

# i9 Sports Flag Football Rules



## i9 Sports Official 5 vs. 5 Flag Football Rules

i9 Sports Flag Football is a popular five-on-five game filled with fun and action. In this game, the offensive team plays for a first down at midfield and a touchdown in the end zone. Running and passing plays are allowed, **although there are “no-running zones” at midfield and near each goal line. The offensive team cannot run a running play when the line of scrimmage is in a “no-running zone.”** The defensive team covers receivers, rushes the passer and grabs flags to make “tackles.”

### The Basics

- A coin toss determines first possession.
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has four plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it 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 5-yard line.
- If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its 5-yard line.
- All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line. Interceptions may be run back.
- Teams change sides after the first 20 minutes. Possession changes to loser of coin toss.
  - **ELITE -Teams change sides after the first 22 minutes. Possession changes to loser of coin toss.**
- Field dimensions are: 50 yards long X 30 yards wide with 7-10 yard end zones with 5 yard no-run zones before mid-field line and goal lines.

### Players/Game Schedules

Teams must field a minimum of four players at all times.

Teams consist of 8 to 10 players – five players on the field.

### Playing Time

- Equal playing regardless of participant's athletic ability.
  - **ELITE - It is not mandatory that players rotate positions, but each player is required to play 33% of the game. (1 out of 3 plays or drives)**

### Timing/Overtime

- Games are played in two 20 minute halves with a running clock. Clock will stop in last minute of each half.
  - **ELITE - Games are played in two 22 minute halves with a running clock. Clock will stop in the last minute of each half.**
- Game Clock will stop during the last minute for penalties. Play Clock will resume.
- 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.
- **There is no over time in the regular season.**

## Scoring

- Touchdown: 6 points
- Extra point: 1 point (played from 5-yard line) or 2 points (played from 12-yard line)
- Extra Point Attempt Return 2 points
- Safety: 2 points
- Forfeits: Any forfeit will be scored as 7-0 for the non-forfeiting team

**Please remember that scoring is part of the game but not the main focus;  
always place the kids before the win!**

## Running

- The quarterback cannot run with the ball past the line of scrimmage.
- Offense may use multiple handoffs
- “No-running zones” located five yards from each end zone and five yards on either side of midfield 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 players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player (no diving).
- The ball is spotted where the ball carrier’s feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.
- Laterals and pitches are only allowed behind the line of scrimmage.

## 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

- Shovel passes are allowed.
- The quarterback has a seven-second “pass clock.” If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, play is dead, loss of down. Once the ball is handed off, the seven-second rule no longer is in effect.
  - **ELITE** - The quarterback has a five-second “pass clock.” If a pass is not thrown within the five seconds, play is dead, loss of down. Once the ball is handed off, the five-second rule no longer is in effect.
- Passes **MUST** cross the line of scrimmage!
  - **ELITE** - Passes behind the line of scrimmage are allowed and a double pass can occur as long as the player who catches the pass is parallel or behind the quarterback’s position.
- Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the end of the run back. Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start on the 5-yard line.

## **Dead Ball**

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
- The ball is fumbled and hits the ground
- Ball carrier's flag falls off

The ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to one side, to start play (Rule can be altered by allowing the players to hike to the side for the first two weeks of the season for the youngest age group).

**\*\*Note: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground.**

**\*\*Note: There are no kickoffs, and no blocking is allowed.**

## **Rushing the Quarterback**

All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. 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 or thrown, the seven-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 seven yards from the line of scrimmage. Remember, no blocking or tackling is allowed.

## **Sportsmanship/Roughing**

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 will be ejected from the game.

