at its 5-yard line
- Teams change sides after the first half. Possession changes to the team that started the game on defense.

Substitutions

In the event a team does not have an adequate number of players, they are allowed to use substitute players. The substitute must complete a liability waiver with the VSL coordinator. Substitutes are allowed to play in a playoff or championship game only if they have played and signed into a regular season game. Substitute eligibility should be confirmed with the VSL coordinator prior to a playoff or championship game. Substitutes may only participate in a game in the event a team does not have the minimum number of players to start the game. If paid players arrive after the start of game time, they take priority to a substitute. Subs are permitted to play in 3 regular season games only. If a substitute player is eligible and needed to play in a playoff game, they are only eligible to play with one team.

Code of Conduct

VSL offers recreational sports leagues and will not tolerate unsportsmanlike conduct. Players displaying unsportsmanlike conduct with an official or player will first receive a verbal warning. If said player displays inappropriate behavior again, they will be suspended from the next scheduled game of the season. Depending on the severity of the conflict, season suspension may be enforced by the VSL coordinator. All warnings will be communicated by the official and via email by the VSL coordinator. Please note that officials serve the right to eject players from the game or place suspensions.

Weather / Rain Out Policy

All game day, weather dependent decisions will be made by 2pm the day of the game. Temperatures estimated to be over 105 degrees or under 30 degrees at the time of play will result in a postponed or canceled game, decided by the VSL

coordinator. Rain that has left the field in an unplayable condition will result in a postponed or canceled game, decided by the VSL coordinator. Players will be notified of any schedule changes by email and can also call the rainout line at 214-772-2409 for the most up to date game day decisions

Equipment

- All players must wear official VSL belts and flags. Mouthguards are optional.
- Players must wear shoes.
- Players must remove all jewelry, hats and do-rags. Winter beanies are allowed.
- Players may wear soft shell helmets, but they must be always secured while on the playing field
- Players' jerseys must be tucked into shorts or pants if they hang below the belt line.
- We recommend players wear shorts or pants that do not have pockets. Shorts or pants with belt loops or pockets must be taped. Games will not be delayed for a player to tape up pockets.
- a. **Flag belts and flags cannot be the same color as the shorts or pants.**

Field of Play

- Field dimensions are as follows:
- X yards wide by X yards long with two X yard endzones. Both with a midfield line to gain. No Run zones are located 5 yards prior to the line to gain and 5 yards prior to the endzone in the offense's direction.
- No run zones are in place to prevent teams from conducting power run plays. While in the no run zones teams cannot run the ball in any fashion. All plays must pass plays even without a handoff.
- Stepping on the boundary line is considered out of bounds.
- Each offensive team approaches only 2 no run zones in each drive (one zone 5 yards from midfield to gain the first down, and one zone 5 yards from the goal line to score a TD).

Timing and Overtime

- Regular season games are played on a 40 minute continuous clock with two 20 minute halves, unless one team gains a 35 point advantage which will end the game. The clock stops for halftime, injuries and the officials' discretion.
- Halftime is 5 minutes.
- Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball.
- Each team has one 60 second timeout per half. They do not carry over.
- Overtime will not be provided during regular season games. A 5 minute overtime period will be provided in playoff games only.

Scoring

- Touchdown: 6 points
- PAT (point after touchdown) 1 point (5 yard line) or 2 points (10 yard line)
- Interceptions returned for scores during regular game play are worth 6 points, conversions are worth 2 points.
- Safety: 2 points
- A safety occurs when the ball-carrier is declared down in his/her own end zone. Runners can be called down when their flags are pulled by a defensive player, a flag falls out, they step out of bounds, their knee or arm touches the ground, a fumble occurs in the end zone or if a snapped ball lands in or beyond the end zone.
- Forfeits are scored 35-0 for the winning team.

Running

- The ball is spotted where the ball is when the flag is pulled.
- The quarterback cannot directly run with the ball. The quarterback is the offensive player who receives the snap.
- Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Handoffs may be in front, behind or to the side of the offensive player but must be behind the line of scrimmage. The offense may use multiple handoffs.
- Center sneak play is not allowed.
- No pitches/laterals of any kind.

- No run zones are located 5 yards before each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield are designed to avoid short yardage power running situations. Teams are not allowed to run in these zones if the subsequent line is live.
- No blocking or screening is allowed.

Passing

- All passes must be thrown with one hand from behind the line of scrimmage, thrown forward and ball out of hand prior to breaching the line of scrimmage.
- There is no intentional grounding
- All passes that do not cross the line of scrimmage, whether received or not, are illegal forward passes, unless touched by a defender
- The quarterback may throw the ball away to avoid a sack. Pass must go beyond the line of scrimmage.
- Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- The quarterback has a 7 second pass clock. If a pass is not thrown within 7 seconds, the play is dead, the down is consumed, and the ball is returned to the LOS. Once the ball is handed off the 7 second rule is no longer in effect.

Receiving

- All players are eligible to receive passes, including the quarterback, if the ball has been handed off behind the LOS.
- A player must have at least one foot or other body part in bounds, contacting the ground first possession.

Rushing the Passer

- All players who 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 quarterback. Players who are not rushing the quarterback can defend on the line of scrimmage.
- Once the ball is handed off, the 7-yard rule no longer is in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
- A special marker, or the referee, will designate a rush line 7 yards from the line of scrimmage. Defensive players should verify they are in the correct position with the official on every play.
- A legal rush is: Any rush from a point 7-yards from the defensive line of scrimmage, a rush from anywhere on the field AFTER the ball has been handed off by the quarterback
- Players rushing the quarterback may attempt to block a pass; however, contact to the QB, unless ruled incidental by the official, would result in a roughing the passer penalty.
- The offense cannot impede the rusher in any way. The rusher has the right to a clear path to the quarterback, regardless of where they line up prior to the snap. The PATH is set pre-snap from the rusher or rushers directly to the QB. PATH does not move once the quarterback moves. If the "path or line" is occupied by a moving offensive player, then it is the offense's responsibility to avoid the rusher. Any disruption to the rusher's path and/or contact will result in an impeding penalty for the rusher. If the offensive player does not move after the snap, then it is the rusher's responsibility to go around the offensive player and to avoid contact.
- A sack occurs if the quarterback's flags are pulled behind the line of scrimmage. The ball will be spotted where possession of the ball is once the flag is pulled.
- A Safety is awarded if the sack takes place in the offensive team's end zone.

Flag Pulling

- A legal flag pull takes place when the ball-carrier is in full possession of the ball.
- Defenders can dive to pull flags but cannot tackle, hold or run through the ball-carrier when pulling flags.
- It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball-carrier's possession at any time.
- If a player's flag inadvertently falls off during a play while that player has possession, the player is down immediately and the play ends. The ball is placed where the flag lands.
- If a player who has one or no flags in their belt takes possession of the ball, the play is dead at that spot on the field.
- A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags from a player who is not in possession of the ball.

- Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball-carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping the head, hand, ball, arm or shoulder or intentionally covering the flags with the football jersey.

Formations

Offenses must have a minimum of one player on the LOS(the center) and up to 5 players on the LOS. The quarterback must be off the LOS.