- **ELITE - If the referee witnesses any tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. The foul will result in a 15 yard penalty.**

## **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.

- **ELITE - 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, players or coach will be assessed a penalty of 15 yards if on defense. An ejection from the game will be at the discretion of the official.**

### **Defensive Penalties**

- **Offside** -- 5 yards and repeat the down
- **Pass Interference** -- 15 yards and automatic first down
- **Illegal contact** (holding, blocking, etc.) -- 5 yards and repeat the down
- **Illegal flag pull** (before receiver has ball) -- 5 yards and repeat the down
- **Illegal rushing** (starting rush from inside 7-yard marker) -- 5 yards and repeat the down
- **Substitution fouls** (player enters field after ball is blown ready for play, i.e. to deceive opponents, or 6 players on the field) -- 5 yards and repeat the down
- **Interference with opponent or ball at the snap** -- 5 yards and repeat the down
- **Defensive holding** -- 5 yards from the point of the foul
  - **ELITE - An Unsportsmanlike Penalty will result in a 15 yard penalty.**

### **Offensive Penalties**

- **Delay of game** -- 5 yards and loss of down
- **Substitution fouls** -- 5 yards and loss of down
- **Illegal motion** (more than one person moving, etc.) -- 5 yards and loss of down
- **False Start** -- 5 yards and loss of down
- **Illegal Snap** -- 5 yards and loss of down
- **Offensive holding** -- 5 yards and loss of down
- **Player out of bounds** (if player goes out of bounds, player cannot return to the field and catch ball) -- 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) -- 5 yards and loss of down
- **Flag guarding** (carrying ball close to flag in an effort to guard or stiff-arms) -- 5 yards from the point of foul and loss of down
  - **ELITE - An Unsportsmanlike Penalty will result in a 15 yard penalty.**

### **When In Doubt, Sit Them Out Policy**

If a coach, official or i9 Sports staff member suspects that an athlete may have sustained a concussion, the player should be removed from play immediately. The player should not be left alone and the parent/guardian should be notified so they can follow up accordingly.

### **Attire**

- Cleats are allowed, except for metal spikes. Inspections will be made.
- All players must wear a protective mouthpiece; there are no exceptions.
- No pockets or hoops on shorts.
- No hats with brims or bills.
- The official i9 Sports jerseys must be worn during play.

### **Playoffs**

Teams will be placed in a single week playoff format with the highest seeded team playing the second seeded team and so on.

### Tiebreakers for Post Season

Tiebreakers will be in the following order:

1. Head to Head Competition
2. Point Differential - points scored minus points allowed for the season (a maximum of 15 points per game)
3. Total Points Allowed
4. Coin Flip

### Overtime (Playoffs Only)

If the score is tied at the end of regulation, teams move directly into overtime (only in the playoffs).

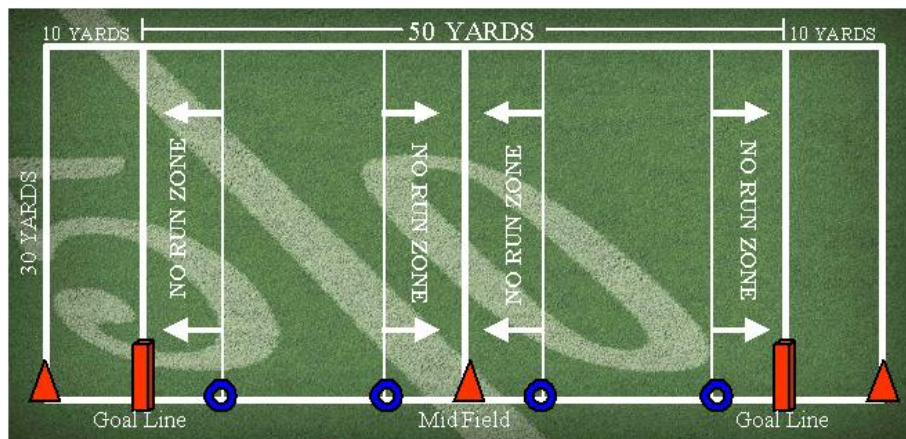
- Coin flip will determine possession
- Each team will get one possession starting at mid-field
- Continue until winner is determined.

### Playing Field

The typical playing field is 50 yards in length and 30 yards wide with 10 yard end zones at each end. These dimensions can be modified to suite the area or other concerns.

No-Running Zones: Will be marked 5 yards from each end zone and 5 yards on both sides of mid field. The no-run zone is only in play when there is a line to gain (i.e. attacking to the midfield line and end zone).

## THE FIELD



**“and the most important rule of all... HAVE FUN!!!”**